



almond facts

NEWS, VIEWS, AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

MARCH–APRIL 2022

COMING SOON!
*Elote and Korean BBQ
Flavored Almonds*



COMING SOON:
Elote and Korean BBQ!

Shamrock'n Race
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Challenges
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MAR–APR 2022



Head to your local Walmart this May to pick up two delicious, new flavors!

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22 Shamrock'n Race is Back!

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ON THE COVER:

Blue Diamond is excited to welcome our newest flavors this April: Elote and Korean BBQ.



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Mark Jansen
President & CEO



Weathering the Challenges

The old adage, "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb" seems especially appropriate this spring. The unpredictable weather patterns over the last few months will certainly play a critical role in the success and size of this year's crop.

Unseasonably warm weather that accelerated almond bloom, followed by significant frost events across the state, was an unfortunate combination that resulted in freeze damage to many growers' orchards. While the extent of impact is still being assessed as I write this, growers in the Sacramento Valley were particularly affected. Our advocacy work through the Almond Alliance to secure disaster declaration for the impacted counties should bring growers much needed assistance. I also want to acknowledge the increased costs you are incurring on production inputs such as gas, diesel and fertilizer as well as the services and equipment needed to deliver your almonds.

Fortunately, as you have demonstrated countless times throughout my tenure as your CEO, *Blue Diamond* growers are both resilient and resourceful. These attributes were highlighted through conversations I had with many of you during my recent visits with groups of growers throughout the valley. Through the strength of our growers and our co-op partnerships, I'm confident we'll be able to face upcoming challenges and stay focused on maximizing grower returns.

Speaking of partners, as part of Women's History Month in March, we were honored to have four *Blue Diamond* growers — Cathy Marsh, Kelli Evans, Christine Gemperle, and Samantha Lewis — participate in a video discussion session with our team members. The group shared personal insights about life in the orchard and their roles as women leaders in ag

and business. I want to personally thank those four inspiring women again for taking the time out of their busy schedules to share with our team.

It was nice to see that, this year, National Agriculture Day and California Agriculture Day were recognized back-to-back on March 22 and 23 respectively. We certainly appreciate any opportunity to shine a spotlight on the importance of the ag industry and America's hard-working farmers and ranchers. The message themes for both days focused on sustainability and climate change — the national theme was "Growing a Climate for Tomorrow," and the state theme was "Working lands. Human hands. Healthy plans."

With the impressive level of grower participation in *Blue Diamond's* Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program, our co-op has a great story to tell around sustainability. Key metrics and narrative being developed across all areas of the co-op will be captured in our first Sustainability Report to be released this November in conjunction with our co-op's standard Annual Report.

As you can see on the cover of this magazine issue, *Blue Diamond* is rolling out two new snack nut flavors in early summer — Korean BBQ and Elote. We've heard fantastic reviews of both, and I'm thrilled that we're once again pushing the envelope of innovation to remain relevant with our consumers and deliver added value to our growers.



I'm exceedingly proud of how committed our *Blue Diamond* team members are to the success of the cooperative and to our collective mission of support for grower families. The team continues to expand market opportunities while navigating complex supply chain and logistics challenges to ensure your almonds get into the hands of customers and consumers around the world. You'll find updates about shipping challenges and potential solutions in articles from the Almond Alliance and our own VP of Global Supply Chain in this issue.

With the 2022 bloom complete, the focus returns on ensuring adequate water supplies to meet orchard needs. Above average temperatures in mid-March have amplified discussions of a California drought situation again this summer. But just as spring is a time of renewal, hope and new growth, perhaps the unpredictable weather will surprise us once again. After all, I believe the best is yet to come. ♦

Mark Jansen
President & CEO

Regional Managers

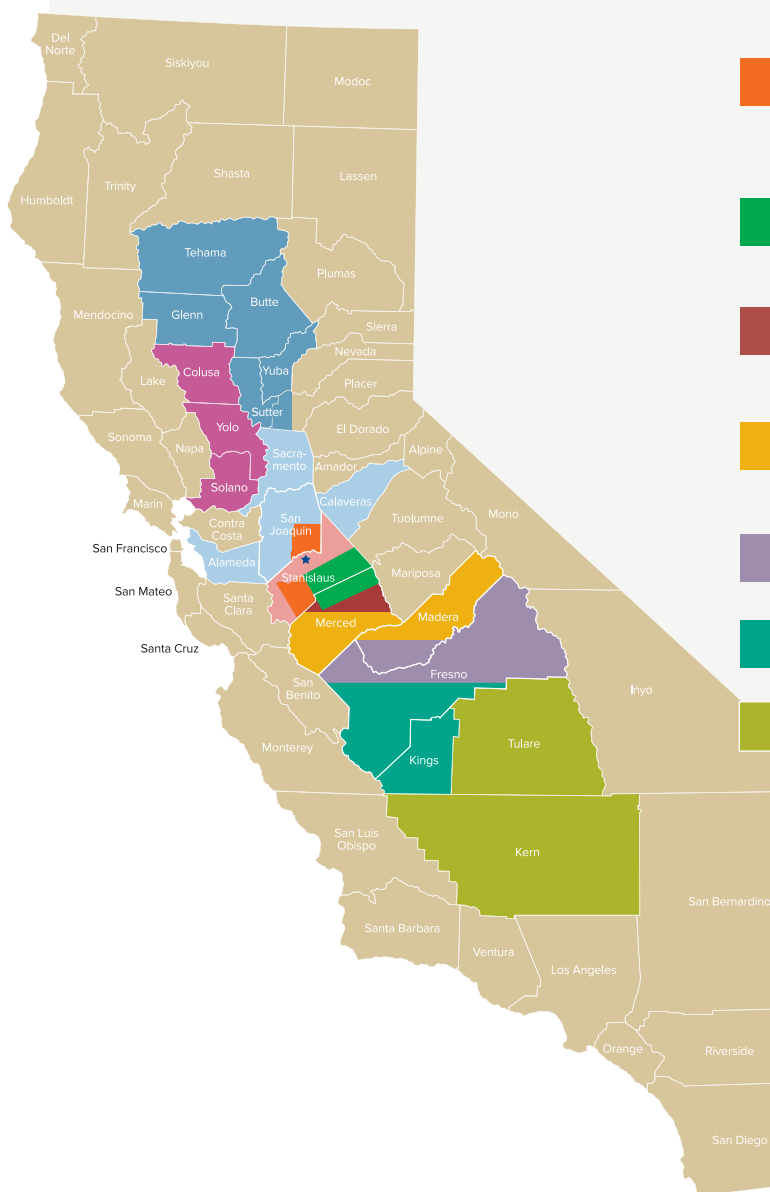


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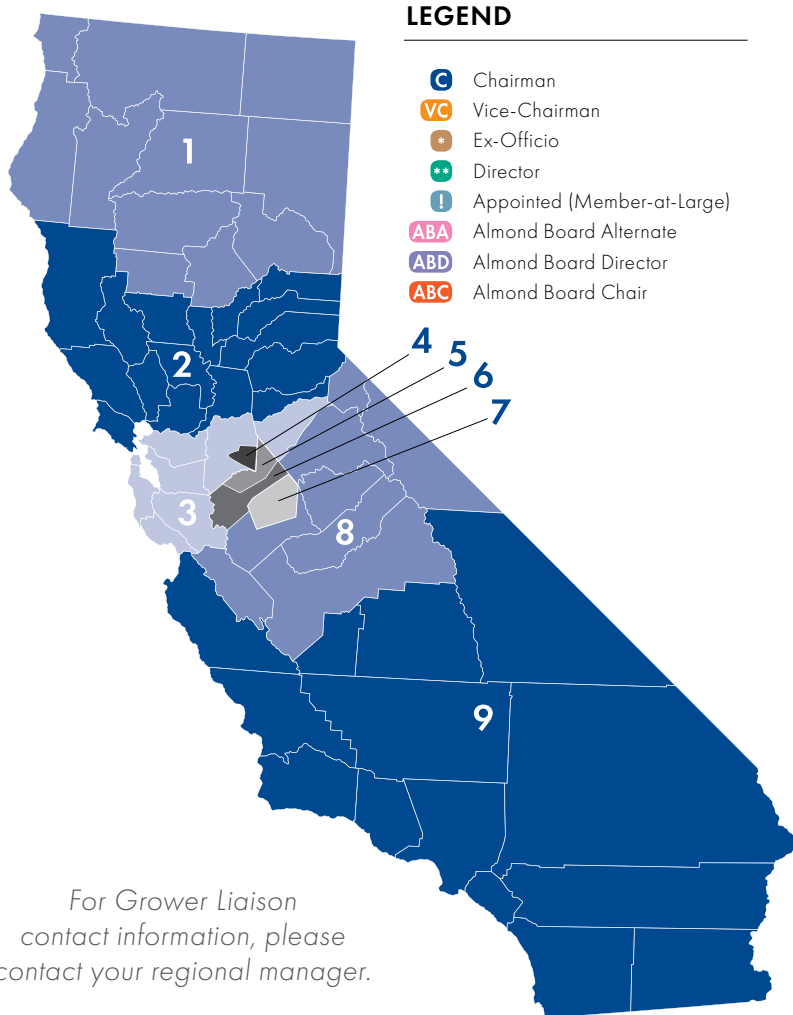
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- ABC** Almond Board Chair



Blue Diamond Well Represented at CalChamber Reception



Warren Cohen, Dale Tipple, and Chris Cummings had the opportunity to visit with both the California Lieutenant Governor, Eleni Kounalakis and Koji Tomita, Ambassador of Japan to the United States at the CalChamber reception in late March. We appreciate you all representing *Blue Diamond* so well! ♦

L to R: Chris Cummings (Sales Director, Global Ingredient International), Warren Cohen (VP Sales, Ingredients), Koji Tomita (Ambassador of Japan to the U.S.), and Dale Tipple (Vice President and Managing Director, International Consumer)



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Blue Diamond Almond Growers Sustain Family Farms, Feed Consumers Worldwide

By CalChamber - March 9, 2022

This article is a part of a series of profiles of CalChamber member companies that are contributing to the state's economic strength and ability to stay competitive in a global economy. Company leaders look both to their history and what's ahead. Visit www.calchamber.com/californiaatwork to learn more about this series and read future profiles.

Blue Diamond Growers is a grower-owned cooperative that provides financial returns and stability to almond grower members while expanding markets and opening opportunities for future generations. The cooperative ships products and ingredients to all 50 states and more than 100 countries around the world.

Sustaining Family Farms for More Than 100 Years

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USDA Trade Mission

While on the USDA Trade Mission to UAE, *Blue Diamond* visited Lulu, a large supermarket chain in the Middle East. They were promoting products from California. ♦



Left to right is Karen Ross – Sec. of Calif. Dept. of Food & Ag, Daniel Whitley – Administrator of FAS/USDA, Meghan Gregonis – U.S. Consul General for Dubai, and USDA mascot for U.S. promotions in the UAE.



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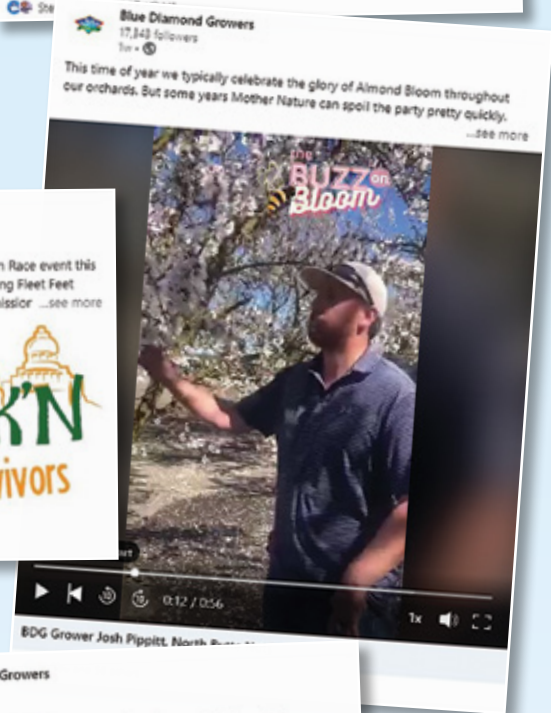
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#WeAreBlueDiamond Social Media Activity



This month, *Blue Diamond* celebrated some of the non-profits we support through our Community Giving program. We heard some educational bits from some of you, our growers in our “Buzz on Bloom” series. Many of our growers and team members partook in “Shamrock’n” a sponsored walk/run held in Sacramento whose proceeds support cancer survivors. BDG leaders extended a big “thank you” to team members for Employee Appreciation Day.





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Creamy Lemon Spring Vegetable Pasta

Prep Time: 30 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes Difficulty: Medium Servings: 5

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small shallot minced
- 12 asparagus spears cut into 1-inch pieces woody ends discarded
- 1 (14 oz) can quartered artichoke hearts drained
- 3 cups fresh spinach leaves
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- ¾ cup frozen peas
- 8 ounces whole wheat farfalle pasta or pasta of your choice (gluten-free is fine)
- 2 tablespoons butter or vegan butter
- 2 tablespoons flour (can use gluten-free flour)
- 2 cups *Almond Breeze* Almondmilk Original Unsweetened
- Zest of 1 large lemon
- Juice of 1 large lemon
- 4 lemon slices
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- Parmesan cheese, vegan Parmesan cheese, or nutritional yeast for garnish

Directions

1. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the shallot, asparagus pieces, artichoke hearts, spinach, garlic, and frozen peas. Cook until vegetables are tender and spinach is wilted, about 5 minutes. Pour the vegetables into a large bowl and set aside while you cook the pasta and sauce. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt generously. Cook pasta according to package instructions.
2. While the pasta is cooking, make the creamy lemon sauce. Place the large skillet you used to cook the vegetables back on the stove and melt the butter. Whisk in the flour, whisking until you don't have any clumps. Slowly whisk in the almondmilk, about ½ cup at a time, whisking vigorously. Add the lemon zest and keep whisking until the sauce comes to a boil. Reduce heat to low and whisk occasionally until the sauce thickens. Add in the lemon juice and sliced lemons. Season the sauce with salt and black pepper, to taste.
3. Drain the pasta and add it to the thickened lemon sauce. Stir in the cooked vegetables and stir until the pasta and vegetables are well coated with the creamy lemon sauce. Remove the lemon slices with tongs or a spoon. Garnish with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese, vegan Parmesan cheese, or nutritional yeast, if using. Serve warm.



Gluten-free Strawberry Shortcakes

Prep Time: 32 minutes Cook Time: 32 minutes Difficulty: Easy Servings: 4



Ingredients

- 2½ cups *Blue Diamond* Almond Flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 6 tablespoons cold butter, cubed
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon ice water
- 1 quart strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup heavy cream, whipped

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment.
2. Combine flour, 1 tablespoon sugar, salt and baking powder in a bowl. Add butter and cut in using 2 knives or a pastry blender until the butter is pea-sized. Add egg and egg white to flour mixture and stir with a fork just until combined. Stir in ice water, 1 teaspoon at a time, just until dough forms.
3. Turn dough onto prepared baking sheet and pat into an 8" disk. Sprinkle the top with 1 tablespoon sugar; press lightly. Bake at 350°F for 12 minutes or until set in the middle and browned on the edges. Transfer on parchment from baking sheet to a wire rack. Cool to room temperature.
4. Combine strawberries and the remaining tablespoon sugar in a bowl; let stand 15 minutes. Slice shortcake into 8 wedges. Top each with whipped cream and strawberries. Layer with second piece of shortbread and top with more cream and berries. Serve immediately.

Coming Soon: Elote & Korean BBQ Flavored Almonds!

Blue Diamond is thrilled to launch two exciting new flavors to the snack nut family: Elote and Korean BBQ! Both flavors can be found on the shelves of Walmart this May, then will become available in other stores shortly after.

Elote, (pr. eh-LO-tay) Spanish for “corn cob,” is a Mexican dish where corn on the cob is grilled, brushed in a mayonnaise cream sauce and topped with chili powder, cheese, and lime. It is often sold from food carts in Mexico and is a favorite treat in the Hispanic community. While we are always working to delight the taste buds of all generations and communities, we’re especially excited about the release of Elote because the awareness of this trending flavor is highest amongst the Hispanic community, Millennials, and Generation Z.

“45% of U.S. consumers want more Mexican and Latin flavors made available in their favorite snacks.”

*Savory Snacking Flavors Global Survey
– U.S. Source: McCormick; 2022*

The idea for the Elote flavor came from the creative mind of Dionisius Gunadi, a Blue Diamond intern who serves on the Innovation team with Jennifer Eastman and Amrita Mann. After he came up with the idea, he worked with our seasoning vendors to create the seasoning. He then seasoned the almonds in the lab and led sensory evaluations to come up with the best flavors to move forward. Dionisius is also a current UC Davis student, and we are grateful for his amazing work on developing this delicious flavor.

Korean style barbecue (also known as gogi gui) is a method of grilling meats on a grill that is inlaid right into the dining table. The meat could be marinated in either a sweet or savory sauce and is cooked in front of customers on the table grill. And since “65% of consumers are interested in trying new cultural foods at home” (Study Finds Source: OnePoll; 2020), we’re proud to say that Korean BBQ boasts a fantastic, flavorful kick of smoky, sweet, and spicy. Along with that, Korean BBQ’s popularity is spiking as it is now one of the top ten flavors consumers crave. ♦

66%

ELOTE FLAVORED NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES INCREASED \$67. FROM 2020 TO 2021 WITHIN THE U.S.

Global New Products Database
Source: Mintel, 2022

KETOGENIC FRIENDLY
NET CARBS 1g PER 1/2 OZ SERVING

Once known as a comfort food, Elote is quickly growing into a well-known flavor.
AdAge
Source: Dotdashner, 2021

Awareness is highest among Hispanic consumers, Gen Z, and Millennials.
Nation's Restaurant News
Source: Dotdashner, 2020

TOP 10

KOREAN BBQ IS AMONG THE TOP 10 FOODS THAT CONSUMERS ARE CRAVING!

Clemens Food Service Group
Source: Dotdashner, 2021

KETOGENIC FRIENDLY
NET CARBS 1g PER 1/2 OZ SERVING

Consumers love the balance of sweetness, salt, spices, and smoke, and are actively looking for interesting ethnic-inspired snacks.
Seeing The World Through Flavor
Source: Food Business News, 2022

American consumers are demanding more international variety when it comes to their snacks and Korean flavors are becoming even more mainstream.
Food Trends For 2021: Korean Flavors Go Mainstream
Source: Forbes, 2020



NEW!

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OF U.S. CONSUMERS WANT
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FLAVORS MADE AVAILABLE
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Savory Snacking Flavors Global Survey - U.S.
Source: McCormick, 2022



“ 31% of U.S. consumers
regularly eat
Latin-inspired cuisines.

Trending Flavors & Ingredients
Source: T. Hasegawa Flavor Flash, 2022

“ Diversifying consumer palates are
driving snack innovation, and
globally inspired flavor profiles and
ingredients are trending.

Global Flavors Drive Snacking Trends
Source: Food Business News, 2021

“ Spicy and sweet heat
inspired global cuisines are
growing in popularity.

Food Trends & Flavor Fads for 2022
Source: SideChef, 2021

NEW!

**LAUNCHING
MAY 2022**



INTRODUCING KOREAN BBQ!

A KOREAN KICK OF SMOKY, SWEET & SPICY.

65%

OF CONSUMERS ARE
INTERESTED IN TRYING NEW
CULTURAL FOODS AT HOME.

Study Finds
Source: OnePoll, 2020



“ Flavor is the most important factor when
choosing a snack, and nearly half of consumers
like to experiment with new snack flavors.

Trending Flavors & Ingredients in Snacks - U.S.
Source: Mintel, 2020

“ One in every seven new products
developed around the world is
BBQ-focused.

NPD Growth Curve Report
Source: Innova Market Insights, 2021

“ 38% of consumers want more Global
BBQ flavors made available in their
favorite snacks.

Savory Snacking Flavors Global Survey - U.S.
Source: McCormick, 2022

BLUE DIAMOND GROWERS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION GOLF SCRAMBLE



Benefiting the  blue
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MAY 16, 2022

Brookside Country Club
3603 St. Andrews Dr.
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9:30am Shotgun Start

Registration is limited to 152 golfers and based on a first-come, first-serve basis and due by April 29th

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Supreme Sponsor \$3,500 (1 available) — includes 8 golfers (2 teams), the option to have a *Blue Diamond* golf pro on one team, 3 hole sponsor signs, dedicated logo banner at event and in *Almond Facts Magazine*, social media posts, 20 raffle tickets, 16 drink tickets, 8 mulligans

Nonpareil Sponsor \$1,750 — includes 4 golfers (1 team), 1 hole sponsor sign, logo at event and in *Almond Facts Magazine*, 10 raffle tickets, 8 drink tickets, 4 mulligans

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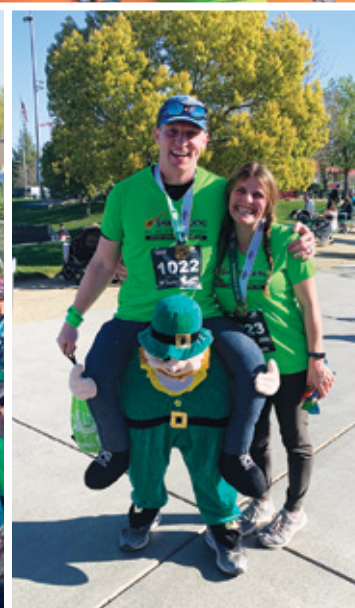
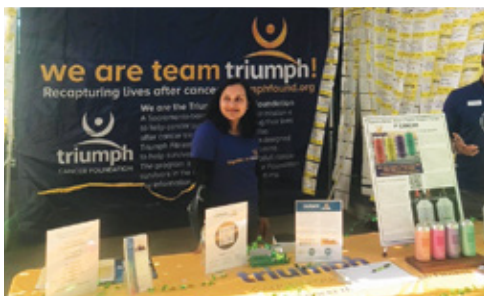
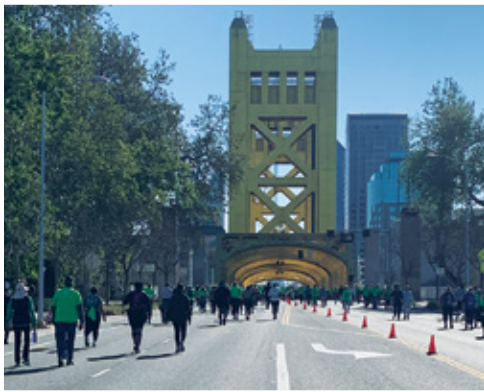


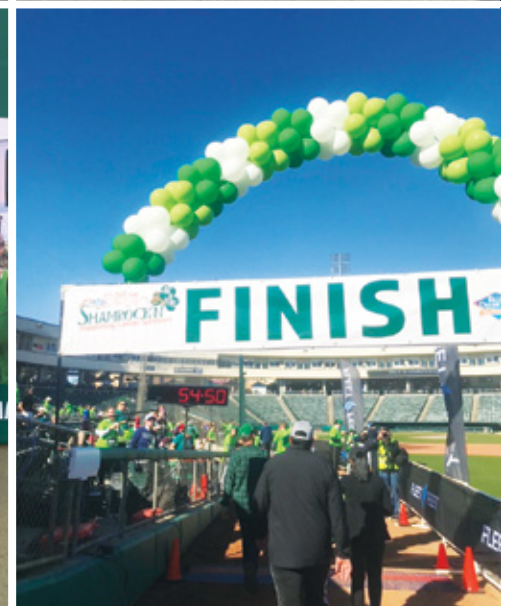
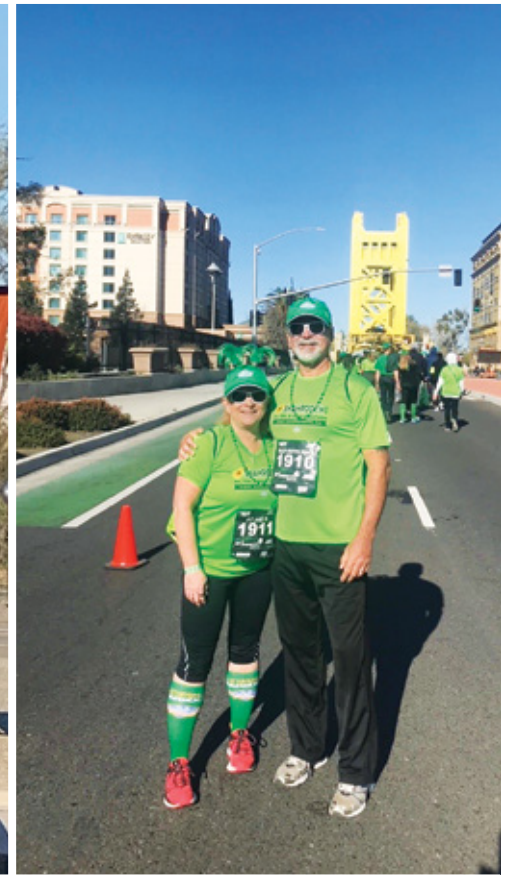
KC Stone had 38 growers in attendance at an Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program (OSIP) Workshop in George Te Velde's Barn in Escalon. ♦



St. Patrick's Day Half Marathon, Shamrock'n, Returns to Sacramento!

After a two-year break due to the pandemic, *Blue Diamond* was deeply proud to, once again, act as the sponsor of Shamrock'n Half Marathon event. Dozens of *Blue Diamond* team members, growers, field staff, and friends of *Blue Diamond* gathered on March 12 and 13 to either run the race, hand out almonds, or cheer on the runners as they passed through "Blue Diamond Alley," the stretch of the run that leads them through the streets of our Sacramento site. All proceeds from the run went to support Triumph Cancer Foundation, a nonprofit that assists cancer survivors in reclaiming their health through physical fitness. Thank you to all who volunteered. Even Dinger, the Sacramento River Cats mascot, stopped by to grab some almonds! We hope you enjoy some highlights from the event and seeing how much fun everyone had, all for a great cause. ♦





Advocacy Report from Almond Alliance

Long before the invasion of Ukraine, the agricultural community of the United States had been bearing the burden of a broken supply chain.

The consumer and many in the agricultural community know full well how long it's taking to export and receive certain orders. For many, the tracking number for their package is traced to a dot floating in the Pacific.

One of the most significant economic impacts on American farmers, small businesses, truckers, and America's economic standing globally is our export crisis.

A recent survey of agricultural exporters by the national Ag Trade Coalition found that lost sales ranged from \$120,000 for the smallest company, up to as much as \$65 million, and 85% said sales were lost as a result of not being able to deliver within the contracted time frame.

To name a few, citrus, pork, dairy, rice, and almonds have experienced tremendous disruption and loss. The University of California, Davis, found that California agriculture lost \$2.1 billion in export in five months in 2021.

The export crisis stems from a series of contributing factors:

- Undersized and outdated infrastructure unable to keep up with the COVID spike of 20% increase in imported goods. According to an October of 2021 study by the World Bank and **IHS Markit**, of 351 container ports around the globe, Los Angeles was ranked 328, and the port of Long Beach at 333 for efficiency and modernity. Ships that used to take 15 days to traverse the Pacific and unload, now take 50 days, making turning around with empty containers more financially attractive than taking the extra time to pick up a load of American exports.
- Box Rules permit intermodal equipment providers (IEP) and ocean carriers to restrict which IEP's equipment may be used to transport containers. A trucker must use the ocean carrier's designated intermodal equipment

provider's chassis, or they cannot pick up a shipment or move an empty. Truckers constantly must go back and forth to switch chassis to pick up a load or an empty container, artificially contributing to the already short supply of chassis.

- Gross Vehicle Weights restrictions vary from state to state, particularly coming into port in California. These rules create massive inefficiencies, as trucks inbound from out of state with heavier loads must stop and break down the load onto smaller trucks to meet California's truck weight standards. Although increased to 88,000 pounds from 80,000 by Governor Gavin Newsom, it's still limiting the movement of product and increasing freight costs compared to the Pacific Northwest, where truck weights of 105,500 pounds are allowed. Combined with a trucker shortage of about 90,000, we're again undersized and out-of-date.
- The White House reported that detention and demurrage fees had increased 50% over just one financial quarter to \$2.2 billion.

State and Federal Legislators continue scrambling to figure out what can be done.

With funding from the USDA and partnership from CDFA, the Port of Oakland, the nation's largest agricultural export port, is working to alleviate the congestion and entice ocean carriers to return service. For example, the Port of Oakland has set up a 25-acre empty yard where containers are made available for rapid access by exporters.

In Congress, the bipartisan Ocean Shipping Reform Act carried by Rep. Garamendi and Rep. Johnson passed the House, and with the help of Sen. Klobuchar and Sen. Thune, it is working its way through the Senate.

While the legislation is still being refined to address box rules, it also empowers the Federal Maritime Commission to hold foreign carriers accountable for refusing exports. The Ocean Shipping Reform Act would:

- Prohibit ocean carriers from unreasonably declining opportunities for U.S. exports.
- Promote transparency by requiring ocean common carriers to report to the FMC each quarter on total import/export tonnage and twenty-foot equivalent units (loaded/empty) per vessel that makes port in the United States.
- Authorize the FMC to self-initiate investigations of ocean common carrier's business practices and apply enforcement measures, as appropriate.
- Establish new authority for the FMC to register shipping exchanges to improve the negotiation of service contracts.

In the California State Legislature, Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry introduced AB 2406 to prohibit intermodal marine

equipment providers or intermodal marine terminal operators from imposing per diem, detention, demurrage, extending dwell or congestion charges under certain circumstances that are not within the control of the importer, exporter, or trucker.

The ag community is not facing a supply problem or a demand problem. It's a leadership problem.

The attention provided by the state and federal administrations is appreciated, but it's treating symptoms, not the disease. We must explore and exercise the full authority of the United States and the State of California to find whatever recourse or incentive available to hold carriers to contracts.

The California farmer is heading into what might be the most expensive year of farming in their lifetime. The cost of water is on the rise heading into the third year of reduced water allocations and drought. The fuel cost is equally increasing, the irregularity and increased cost of critical fertilizer and plant health products are exacerbated by the war in Ukraine.

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On any product sold but not delivered, payments were never received. The 2022 cash flow is tight, and still, the trees continue to grow, and the 2022 crop will be harvested soon. American farmers, workers, small businesses, truckers, and everyone along the way can't continue this way forever.

As an ag community, we are headed into tough times. So much of the supply chain crisis seems out of our control. Still, the American ag community is resilient, sophisticated, and adaptable. While we continue to call for leadership to defend the American worker, farmer, small business, and position in the world, it is apparent we cannot leave this up to the government alone to solve.

Like everything else on the farm, we're going to have to solve this problem for ourselves. At the Almond Alliance, we continue to be a resounding voice in Washington and Sacramento, elevating the reality of the crisis and advocating for real solutions, not just temporary relief.

We continue to work with our partners and our members on the ground to explore, identify, and create workable options and find technical and financial resources to keep our farmers farming. ♦



Aubrey Bettencourt,
President/
CEO,
Almond
Alliance



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SUSTAINABLY SPEAKING, WITH DR. DAN

Why Sustainability at *Blue Diamond*? Sales.

For quite a while now, *Blue Diamond* has been explaining to members that our efforts at creating a sustainability program are driven by our customers. We've explained that the number of big customers asking pointed questions about our sustainability efforts has been increasing each year. Yet, I know that some members equate sustainability with a brand of politics and suspect that instead of selling almonds, we're "selling out." I wanted to use this column to assure members that far from "selling out," we're absolutely focused on sales for their benefit when we create sustainability programs.

I've been at *Blue Diamond* for nearly 11 months as of writing this article. In that time, the number of requests from customers, our sales partners, or our sales staff for sustainability data or presentation materials has been running about a rate of one every 10 days. And the rate is accelerating. Sometimes it takes multiple days to complete the data request from a customer, while others are more quickly completed. Why are these customers putting effort into this?

For some customers, the process is defensive — they don't want to be sourcing from suppliers that may give them a "black eye" if a story hits the news about environmental abuses. That could negatively impact their sales by turning consumers away from purchasing. Some customers are motivated by climate change and related concerns that one could be characterize as political.

“From 2013–2018 sales data showed that while the share of market for sustainably marketed products was less than 17%, these products were responsible for 50% of all market growth during the same period.”

But for many customers, sustainability is a positive sales opportunity. I've been following research on consumer interest in sustainability since 2005. In the early days of tracking consumer interest, it was clear that a subset of consumers in the U.S. were interested in sustainability, but most were not interested in paying extra for it. But since 2005, the Millennial generation has emerged into adulthood and even Generation Z behind them is entering the workforce. These generations have altered the narrative. A majority of consumers now say they are interested in sustainability, not a subset. The younger generations, in particular, seek out brands built entirely around sustainability and are willing to pay extra for these brands. The perception is that they are thereby investing in health, the environment, and community development, though one could also argue that they are investing in status symbols. Either way, from 2013-2018 sales data showed that while the share of market for sustainably



marketed products was less than 17%, these products were responsible for 50% of all market growth during the same period. That means the remaining 83% of products had little or no growth in sales. In early March, we met with a European partner whose market research identified sustainability as one of three large trends driving product introductions in that market. There is a lot of interest in sustainability in the marketplace. It is too big to ignore.

I think of our investment in sustainability similarly to introducing a new flavor of snack almonds. *Blue Diamond* launched Smokehouse® almonds way back in 1949. I love Smokehouse® almonds and so do many other folks. But that didn't stop *Blue Diamond* from introducing Wasabi and Soy Sauce flavored almonds in 2005. Today, that flavor is almost as popular as Smokehouse® and is a significant sales driver for our snack nuts business. I doubt there is a member who is upset that we added this bold flavor to our product portfolio instead of insisting that our consumers stick with the classics. The recent introduction of XTREMES™ takes spicy flavors to yet another level in the pursuit of consumer dollars for our members. We are pursuing the contemporary interests of consumers as we seek to maximize returns for our members.

True, flavoring nuts is not the same as engaging our members in their on-farm practices; there is more involved here. Nor are spicy flavors as politicized as sustainability issues. But the market reality is...a reality. I've told my colleagues at *Blue Diamond* that if sustainability can't help drive sales, then I'm not doing my job. That is our focus for sustainability at *Blue Diamond*. Sales, not selling out. ♦



Dr. Dan Sonke,
Director of
Sustainability,
Blue Diamond
Growers



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GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Blue Diamond Moving Despite Challenges

Over the last two years, ports and transportation have continued to face congestion and delays globally, leading to many almond exporters facing the difficult task of processing and shipping their crops. The rolling delays of shipments, equipment availability to load, chassis available to move containers, and ongoing driver shortages have led to warehousing capacity reaching all-time highs. Several factors have contributed to the delays that continue to place pressure on Global Logistics:

- In 2020, increased consumer spending and a labor shortage at ports and driver shortage created a backlog of cargo awaiting shipment.
- The Alliance, a group of steamships exiting the Port of Oakland, and the entry of new ocean carriers with larger ships have resulted in fewer options for export.
- Ocean carriers significantly reduced or canceled volume commitments to all exporters to reduce the volume on ships.
- Ocean carriers continue to focus on profit by returning empties to more profitable regions for reloading and import back. For example, in January of this year, empty containers were moved back to Asia by the steamships off the West Coast, causing further constraints and availability challenges.
- Chassis availability has reached capacity as delays in shipping and unloading have reached capacity, leading to a lack of wheels to move containers once loaded for trucks.

The delays in shipments, securing vessel space, and warehouse networks reaching all-time highs have resulted in charges with detention on what is already in some cases a 200% – 300% increase in transportation rates over prior years. In addition, many exporters have faced challenges securing vessel shipments regardless of being willing to pay the prices. Lastly, carrier systems automatically generate

penalties requiring many hours of research to file claims. These financial burdens have weighted many handlers and growers with increasing logistics costs in times of high fuel prices.

The power of *Blue Diamond Growers* has never been more present than amid these dynamic and challenging times. Like others in the industry, we have faced challenges such as delays, administratively burdensome booking processes, and increased rates. The strength of the cooperative has helped us to implement new processes to improve our performance and distribute our growers' almonds globally:

- Booking ahead has allowed us to remain ahead and move our containers when others have not located container space on ships or equipment to load out.
- Having a trusted partner in Devine Intermodal, who has been a carrier for *Blue Diamond Growers* for over 30 years, is integrated into our trucking operations and secures our equipment.
- Our direct contractual relationships with our Ocean Carriers and access to the global support desk provide a competitive advantage.
- Forward-thinking with capital for our California Network infrastructure with warehouses in Salida, Sacramento, Oakdale, and our dedicated third-party warehouse allows us to support shipment delays without disrupting our supply chain.



While we face many challenges in the coming year, your *Blue Diamond* team continues to find new and innovative ways to move our shipments. Our shipments have experienced delays of weeks, but ultimately, we are shipping out on vessels. Our California network allows us to hold, book, and secure capacity, while adjusting for the changes seen daily.

Finally, our Global Supply Chain and Operations team has been hard at work to ensure we deliver the benefits of *Blue Diamond* almonds globally. ♦



Steve Schult,
VP Global
Supply Chain,
Blue Diamond
Growers

TIME TO CONSIDER



Bacterial Blast



Bacterial Canker

Orchard Care This Spring

I saw bacterial blast-like symptoms on Independence blossoms in March, as well as bacterial canker-like symptoms on trees. They may have had an incompatibility issue between the Independence scion and Krymsk rootstock. Bacterial canker, blossom, and bud blast are all caused by a plant-pathogenic bacterium called *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *syringae* that is usually found living on the surface of healthy plants. *Pseudomonas syringae* lives most of the time as an “omnipresent epiphyte,” always present on the surface of plants, living happily, just waiting for certain environmental conditions (cold and wet) that allow it to enter the plant, multiply, and build to high enough populations within the tree to trigger a disease (bacterial blast or canker). Relatively little is known about blossom and leaf bacterial blast, but we do know that cold wet weather can be important predisposing factors that can worsen the disease.

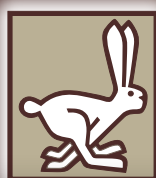
The picture of “blasted” blossoms are from trees growing in sandy soils in an orchard near Manteca. We had some cold temperatures in late February early March that could have created small wounds that allowed the bacteria to enter leaves and blossoms. Bacterial blast is usually more severe in the lower canopy of the tree and in the lower part of an orchard. Blast is usually more severe on earlier blooming varieties, but that may be because earlier blooming varieties tend to be in bloom when temperatures are cooler. Aldrich and Fritz are typically less affected than Nonpareil, Independence, or Carmel. Bacterial blossom blast has been significantly reduced in trials where trees were protected against frost by running water or wind machines. Harley English, a UC Davis professor in the 1980s, conducted a series of experiments on bacterial blossom blast. Cut blossoming shoots of almond that were subjected to 24.8°F (-4°C) for two hours were significantly more susceptible to blast than shoots that were not subjected to the two-hour frost treatment. In another

experiment, cut leafing out shoots were sprayed with "ice-nucleating" (the ability to catalyze the formation of ice) *Pseudomonas syringae* before being subjected to freezing temperatures. Other shoots were also inoculated but not chilled. Damage to leaf clusters were significantly greater in shoots that had been inoculated and chilled, confirming the interaction between ice-nucleating bacteria and freezing temperatures with bacterial blast.

Trees growing in sandy soils with high ring nematode populations and low nutrient value, typically flood irrigated with district water, appear to be the most susceptible to bacterial canker. Bacterial canker control usually includes preplant fumigation for ring nematode, proper rootstock selection, proper irrigation and nutrition (especially nitrogen and perhaps calcium and iron), and post plant nematicide treatments (less successful — Movento and VelumOne).

Conversion to drip irrigation systems have in general improved bacterial canker incidence. Roger Duncan, UC Farm Advisor in Stanislaus County, has shown Viking and Lovell rootstocks to be more tolerant than peach-almond hybrids (Hansen, Nickels, and Brights) and Nemaguard. Duncan also cooperated with research that showed copper sprays may also play an important role at reducing bacterial populations. Silicone-based surfactants may help deliver bactericides into previous inaccessible leaf surfaces. There is limited evidence that defoliating leaves in the fall with zinc or urea may improve bacterial canker symptoms.

We wonder if freezing temperatures in the fall, before trees were completely dormant, may contribute to early bud infections, because sometimes dormant buds appear to be killed even before bloom. I'm guessing that frost events and rainfall may allow the bacterium to enter the plant early



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and reach high enough populations to cause the canker and blast symptoms we observed this spring. Several farm advisors and myself are working with Dr. Florent Trouillas to more fully understand bud colonization in the winter by *Pseudomonas syringae*.

Don't get caught by surprise with freezing temperatures in April! I remember a damaging frost on Easter Sunday (mid-April) more than a decade ago. Young nuts are very susceptible to freezing conditions. As almond flowers bloom and small nuts form, they are more susceptible to frost damage. The amount of damage is dependent on the lowest temperatures received and the duration of the freeze. In the small nut stage, Nonpareil can have 25% loss with 29°F for 30 minutes, 50% loss with 28°F for 30 minutes, and 100% loss with 27°F or less for 30 minutes. A one-degree variation in temperature can mean the difference between slight damage and total loss. Irrigation and mowing down winter weeds can increase orchard temperatures. Freezing temperatures followed by warm weather can cause more damage than a frost followed by cold weather as the trees can acclimate to the cold. Irrigating dry soil a few days prior to a frost may cool daytime temperatures and increase heat storage in the

soil, enhancing frost protection. See Chapter 23 in our Almond Production Manual, University of California publication 3364 available in our county offices and at anrcatalog.ucanr.edu.

A pressure chamber is especially useful in early spring to determine tree water status and when irrigation should begin. On a wet-year growers can often skip an irrigation or two because of the added water in the soil profile. Unfortunately, most growers are starting this season with a dry profile. Dr. Bruce Lampinen, our Almond Specialist at UC Davis, has written a nice article "Using Midday Stem Water Potential to Refine Irrigation Scheduling in Almond" that can be found at the Fruit and Nut Research and Information Center fruitsandnuts.ucdavis.edu. This document provides baseline stem water potential values for fully watered trees at various temperatures and % relative humidity. For example, if the temperature is 80°F and the relative humidity is 20%, the baseline would be -7.5 bars. You should allow the midday stem water potential to fall one to two bars below the baseline (-9.5 to -10.5 bars) before beginning irrigation to assure that you are not over-irrigating. The pressure chamber will also allow you to more accurately monitor tree stress in the absence of adequate water.

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Crop evapotranspiration (ET_c) is the sum of transpiration from leaves, and evaporation from soil and is referred to as the crop water requirement, or orchard water requirement. In Dr. David Goldhamer's irrigation scheduling chapter, in our UC Almond Production Manual #3364, ET_o from April 1–15 is 1.4 inches (31.2 gallons/tree/day) and ET_o from April 16–30 is 1.6 inches (34.2 gallons/tree/day) while ET_c from April 30 is 4.8 total inches. The amount of water stored in the soil depends on rainfall intensity, duration, and soil water holding capacity, but generally it is between 50–70% of total winter rainfall. Most of the soils that I have observed this winter are dry, although in some cases quite a bit of water has been applied for frost protection.

Because of the prolonged drought, most of our reservoirs are below average, and several districts may reduce allocations this year. Research has shown that season long limited irrigation is better than fully irrigating at the start of the season and then reducing water later in the season. If only 60% of your annual irrigation water is available, then you should apply 60% of your normally applied water at each irrigation throughout the year. Removing crop or heavy pruning does not reduce water use, and heavy pruning can increase shoot growth and leaf area and actually increase water use later.

The University has produced a useful publication for "Drought management for California Almonds" at anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8515.pdf. One year of severe water stress can result in two years of yield reduction, even if full irrigation is restored in the second year. This is because flower bud differentiation for next year's bloom occurs around harvest time, and fewer flower buds will differentiate under water stress. As a result, crop

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IN YOUR ORCHARD


loss in the water stressed blocks will be mostly due to lower kernel weight the first year, and due to less nuts produced in the second year. Almond trees are very resilient and have survived an entire season with just eight inches of water for the entire season. But, two years of yield loss will result even with a return to normal irrigation the second year. Try to irrigate in the evenings and at night, this will save water loss to evaporation. Short irrigation sets of less than six hours lose more water by evaporation than longer sets. Consider limiting water use of

non-crop plants such as cover crops or weeds in the alleyways. This is particularly true for sprinkler irrigated orchards.

Nitrogen is the most important element we can apply to our tree fruit crops. Almond growth and productivity depend on the availability and uptake of nitrogen. Most fertilizer recommendations are based on making nitrogen available to our trees so that a nitrogen shortage does not limit tree growth or productivity. Unfortunately, a recent report commissioned by the State

Water Control Board, conducted by a team of UC Davis researchers, has shown that many of our wells are contaminated with excess nitrogen, and that agricultural fertilizers and dairy waste are the most likely source (groundwaternitrate.ucdavis.edu). Efficient nitrogen management will become increasingly important in the future as we collectively try to reduce groundwater contamination while keeping our orchards productive. Nitrogen usage should be based on individual orchard's cropping history (previous yields) and leaf and water analysis to determine nitrogen availability and potential sources.

Almond nuts and shoots use most of the season's nitrogen (80% of annual demand) between bloom and mid-June. Dr. Brown's group at UC Davis recommends delivering fertilizer nitrogen at four different timings and amounts through the season — February or March (20% of total annual nitrogen input), April (30%), June (30%) and September–October (20%). Nitrogen use efficiency has increased dramatically (75–85%) in Dr. Brown's studies where nitrogen is applied at the time of peak tree demand and uptake. I know many growers that "spoon feed" their trees with small injections of nitrogen and other liquid fertilizers into their irrigation systems. I would prefer to see you add a little bit of nitrogen with every irrigation from March to June, rather than applying large doses periodically through the season (we prefer three small meals a day



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over one big one). A best management guideline for nitrogen was recently published and can be found at: almonds.com/almond-industry/orchard-management/soil-health-and-nutrients/nutrient-management.

Peach Twig Borer (PTB) pheromone traps should be placed in orchards, one per 20 acres by March 20 in the southern San Joaquin Valley (SJV) and by April 1st in the Sacramento and northern SJV. Hang traps six to seven feet high in the northern quadrant of the tree, one to three feet from the outer canopy. Monitor twice a week; replace pheromone caps at the interval recommended by the manufacturer and trap bottoms after 100 moths have been counted and removed. If shoot strike monitoring indicates treatment is necessary, use trap catches and degree days to time a May spray. Optimum timing for first generation larvae (the May spray) is between 400 and 500 degree-days after the first male is trapped in April when using spinosad (Entrust, Success), spinetoram (Delegate), or the organophosphates. When using insect growth regulators (IGRs) like Intrepid, make the application at 300–400 degree-days. Accumulate degree-days for peach twig borer using a lower threshold of 50°F and an upper threshold of 88°F. See calculating degree days at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu looking under almond and then peach twig borer.

Do not allow weeds to exceed four to five inches in height before treating or mowing. Mowing down winter weeds early can increase orchard temperatures. Weeds are more difficult to control chemically when more debris is left on the orchard floor. There are documented reports of weed resistance developing to certain herbicides. The UCIPM website has charts that show which weeds are controlled by what herbicides, and an excellent weed photo gallery includes many weed species commonly found in California for easy reference www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.

Stay Safe and Good Luck!



**Brent Holtz, Ph.D.,
Orchard Systems Advisor,
University of California
Cooperative Extension
in San Joaquin County
baholtz@ucanr.edu**





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Contact (209) 358-1759

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- John Deere low profile 5100ML with exact cab tractor
- 12' V Risimo flail mower
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