



By Maura Maxwell

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## Mission launches Emeralds in the Rough avocados



Marketer seizes on growing consumer awareness and acceptance of visually imperfect product

**M**ission Produce has unveiled its latest value-added offering for the avocado market, 2lb and 3lb bags of grade 2 fruit that will be sold under the Emeralds in the Rough banner.

"These avocados are the interesting little fellas that aren't quite 'pretty' enough for the main stage," the company said.

"Peculiar and marred – weather blemished, imperfect and how should we say this... wonderfully wonky. Regardless, these less attractive avocados taste just as amazing as their more beautiful (grade 1) brothers and sisters and have a sense of humor about it. Just read the bag."

Grade 2 avocados are typically sold to foodservice distributors and industrial users in bulk configurations. The external scars and blemishes that contribute to an avocado's downgrade haven't been widely merchandised at retail.

However, these characteristics do not affect the internal quality or taste of the fruit. The company has seized on growing consumer awareness and acceptance of visually imperfect produce to launch its latest offering.

According to marketing director Denise Junqueiro, this is a movement that is good for the industry. "This is agriculture and not every piece of fruit is picture perfect. We created Emeralds in the Rough to showcase how beautiful and tasty every avocado is even when it's blemished," she said, adding that the vibrant packaging is designed to draw in shoppers.

"This product has a lot of things going for it; rising consumption of imperfect fruit, a propensity for sustainable products, smart design and average lower cost," said Mission's sales director Patrick Cortes.

"We see Emeralds in the Rough as a

promotional item, available certain times of year when the trees have more grade 2 fruit. This will alleviate the pressure to move it only through foodservice at the times we have abundant grade 2 avocados."

Mission's vice president of sales and marketing, Brent Scattini, said Emeralds in the Rough were for the "savvy avocado eater who can see past the rough exterior to get to that green gold" and would add to Mission's repertoire of products that fill specific needs for its growing customer base.