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MEMO!

ATTACHMENT 1:

ISSUE 1 of Demand Letter September 7, 2025: The avocado import pipeline as a criminal economy eco-system

Investigative reporting has revealed incriminating evidence of collusion between the Mexican cartels and organized crime groups, the local Mexican government officials of the avocado growing regions of Michoacán and Jalisco, and the American companies involved in packing shipping and transporting avocados for importation to the United States. [See Appendix 2 for a list of referenced published reports.]

We have discovered, and been greatly disturbed by, videos which feature a three-part interview with former Mexican Secretary of Agriculture Francisco Mayorga Castañeda. They contain candid and damning on-the-record insights about the systemic issues plaguing Michoacán's avocado sector: SENASICA's alignment with criminal groups, cartel-administered market controls, and the tight integration between APEAM and U.S. importers. He singles out Calavo as an exemplar of the latter.

Among many striking statements, these three stand out as particularly eye-opening:

1. *"los mismos oficiales de senasica me decían que estos grupos maleantes eran sus mejores aliados para que los programas de sanidad se cumplieran al pie de la letra" (19:23-19:35)*

Revealing that government sanitary officials viewed criminal groups as the inspectors "Best Allies" in enforcing export certification standards. (These are the same inspectors which now conduct all of the county inspections and which replaced the USDA inspectors)

2. *"Estos señores [los grupos criminales] administran un mercado y ponen un cierto orden… eran los mejores aliados para que los programas de sanidad se cumplieran."*

SENASICA officials viewed cartels as allies in enforcing export standards, an astonishing admission of criminal governance.

3. *"hay una simbiosis pues entre productores delincuentes comercializadores proveedores de insumos en fin" (18:27-18:33)*

He sees a deep symbiosis in a blended criminal-economy ecosystem of producers, cartels, commercializers, suppliers and exporters operating interdependently.

Video Links:

Territorio Reportaje || Aguacate, Negocio, Ecocidio y Crimen | Parte 6 (Oct. 12 2022) — CALAVO

Territorio Reportaje || Aguacate, Negocio, Ecocidio y Crimen | Parte 7 (Oct. 19th 2022) — APEAM

[For English transcriptions, see Appendix 3.]. The incriminating material in these documents point to violations of the guidelines created by our trade agreements, by the groups involved in what is being

described as a blended criminal-economy ecosystem in which cartels, government officials, producers, suppliers and packer/shipper/exporters operate interdependently. Specifically:

1. SENASICA's Alignment with Organized Crime. SENASICA, Mexico's federal agricultural oversight agency, has been implicated in systematically favoring cartel-run orchards by tailoring phytosanitary protocols and undermining impartial inspections. Former Secretary Mayorga Castaneda details how SENASICA officials turned a blind eye to protection rackets, effectively granting criminal actors de facto regulatory authority. This collusion has marginalized independent growers and entrenched cartel influence at the heart of Mexico's avocado export pipeline.
2. Cartel-Administered Market Controls. Drug trafficking organizations in Michoacan and Jalisco impose "cuotas" or protection fees on growers and transporters, inflating costs and dictating supply routes. They've coerced local authorities to issue illegal land concessions, enabling the retroactive legalization of orchards established through corruption. These tactics have consolidated cartel monopolies over production, distribution corridors, and pricing within the region's avocado sector.
3. Integration Between APEAM and U.S. Importers. The Association of Avocado Producers, Packers, and Exporters of Mexico (APEAM) operates market-control mechanisms that dovetail with U.S. importer networks to guarantee volume and price stability. Mayorga highlights how APEAM's bylaws and logistical coordination effectively embed cartel-backed supply arrangements into U.S. distribution channels. This integration not only ensures consistent exports but also shields cartel-run operations from scrutiny.
4. Calavo as a Case Study. Calavo, a leading U.S. avocado importer, is singled out by Mayorga as an exemplar of cartel-aligned procurement. He describes how Calavo's adherence to APEAM's cartel-influenced guidelines secured protected supply corridors and pricing structures. This case underscores the risk that major brands may be complicit-knowingly or unknowingly-in financing and sustaining criminal networks. There is also reported use of funds paid into the APEAM by Calavo, ostensibly for marketing purposes

As pointed out in my letter to you dated August 7, 2025, U.S. packers have apparently been unable to act in opposition to Mexico's illegal avocado-driven deforestation and the cartel-driven violence that comes with it. Likely as a direct consequence of their dependency on it, and their political influence as U.S. companies in the supply chain, the USDA, the HAB , and, the CAC have condoned and turned a blind eye to these following well-documented ongoing conditions included in our references:

- Continued sourcing from orchards on land that was cleared in violation of Mexican law. Climate Rights International and Guardian Forestal identified 60 shipments from three prominent American avocado importers of fruit grown on recently deforested regions in Michoacán and Jalisco.
- Purchases from groves developed on land where forests were destroyed by intentionally set fires, a tactic often orchestrated or protected by cartels, to seize territory and intimidate communities. By purchasing these avocados, the importer community has effectively rewarded and incentivized further criminal land grabs and violence against forest guardians.
- The ignoring of formal warnings and transparency requests. The U.S. State Department forbade the movement of American government employees off the principal highways in Michoacán and Jalisco in August 2023, due to excessive risk of physical harm. This has yet to be lifted, in spite of the USDA's appeals to do so, and their belief that they are permitted to inspect on a day by day and location by location basis, per our discussions with APHIS staff.

- Despite being made aware of deforestation, ecological devastation, and public disclosure by multiple investigators of the corruption and cartel control of resources within their supply chains, and the latter's investigated associations with fentanyl and heroin smuggling, American wholesalers and their commercial marketing partners received no clear messaging from the CAC to not accept fruit from illicit orchards.
- This lack of clear messaging concerning the contamination of the American consumer's avocado supply, committed in spite of the ongoing public sustainability pledges guaranteed by the importers, made these signed and legally binding agreements with the retailers and their consumers little more than window dressing. These oversights, in each and every case, and with each and every opportunity to raise awareness of them, are perpetuated untruths that were condoned by the import industry, and forgiven.
- **The CAC's silence concerning this has been deafening. This has resulted in the industry supplying virtually every major U.S. supermarket chain with CONFLICT FRUIT, thereby embedding tainted avocados deep into American grocery aisles and consumer consciousness.**

Through this "greenwashing" of their brands, and the failure to cut off suppliers who are breaching Mexico environmental laws and conditions of our trade agreements, our importers, packers and shippers have allowed the following well-documented violations of trade agreements:

1. Failure to uphold standards and certification of sustainable and ethical sourcing;
2. Undermining of genuine anti-deforestation efforts;
3. Betrayal of local communities fighting to protect their forests and water supplies;
4. Appropriation by cartel and organized crime syndicates with control over picking, packing and shipping maintained through extortion, intimidation, violence, bribery, and uninvestigated subsidies.

The CAC Mission Statement reads: "To maximize grower returns by enhancing premium brand positioning for California avocados and improving grower sustainability." While the CAC board is supposed to execute policies to the benefit their member farmers, we have documented multiple instances in which it has moved instead to suppress actions which would have benefited growers, while advocating for and operationalizing proposals to increase the volume of avocado sales regardless of country of origin. By the board's own reporting, the tens of millions of dollars of grower tithed funds spent on marketing and outreach, supposedly to further the aims of the organization, have failed to show benefit.

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ATTACHMENT 3: English Translation of Francisco Mayorga Castañeda Interview (15:03–25:26)

Section A: English translation of the specified section (15:03–25:26) of the YouTube video Territorio Reportaje || Aguacate, Negocio, Ecocidio y Crimen | Parte 7 (APEAM), featuring an interview with Francisco Mayorga Castañeda, former Secretary of Agriculture under the administrations of Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderón.

The translation is organized by timestamped segments to clearly distinguish the content and maintain the context of the discussion. The aim is to preserve the speaker's intent and tone while ensuring clarity in English.
Video Link: *https://youtu.be/GSz8xihdsTI?si=0dxCH0scJrqXr8Cz*

Translation of Territorio Reportaje || Aguacate, Negocio, Ecocidio y Crimen | Parte 7 (APEAM)

Interview with Francisco Mayorga Castañeda
Time Segment: 15:03–25:26

15:03–15:24
It's evident that a product grown in territories dominated by criminal groups would not be overlooked by them. The former Secretary of Agriculture during the administrations of Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderón, Jalisco businessman Francisco Mayorga Castañeda, explains it.

15:24–15:54
Not only has the avocado been affected by this phenomenon, but berries as well. Berries were, let's say, a product born from trade liberalization. Before the North American Free Trade Agreement, we didn't know about berries here in Mexico. Nobody believed they could be produced. But they were gradually introduced in Jalisco and Michoacán, in areas like the south of Lake Chapala, Mazamitla, Jocotepec, and Ciudad Guzmán.

15:54–16:23
So, there was an overlap of berry-growing areas in Michoacán with avocado-growing areas, and berry and avocado zones in Jalisco. Often, the same farming families who initially grew avocados later moved into berries in Michoacán, and the same happened in Jalisco. It's become a kind of 4x4 matrix where you have the crops—berries and avocados—and the states—Jalisco and Michoacán—with many of the same actors on both sides of the border and in both crops.

16:23–16:54
Exactly, it's like the accompanying subtropical ecosystem of Michoacán and Jalisco is also subject to this phenomenon. For example, lemons—both Persian and Mexican lemons. Let's remember that Michoacán is the leading agricultural producer in this country in terms of value. Many people think it's Sinaloa, but no, Michoacán is the top agricultural producer in terms of value.

16:54–17:25
This is because it has a very wide range of products, where avocados and berries stand out, followed by lemons, guavas, and others. But obviously, avocados and berries generate a large part of that production value. As we've mentioned before, there's a kind of market administration, both in the national market…

17:25–17:58
…and possibly in the international market as well, where the flow of fruit entering the market is

regulated to prevent prices from collapsing due to oversupply. By maintaining these generous margins, there's enough to distribute to the direct producer, to marketers here and abroad, and to those criminal groups that are profiting consistently.

17:58–18:33
It's a very delicate issue, fueled by the absence of fiscal controls in Mexican agriculture. I would ask: What future does the Mexican state face in confronting these groups when they are so deeply intertwined in economic matters? There's a symbiosis between producers, criminals, marketers, and input suppliers. In short, a confrontation could be chaotic or tremendous.

18:33–19:03
Because if this so-called order is disrupted, it's likely that sanitary certifications or control over orchards certified for export could be lost. Not just any orchard can export. These individuals, let's call them the criminals, administer a market and impose a certain order against other criminals who might try to encroach on their business or their territory.

19:03–19:50
As I mentioned in a previous conversation, SENASICA [Mexico's National Service of Agri-Food Health, Safety, and Quality] officials themselves told me that these criminal groups were their best allies in ensuring that sanitary programs were followed to the letter, reducing the risk that the United States would decertify orchards and ban exports to their country. In that sense, they are highly modernized and perfectly aware that they can push the boundaries only so far.

19:50–20:23
They know they can't overstep too much, or the entire business could collapse for everyone. Not long ago, when the U.S. ambassador to Morelia was withdrawn for a few days, confrontations between criminal groups were suspended during that time. They waited for the ambassador to return to Mexico. You can see there's control, there's order, there's a hierarchy that governs.

20:23–20:59
We would have to rethink, as a country, how to address this issue in some way, given the state's failure to control its territory. It's not as simple as applying force indiscriminately. That could bring down many things. It reminds me a bit of the December mistake with Zedillo, when everyone said the economy was held together by pins. Yes, but you removed the pins, and of course, it collapsed.

20:59–21:35
The same could happen if this isn't handled with great care. I've thought about some solutions—not magical, immediate, or total solutions, but ones that could contribute. One of them is the fiscal issue. If foods in Mexico had VAT [Value Added Tax], as they do in many parts of the world, in Latin America, like Chile, where everything has VAT, including food…

21:35–22:15
…that would allow the state to exercise fiscal control, which is a non-violent but highly effective form of control. Tax evasion is subject to penalties very similar to those for organized crime or other serious offenses. So, VAT would allow one link in the chain to control the next. That's the advantage of VAT—when you pay it, you can claim it back when it's charged to you, so the chains remain intact.

22:15–22:56
Unlike income tax, which targets a specific taxpayer, VAT ties one link to the next. I think that would help a lot, not just for avocados but for other sectors in Mexico where crime is used for money

laundering and profiteering—exactly, not just avocados but berries, corn, wheat, livestock, and many primary products.

22:56–23:34
Because these products have a more lenient or less strict fiscal treatment than the rest of the economy, they enable these phenomena. The root of criminal control over economic activities is the same as the root of environmental degradation: the near-total absence of state regulation. In Michoacán, I've come across cases reported by activists and people working with communities where a forest is cleared, an orchard is established, and that orchard never produces anything because it lacks the necessary conditions.

23:34–24:10
Yet they're allowed to operate as if we were talking about half-empty apartment towers. Exactly, they're looking for the first opportunity to slip in. They don't seem to have a purpose, but they're seeking moments and gaps to infiltrate the market. And on top of that, the money is, so to speak, "laundered." Many service providers—you, who are so involved in environmental and forestry issues—we discussed this years ago.

24:10–24:54
For example, those who build access roads in the mountains, those who clear trees and extract them to take to the greenhouse—generally, nobody recognizes these people, nobody knows who they are. Everyone complains about them—they're the loggers, the predators—but they're neither formalized nor professionalized like the criminals are. So, they do things poorly. They build roads that might cause erosion, or they fell trees with obsolete techniques.

24:54–25:26
There's no training for the workers, and there's a lot of waste in what's cleared. If they were more professional and fully legalized, they'd be required to have certifications, training, and proper work methodologies. And, of course, they'd have to issue invoices. It's much easier to trace the origin of anything backward when there's a chain of formality than when there are gaps of informality. Exactly, there's always someone doing the dirty work, and nobody knows who it was, and there's no real way for a fiscal authority to act.

25:26
So, things have to be done through dirty or violent methods, which, as the president says, create spirals of violence that are very hard to stop later.

Notes on the Translation

• Context: The segment focuses on Francisco Mayorga Castañeda discussing the intersection of avocado and berry production in Mexico (particularly Michoacán and Jalisco) with criminal activity, weak state regulation, and environmental issues. He highlights how criminal groups regulate markets to maintain profits, the role of fiscal policy (like VAT) in curbing illicit activity, and the environmental damage caused by unregulated deforestation for orchards.
• Key Themes:
    • Criminal groups' control over avocado and berry markets, including their role in ensuring sanitary compliance for exports.
    • The absence of fiscal controls (e.g., VAT on food) enabling money laundering and criminal profiteering.
    • Environmental degradation due to unregulated deforestation and poorly managed

orchards.

• The need for formalized, professionalized practices to improve traceability and reduce environmental harm.

Section B: English Translation of Francisco Mayorga Castañeda Interview – Video #6 (1:44–8:54 & 15:08–26:58)

Below is the English translation of the specified sections (1:44–8:54 and 15:08–26:58) of the YouTube video Territorio Reportaje || Aguacate, Negocio, Ecocidio y Crimen | Parte 6 (10/12/22), featuring an interview with Francisco Mayorga Castañeda, former Secretary of Agriculture under the administrations of Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderón. The translation is organized by the two requested time segments to clearly distinguish the content and maintain the context of the discussion. The aim is to preserve the speaker's intent, tone, and conversational style while ensuring clarity in English.

Video Link: *https://youtu.be/hpUDj01bYeQ?si=iQPWjTiyD2bFW9K5*

Interview Sections:

• First Part: 1:44–8:54
• Second Part: 15:08–26:58

First Part: 1:44–8:54

1:44–2:07

Companies achieve success when they operate across sovereign countries. Who better to share these details than a former Mexican Secretary of Agriculture, who served during two different administrations—those of Vicente Fox Quesada and Felipe Calderón Hinojosa—when the spectacular business model took off, and plantations expanded at the expense of traditional croplands and, increasingly, the temperate forests of Michoacán and Jalisco. This is the testimony of businessman and former Secretary of Agriculture Francisco Mayorga Castañeda.

2:07–2:58

You know that the most popular avocado varieties, like Hass and Méndez, were originally taken from Mexico to the United States. There, they were refined by American geneticists and producers in California, where a very prosperous industry was built. A cooperative called Calavo was formed, which marketed practically all of California's avocados. At the same time, they protected themselves from competition from Mexican avocados by claiming we had a pest called the avocado seed borer, an insect that burrows into the avocado pit.

2:58–3:41

So, for many decades—if I recall correctly, about 70 years—Mexican avocado exports to the United States were banned because of this pest. Well, this gave Calavo's members a virtual monopoly on avocado marketing. Yes, exactly. Nobody really knew what this seed borer was—it was a bit like the Chupacabra, something mysterious and strange.

3:41–4:38

But eventually, economic factors began to convince California producers that it was more profitable to import avocados from Mexico and market them. Among these factors were water shortages—avocados are a crop that requires a lot of water, and California has been suffering from severe water scarcity for decades. Then there was the issue of labor; harvesting, packing, and processing avocados requires a lot of labor, which is very expensive. So, taking advantage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the seed borer issue was gradually downplayed or faded away, and discussions

began to allow Mexican avocados into the U.S.

4:38–5:17
But this was on the condition that Calavo would be the conduit for entry or commercialization. Initially, exports were allowed only to certain states in the U.S. Northeast—New York, Boston, Washington, Philadelphia—areas with high purchasing power, where avocados couldn't be grown due to the climate and other factors. Gradually, this zone expanded until it eventually covered the entire United States.

5:17–6:04
This allowed for controlled commercialization. It wasn't a competitive market where every Mexican avocado producer could send their fruit to their brokers or counterparts in the U.S. and compete. Instead, with a single or dominant conduit, they could manage supply, control prices, and, above all, centralize promotion and advertising. So, Calavo and the Michoacán producers, through APEAM—the organization of avocado producers in the state of Michoacán—formed a kind of alliance.

6:04–6:56
In fact, Calavo had investments in some Mexican companies, and APEAM, together with Calavo and with support from the Mexican government, promoted avocados at expositions, tastings, and, above all, the crown jewel: the Super Bowl. This generated significant economic benefits in Michoacán, which led to an increase in new orchard areas, often at the expense of forested land. It also gave rise to criminal groups that captured some of these profits.

6:56–7:37
These criminal groups, which already had some roots in the area, took advantage of the large profit margins and the market's order. In exchange for selling "protection," charging extortion fees, or making threats, they strengthened themselves and funneled enormous amounts of money into their coffers. This is a byproduct of the avocado boom and the unique characteristic of having a single commercialization conduit. Is that why Michoacán was exclusively the only state exporting?

7:37–8:54
Yes, sir, it was Michoacán because they had control over the orchards there. However, nothing prevented other states from gradually planting avocados. Several neighboring state governments started promoting avocado cultivation among their farmers, especially in mountainous areas with few options for growing cereals or other fruits. That's how Jalisco, the State of Mexico, a bit of Guanajuato, and even Guerrero began promoting avocados. Jalisco was a special case because, given its geographic proximity and similar soil, climate, altitude, and temperature conditions, some Michoacán producers who could no longer expand in their state due to security issues or land-use change restrictions started moving to Jalisco. They brought with them the advantage of capitalizing on a long history of avocado cultivation development. So, today, Jalisco has more modern and productive plantations in every sense compared to…

Second Part: 15:08–26:58

15:08–15:33
The avocado industry in Michoacán deserves to be understood in greater detail. In this segment, we expand on the revelations of Francisco Mayorga Castañeda, former Secretary of Agriculture under the Fox and Calderón governments. His account helps us understand the secrecy that the avocado sector often maintains in sharing its data with full transparency. Initially, exports were opened only to high-purchasing-power and densely populated states in the eastern United States, like New York,

Boston, and Philadelphia, where there's more money.

15:33–16:22
Another significant issue for me is that, just as exports were allowed only from certified Michoacán orchards, the export channel was also singular. It was solely through a former cooperative—or a cooperative—of American avocado growers based in California, called Calavo Growers.

16:22–17:07
It's interesting to analyze this cooperative because, obviously, they took the avocado from Mexico, improved it, and had large plantations in the United States. Calavo was constantly pressuring U.S. authorities to block Mexican avocado imports under the pretext of the seed borer pest. However, Californians gradually realized that their costs were rising. They faced water issues, which continue to worsen day by day in California, and labor issues, which are also worsening.

17:07–18:00
So, they cleverly said, "Let's produce less here and buy from the Mexicans, who produce more cheaply than we do, with fewer environmental, wage, and water pressures. But we'll distribute it." Essentially, Calavo became a monopsony—meaning they controlled the purchasing side of Mexican avocados from Michoacán.

18:00–18:55
Calavo is a very important part of APEAM, and APEAM is a very important part of Calavo. There was a kind of swap of memberships, shares, and coordination. This seems important to me, Agustín, because it contradicts the much-touted idea of economic competition. By being almost a monopoly on exports and imports, they essentially divide up the sales. The U.S. market grew, but always under Calavo's control.

18:55–19:39
Once Calavo saw the response from the U.S. Northeast, they gradually allowed, through the U.S. government, the expansion of the supply zone until, by around 2010 or 2012, it covered the entire U.S. territory. But the story doesn't end there. The interests of U.S. farmers, like potato growers backed by then-Senator, now-Ambassador Ken Salazar, have been imposed through U.S. diplomacy since the Obama era. The former Secretary's account aligns with that of Mexican potato producers.

19:39–20:03
Mexican presidents Felipe Calderón, Enrique Peña Nieto, and Andrés Manuel López Obrador have accepted the dangerous sanitary risk of importing fresh potatoes from Idaho and Colorado in exchange for Michoacán and Jalisco producers, who control the U.S. market through Calavo, expanding their avocado exports. 2022 was the year when potato shipments began arriving in Mexico.

20:03–20:56
Question: So, is Calavo still very influential with APEAM today?
Answer: Of course, of course. They're partners. The millions of dollars needed, especially at the beginning, for advertising—to get into the Super Bowl, to have a few minutes of advertising on U.S. television—that money was provided by Calavo. Initially, Mexican avocado growers didn't have that kind of money. Now, it's a shared resource, and it's a lot of money—many, many, many millions of dollars. It's a gigantic business.

20:56–22:02

Question: We've talked about Michoacán and Jalisco. How does Jalisco fit in? Has Calavo entered Jalisco, or is Jalisco a separate territory for them?
Answer: Well, initially, only Michoacán orchards were certified. The U.S. dragged its feet on certifying Jalisco orchards. So, many Jalisco avocado growers are from Michoacán—same families on both sides of the border. And not just in avocados but also in berries. If you take a moment to investigate, you'll see that avocados and berries have similar patterns, though they're very different crops, but they share certain common roots. Jalisco didn't have certification, and it wasn't granted, so they had two options: export to countries outside the U.S., like Canada and Japan, or…

22:02–22:51
…in a less transparent way, send product to Michoacán and have it exported as if it originated there. Without transparency, this was allowed. Logically, it wouldn't have been possible for Michoacán alone to supply the market at such a rapidly growing rate in recent years without some flow from elsewhere, mainly Jalisco.

22:51–23:49
Now, in principle, Jalisco is accepted by the U.S., so it's supposed to be able to export. But it paid a very high price for that approval. I experienced this firsthand, but subsequent governments refined it. The cost for the U.S. to accept Jalisco avocados was that Mexico agreed to import fresh potatoes from the U.S., which is tremendously risky for sanitary reasons. Fresh potatoes are a vector for many quarantine pests, and practically no country trades fresh potatoes precisely because it's nearly impossible to remove all soil residues.

23:49–25:03
As a subterranean crop, potatoes have little "eyes" or holes on their surface where soil and pest residues can accumulate. The U.S. put tremendous pressure on Mexico. I experienced that pressure from then-Secretary Tom Vilsack. A senator, the same Ken Salazar, now U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, conditioned Idaho's vote for Obama's re-election on Mexico opening its border to potatoes.

25:03–26:24
The pressure was brutal. I managed to navigate the issue. I told Secretary Tom Vilsack—we met in Mérida—"Secretary, I can't agree to what you're asking, but I'm not closed off. What if we form an international panel to review all the issues with potatoes and determine if Mexico would be at risk by allowing them in?" Vilsack agreed to that solution, and we appointed three panelists—none of them Mexican or American—to ensure impartiality. After a thorough study lasting over eight months, they issued a report concluding that Mexico would indeed face serious risks by allowing fresh potatoes into its territory.

26:24–26:58
So, I went to Washington, accompanied by Ambassador Sarukhán, and we reviewed the panelists' report. The Secretary got upset, saying it was the opposite of what he expected, and he walked out of the meeting.

Notes on the Translation

• Context: The first part (1:44–8:54) covers the history of Calavo Growers' dominance in the U.S. avocado market, their initial resistance to Mexican imports due to the alleged "seed borer" pest, and how economic pressures (water scarcity, labor costs, NAFTA) led to a controlled import system through Calavo. It also discusses the environmental and criminal consequences of the avocado boom in Michoacán. The second part (15:08–26:58) elaborates on Calavo's monopsony, its partnership

with APEAM, and the diplomatic trade-offs (e.g., U.S. potato imports) that enabled Mexican avocado exports, including the sanitary risks involved.

• Key Themes:

• Calavo's Market Control: Calavo's role as a near-monopoly/monopsony in avocado exports, controlling supply and prices, and its partnership with APEAM.

• Environmental Impact: Expansion of avocado orchards at the expense of forests, fueled by market growth and lack of regulation.

• Criminal Involvement: Criminal groups exploiting the avocado boom's profit margins through extortion and "protection."

• U.S.-Mexico Trade Dynamics: The political and economic trade-offs between avocado exports and potato imports, including associated risks.