



CALIFORNIA
TABLE GRAPE
COMMISSION

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2026

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California Table Grape Commission Launches a New Global Campaign as the Season Arrives Early

Fresno, CA – The California table grape season is on track to arrive about two weeks early, signaling that Grapes from California will be available for promotion longer than previous seasons. Each season begins in the Coachella Valley, where growers are expecting to begin harvesting at the beginning of May this year. An early start to harvesting in the San Joaquin Valley is also expected to begin in mid-June.

“California grapes have always enjoyed a long season, with grapes often being promoted into January, but an early start to the season this year lets retailers get a head start on promotions and providing tasty, healthy, happy Grapes from California to eager customers,” said Ian LeMay, commission president.

For the 2026 season, the commission is launching an updated global marketing campaign throughout the U.S. and up to 22 export markets, targeting the trade, which includes retailers, wholesalers, and importers, as well as primary shoppers, with the foundational objective to drive demand for California table grapes. The updated campaign introduces retailers and consumers to a cast of characters known as the *Lunchbox League*. The *Lunchbox League* is a trio of superhero grapes that originate from California, *where tasty fuels healthy, and healthy makes happy*. Captain Cluster, Munch, and Glow are the superheroes who make up the *Lunchbox League* and serve as the embodiment and personification of all the health benefits, taste, and quality of California grapes. “This campaign element is exciting because it capitalizes on the scientific perspective published by Dr. John Pezzuto in July 2025, which claimed grapes should be considered a superfood, in order to give the *Lunchbox League* their superhero status,” said LeMay. Dr. Pezzuto, Ph.D., D.Sc., is a leading resveratrol and cancer researcher and Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Western New England University.

Driving demand for California grapes through the season, the commission works with retail partners on a variety of activities such as contests, digital promotions, merchandising, point-of-purchase materials, and sampling. For retailers in the U.S. with registered dietitians on staff, the commission Retail RD Program offers an additional way to promote Grapes from California and highlight the health benefits of grapes to shoppers. Retail dietitians can work directly with

the commission dietitian team to develop customized promotional activities and educational materials. Primary shoppers are motivated to purchase more California grapes more often through a variety of activities including advertising California grapes on multi-retailer shopper apps, sharing grape usage ideas and health information through commission social media, partnering with social media influencers including lifestyle influencers and registered dietitians, and media coverage.

“With a healthy crop arriving early and an engaging new campaign with demand-driving materials and activities, the commission is eager to work with retailers throughout the U.S. and around the world to move California table grape volume this season,” said LeMay.

Examples of updated campaign promotional materials are included with this release. High-resolution copies are available upon request.



Captain Cluster, left; Munch, center; and Glow, right.

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