

## ***A Quest for Grower Value***

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To build consumer demand for farm products like milk, apples, eggs and avocados, commodity associations have long relied on a successful formula: raise awareness, change attitudes and induce purchase behavior in a way that increases value.

Challenging times, however, call for more than running ads with catchy slogans to win in the marketplace. It's a new world out there. Facing information overload and skyrocketing media costs, organizations with limited advertising budgets must find ways to break through the media clutter and deliver messages that hit home with their target audience. A traditional approach may no longer guarantee sales and a value return.

Today's consumers have an abundance of choices when it comes to receiving information — we're not all tuned in to the same channel anymore. Depending on personal taste, our attention is divided across a variety of media, reducing an advertiser's ability to reach us repeatedly using a single delivery system.

To succeed in the new world of marketing, companies have become savvy hunters, tracking and capturing their quarry where they are most apt to linger. It may be on the Internet, or watching television, or listening to the Spanish radio station at rush hour. And the national, single theme campaign aimed at a non-homogeneous audience is increasingly being supplemented or replaced by targeted, niche campaigns aimed at select groups of consumers. These customized campaigns deliver hard-hitting messages which complement, rather than clash, with popular culture.

The explosion of media choices can be attributed in large part to technological change, and it is this same technology that places a tremendous potential at the fingertips of today's marketers. Computers, cable television, specialty publications, high speed digital telecommunication lines and other advances can help us bring farm products directly to the consumer.

The opportunities for consumer education, niche marketing and the delivery of product information have never been greater. Now, with a few keystrokes, consumers can access tips on how to choose and ripen avocados, or the attributes of different varieties, or recipe ideas for an evening meal. Those with an interest in nutrition can obtain a complete profile on avocados in a matter of minutes. But it's not just a one-way street. The technology that enables us to disseminate product information can also help us identify and attract prospective customers. Shopping in cyberspace and targeted consumer promotions are just a blink away.

Consistent with CAC's issues management philosophy of being future focused and

acting early — while there is still time to shape our destiny — we've tackled the 21st Century marketing challenge head-on by exploring innovative ways to deliver our messages with laser precision. The launch of our Internet web site earlier this year is just one example. As we plan for the 1996-97 crop year and beyond, we are striving to differentiate our product and add value.

To successfully promote avocados in a new marketing environment we must understand the potential of new technology, and where it promises to take us. But even more, we must explore and identify creative ways to unlock that potential today to ensure our place in tomorrow's world. Winning the game in the future means getting off the linear track and exploring, always ahead of the forces which are shaping our business. The quest for grower value is deeply etched in the culture of the California Avocado Commission, and, as we begin our planning for 1997 and beyond, it drives us ever forward into an exciting new phase of avocado marketing.