

2011 Special Award Of Merit, For Excellence In Marketing

APEAM:

**Asociación de Productores y Empacadores
Exportadores de Aguacate de Michoacan, A.C.,**

Uruapan, Michoacan, Mexico

Award presented

by Carl Stucky

From time to time the Society recognizes exemplary performance that benefits the avocado industry by granting a Special Award of Merit. This year the Society is honored to present the Special Award, for excellence in marketing, to APEAM, the Asociación de Productores y Empacadores Exportadores de Aguacate de Michoacan. This translates as the Association of Avocado Producers and Packers for Export, of Michoacan, Mexico. Mostly a group of growers just like us here in this room today.



For many years, from 1914 until 1996, Mexican avocados were prohibited from entry to the United States, based on legitimate concerns about the introduction of insect pests endemic to Mexico. Using a system management quarantine protocol, Mexican avocados were allowed seasonally into 19 states in 1997, 31 states in 2001, and year-round access to all 50 states in 2004. And it has not been the marketing disaster some naysayers in the industry had forecast.



Total California avocado sales continue to set new records. Big crop, small crop, we're making more money each year, on less acreage. And while our own industry's promotion efforts have historically led the way, the marketing and distribution performance by the Mexican growers has been outstanding.

They have professionally met every challenge to opening a new market to ever increasing volumes of fruit. Starting in the orchard, through its modern packinghouses, and efficient distribution system, the Mexican supply chain has been perfected to export a consistent quality of fruit. Believe me, in the subtropics that is not as easy as in California. APEAM's growers and management have responded immediately to temporary over and under supply situations, sometimes more than doubling, or halving, the weekly export volume.

As marketers they have consistently funded the development of the market with promotion and merchandizing programs right up there with what we've seen for years from our own California Avocado Commission. All told, because of the large size of their industry, their investment in developing the United States market is larger than that of the California industry. Even though we all say "my avocado is better than yours", the fact that we're all talking about "avocados" benefits us all!

The California Avocado Society is pleased to present this Special Award of Merit certificate, and a gavel made from the Mother Hass tree's wood, to APEAM, in recognition of their Excellence in Marketing.

Here to receive the award for APEAM is its President, Ricardo Vega. We are also honored that several other gentlemen who are representatives of APEAM have joined him today. Francisco Falconi is Vice President of the Association. Emiliano Escobedo, who lives in Los Angeles, is the U.S. based Marketing Director. Growers Martin Mendoza and



From left to right: Emiliano Escobedo, Martin Mendoza, Ricardo Vega, José Antonio Villaseñor, and Francisco Falconi receive the Hass Gavel and Special Award of Merit at the 2011 CAS Annual Meeting.

Don Jose Antonio Villaseñor, one of the founders of APEAM, and icon of the Uruapan, Michoacan avocado industry also made the trip today to receive this very special Award of Merit. Please join me in showing your Societies' appreciation of this organization and its efforts!