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Damage Reports "Significant," But Supplies Remain Strong

California Avocado Industry Hit Hard By Arctic Cold Blast

Irvine, California January 18, 2007 -- The major freeze event that hit Southern California in mid-January caused significant damage to the 2007 avocado crop, according to a report from the California Avocado Commission (CAC).

Industry experts say it will be several weeks before accurate figures are available for both fruit and trees damaged by the frigid temperatures, but early reports suggest that losses could reach 20-30% of 2007's projected 400 million pound crop.

Use of wind machines and irrigation water may have kept some avocado groves from freezing in warmer locations, but reports of extensive damage are coming into the Commission from California's Central Coast south to San Diego County.

"Even though the freeze caused serious damage to groves directly in its path, most of the state's 6500 growers will be able to meet consumer demand in 2007—including the high-consumption Super Bowl weekend in the short term," said Commission President Mark Affleck. "Longer term for 2007, imports from Chile and Mexico will partially offset the drop in California volume, though prices will undoubtedly rise."

CAC is working closely with government officials to do everything possible to help affected growers recover and get back into production.

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ABOUT CAC

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) was established in 1978 to conduct promotion for the industry's 6500 growers.