

California's tight supply of avocados has contributed to price peaks this season, due to the unwavering demand for the fruit, says [California Avocado Commission](#)'s vice president of marketing, Jan DeLyser.

While early forecasts predicted the state would harvest [175 million pounds](#) - almost half of last year's total volume - this figure has seen a slight dip.

DeLyser says that, currently, "[California's] total volume forecast remains at 170 million pounds."

She explains that the supply was tight this year due to its lighter-than-average volume, which was a result of the extreme heat in 2018.

As for this year, "spring rains and market conditions contributed to delayed harvesting on the front end of the season.

"This led to a shift of timing versus initial expectations and an extension of the California avocado season into August."

Most of this season's California avocado crop will be harvested by the end of August, with limited availability of California avocados following, she notes.

As the state's volumes wind down, the avocado import volume is expected to increase as summer transitions into fall.

When it came to making sure the state's limited supply was as sufficient as possible, she explains: "California Avocado Commission has worked with handlers to target supply primarily to loyal customers in California as well as in some other markets.

"For many retail customers there has been adequate supply to support on-shelf merchandising and display programs."

In regards to the retail programs the commission typically offers, this year's circumstances meant there was marked a shift in approach.

"As expected, promotion this year does not necessarily mean traditional price promotions, so though demand has been good, feature ad activity is down," DeLyser comments.

"Branded foodservice programs are also down this year but we are already working with targeted chains for next year when supply is expected to be higher."

She indicates that while Hass avocados continue to be the major crop, interest in other local varieties is on the increase.

In particular, there have been some targeted retail programs this year with both the Reed and GEM varieties.

"Supplies of these varieties are limited but increasing," she concludes.