



almond facts

NEWS, VIEWS, AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

JULY–AUGUST 2022



Key Factors to Consider this Harvest Season

Tips for Planting Cover Crop

Regenerative Ag and You

BDG Foundation Introduces 2022 Scholarship Recipients

2022 Annual Meeting

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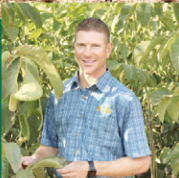


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Seeds for Bees cover crop closes Aug 31.

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22 Meet the *Blue Diamond Growers* Foundation Scholarship Recipients

The *Blue Diamond Growers* Foundation selected 25 young people to receive a scholarship for the 2022–2023 academic year. The Foundation assists students who are passionate about making a difference in their communities and influencing the future of agriculture.

30 Regenerative Agriculture and *Blue Diamond Growers*

Blue Diamond’s Director of Sustainability, Dan Sonke, shares on the timely topic of regenerative agriculture in his column, “Sustainably Speaking with Dr. Dan.”

34 Project *Apis m.* Discusses Cover Crops

There are several tips and tricks for planning and planting cover crop to consider adopting this season. If you haven’t yet, remember to get involved with Project *Apis m.’s* “Seeds for Bees” program.

ON THE COVER:

Gearing up for the harvest season! And tips and tricks for cover crops



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Almond Facts, established in 1922, is published bimonthly by *Blue Diamond Growers*, 1802 C Street, Sacramento, California 95811. Address all correspondence to the Editor, *Almond Facts*, P.O. Box 1768, Sacramento, California 95812. Advertising subscription rates provided upon request.

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Mark Jansen
President & CEO



At the recent District Meetings held throughout the Central Valley, I appreciated the opportunity to connect with many of you in-person. You shared the challenges you are facing with increased production costs, especially in the areas of fuel, fertilizer and pest management. It certainly doesn't help that water costs have also increased while so many were impacted by the February 2022 freeze, particularly in the northern part of the state. I've heard the challenging decisions that many have faced, balancing the needs of their orchards against lower market pricing and reduced yields while enduring rising input costs. Blue Diamond team members recognize that every penny counts!

In times of inflation like these, it's important to appreciate that one of the strengths of our 112-year-old co-op is financial stability. I'm proud that we've been able to consistently provide our growers with competitively advantaged returns when they need it most. In addition to delivering progress payments throughout the year, our growers can take advantage of accelerated or deferred payment options, as well as pre-harvest and stockpile advances. As *Blue Diamond* member-owners, our growers also have access to long and short-term investment programs, tax deductions, and premium payments for delivering exceptional quality almonds.

Our Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program (OSIP) is another source of welcome funding. This year, the co-op paid out \$1.75 million in incentives, an average of over \$3,000 per contract, to reward growers for documenting the sustainable farming practices they've already been doing. As demonstrated through nearly a 50% increase in the number of contracts participating in this program, our growers have truly embraced their role as stewards of the land they farm.

In case you missed it, the Almond Board recently shared a list of additional financial incentive opportunities associated with water and energy efficiency, water and air quality, and habitat creation, available for almond growers. More information on those incentives can be found on ABC's website under Grower Tools.

With the end of the 2021 crop year in sight, we've had an opportunity to reflect on a dynamic season. Following several months of lackluster monthly industry shipments, innovative work by your *Blue Diamond* Team, in partnership with the Almond Alliance of California and others, has produced dramatic increases in shipment performance. As I stated at the District Meetings, it's not that the port issues have necessarily improved, it's more that we have learned to work better within the system to get your almonds to our customers. As a result, it now appears that the industry carryout at the end of 2021/22 marketing year will drop below 800 million pounds, a significant improvement over previous forecasts.

As you've seen, this year's National Statistical Service Objective Estimate for the 2022 California almond crop was 2.6 billion meat pounds. When compared to the May Subjective forecast of 2.8 billion pounds the 200-million-pound difference reflects concerns over water availability during California's continued drought.

The harvest season is now upon us. Fueled by extended runs of hot weather, growers with water and heat-stressed orchards in Fresno and Colusa counties started shaking trees in mid-July. I know many growers throughout the state are seeing nuts on the ground and readying equipment and resources for your busiest time of the year.



I'm pleased to report that our planning efforts are well underway for the 2022 Annual Growers meeting on November 16. We are hopeful that we'll be able to return to an in-person format for this year's meeting and are developing a productive and informative agenda. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Best of luck to you all on a successful harvest! ◆

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark Jansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Mark Jansen
President & CEO

Regional Managers

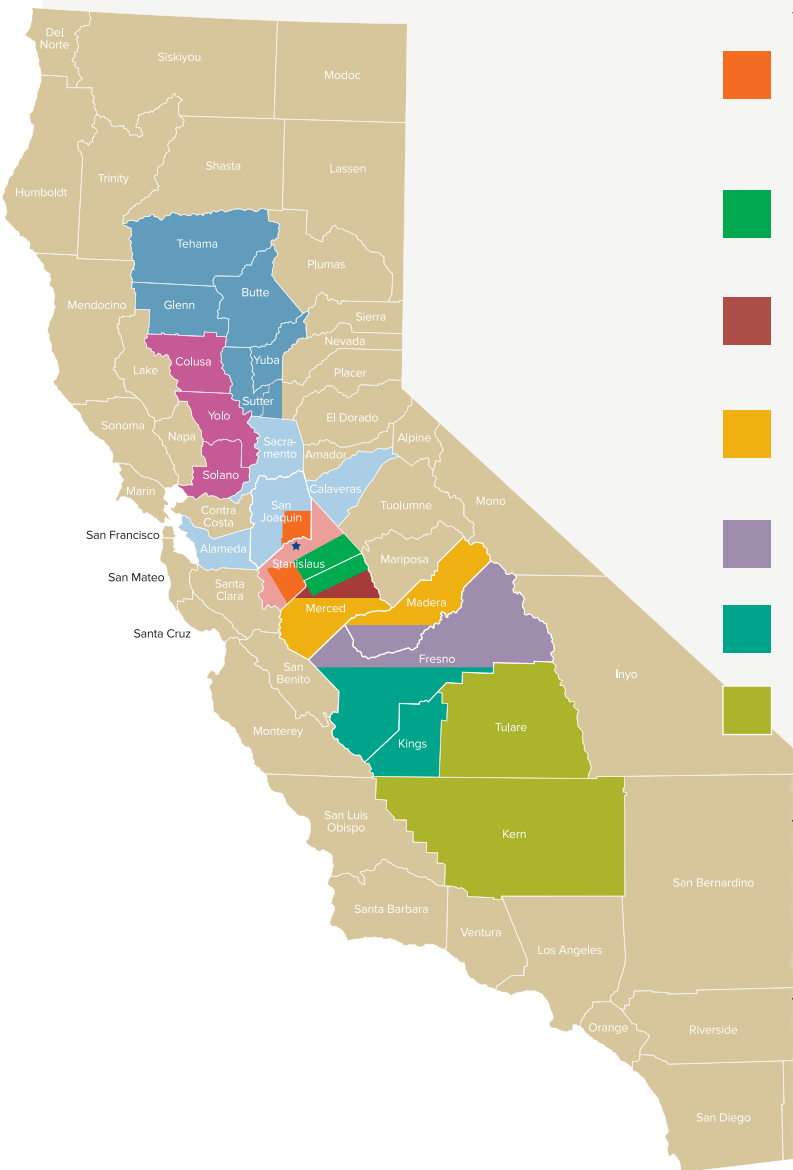


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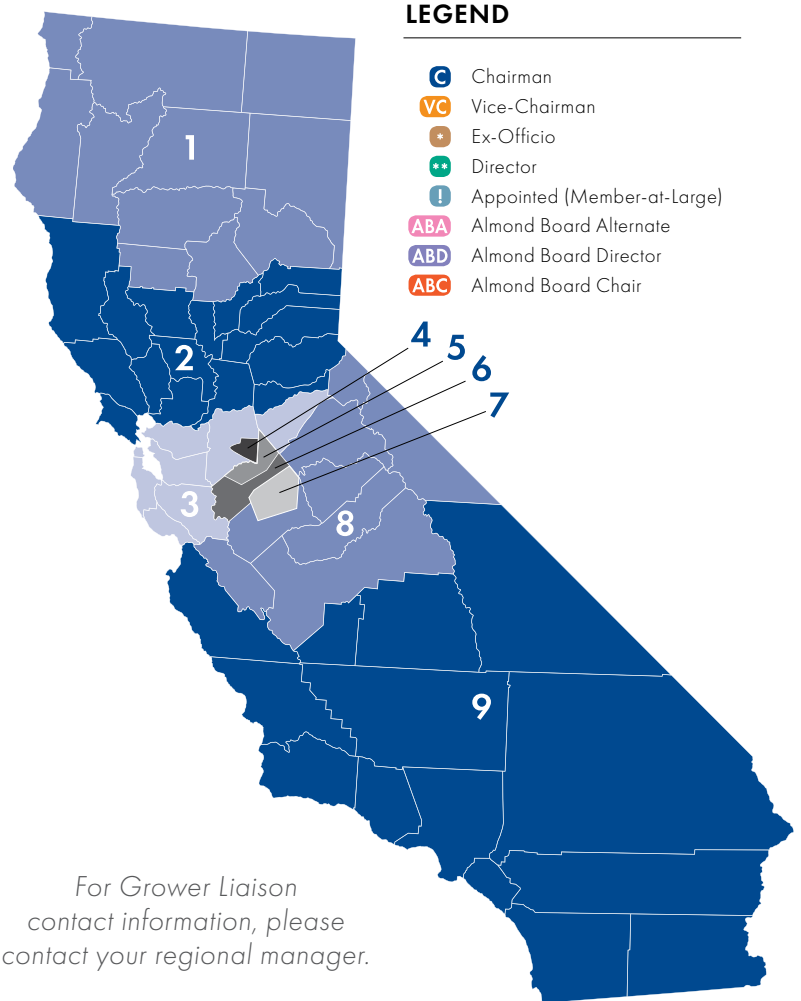
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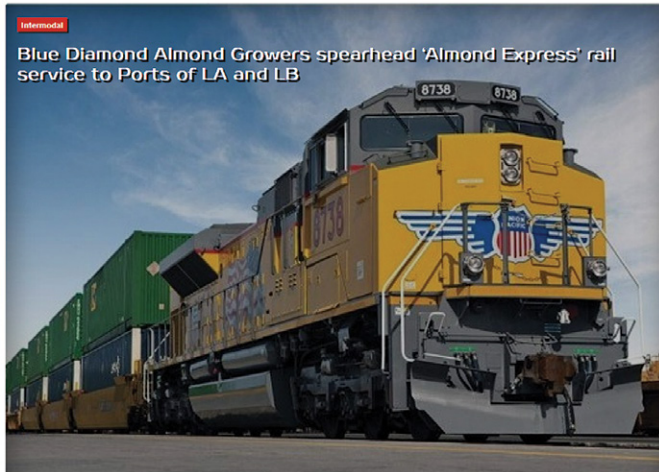
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- **** Director
- !** Appointed (Member-at-Large)
- ABA** Almond Board Alternate
- ABD** Almond Board Director
- ABC** Almond Board Chair

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Blue Diamond Almond Growers Spearhead ‘Almond Express’ Rail Service to Ports of LA and LB

Top Stories



Read the article via the link below or scan the QR code with your smartphone. ◆

ajot.com/insights/full/ai-blue-diamond-almond-growers-spearhead-almond-express-rail-service-to-ports-of-la-and-lb



Special Feature in Progress Magazine

Blue Diamond was featured in the June edition of the local Modesto Chamber of Commerce magazine, *Progress*. The article from Site Director, Dennis Bettencourt highlights the innovative, new flavors currently on shelves near you. Salida also received a shoutout in the Agriculture Day article following the 2022 Leadership Modesto class and onsite tour in June. Blue Diamond is fully committed to ensuring the Salida site continues to maintain a strong presence in the Modesto community. ◆



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator Whitley Kicks Off Philippines Trade Mission

Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator Daniel Whitley visited Manila in July to launch a USDA trade mission to build strong partnerships between the Philippines and the U.S. 29 representatives from U.S. agribusinesses and farm organizations joined him along with 10 state departments of agriculture who wish to explore export opportunities in the Philippines. Warren Cohen, VP International Sales for Global Ingredients represented *Blue Diamond* on this mission. Cohen stated, "Attending the USDA trade shows offers *Blue Diamond* a unique opportunity to meet with key customers in market and create tighter alliances with our friends at the US Foreign Agricultural Service and local government authorities."

"The USDA Philippines trade mission will offer an abundance of opportunities for both the United States and the Philippines," said Whitley. "I'm confident the next few days will produce mutually beneficial results to help expand trade, increase collaboration on key issues impacting agriculture in both our countries, and ultimately strengthen Philippine food security. We have a diverse group of U.S. agribusinesses and industry officials joining us in Manila who can provide reliable, high-quality, and sustainably produced U.S. food and farm products to local buyers."

The Philippines ranks as the eighth-largest export market for U.S. food and agricultural products, averaging \$3.1 billion during the past five years, and we're looking forward to increasing sales and meeting the growing demand from Filipino consumers for U.S. foods." ♦



Left to Right: CDFA Josh Eddy, CDFA Undersecretary Birdsong, Elizabeth Carranza CA Blueberry Commission, USDA FAS Administrator Daniel Whitley, Warren Cohen Blue Diamond Growers and Catherine Stringer CA Fresh Fruit Assoc.

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Blue Diamond Briefings in Washington DC

Blue Diamond hosted congressional and administration briefings on July 18–21. While DC visits have often been done by Blue Diamond before, this was the first time group briefings were conducted, with sessions held for the Senate, House, and the administration. Dr. Dan Sonke, Jeff Smith, and Steve Schult were joined by Alicia Rockwell to give 10-minute presentations demonstrating the cooperative’s innovative approaches to sustainability, product development and global supply chain. Excellent feedback from attendees was provided which encourages Blue Diamond to produce more briefings for congressional staff in the future. Blue Diamond was accompanied by Almond Alliance CEO and President, Aubrey Bettencourt for separate meetings on the Hill and with leaders at USDA. The team focused the conversations on our industry’s accelerated progress in sustainable production and the creative supply chain solutions to support our high export needs. They enjoyed dinner with Congressman Jim Costa and his staff, dinner with Congressman John Garamendi and his staff, and met with many other members of Congress and their staff members for further discussions. ♦



Blue Diamond enjoys dinner with Congressman Garamendi



Dr. Dan Sonke giving a briefing in the Cannon Building (House of Reps)



Jeff Smith briefs on Innovation



Steve Schult briefs on global supply chain solutions



Dr. Dan Sonke briefs on Sustainability



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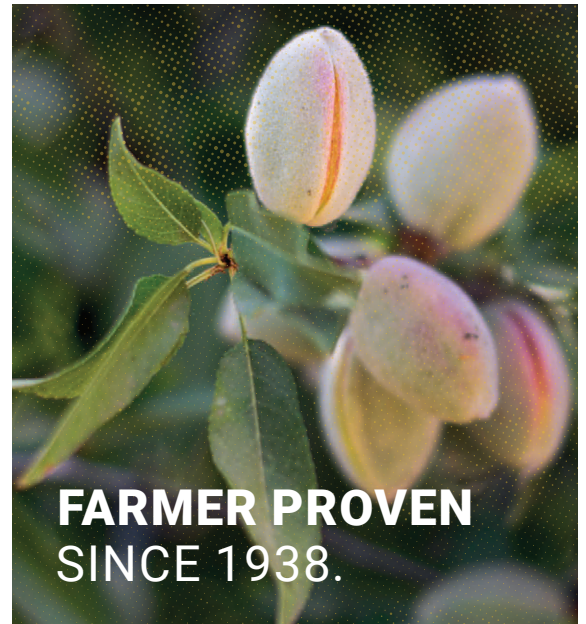
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Catching up at July's District Meetings

In agriculture, each year presents new challenges and once again, almond growers throughout the Central Valley are facing a significant series of trials. Some growers have suffered a varying degree of freeze damage, and many are being impacted by the continuing drought, all while input costs have increased due to global political instability and supply chain challenges.

Over the past year, the *Blue Diamond* team has been busy processing and marketing the 2021 crop and preparing for the 2022 harvest. It was exciting for everyone to be back in person for District meetings from July 12–15 where the team presented the latest information on market conditions and how *Blue Diamond* has tackled this year's challenges on behalf of our grower owners. ♦





“It was a great pleasure having Bob on the board. His understated manner at times belied the wisdom of his insights and contributions, especially in the areas of prudent corporate governance practices and water policy.”

*— Dan Cummings, Chairman of the Board,
Blue Diamond Growers*

Remembering Former Board Director, Robert “Bob” J. Weimer

Robert J. Weimer (November 18, 1945 – July 20, 2022)

Former *Blue Diamond* board director, Bob Weimer passed away on July 20, 2022, at his home in Atwater, California. After earning his Master of Science degree in Plant Pathology from Washington State University he returned to Atwater to work with his family on Weimer Farms, where they grew almonds, walnuts, peaches, and sweet potatoes. Bob also started his own manufacturing business in the 1970s that centered around irrigation.

Dan Cummings, Chairman of the Board for *Blue Diamond*, shared, “It was a great pleasure having Bob on the board. His understated manner at times belied the wisdom of his insights and contributions, especially in the areas of prudent corporate governance practices and water policy.”

Bob served various organizations in his community. He was a past president of the Merced County

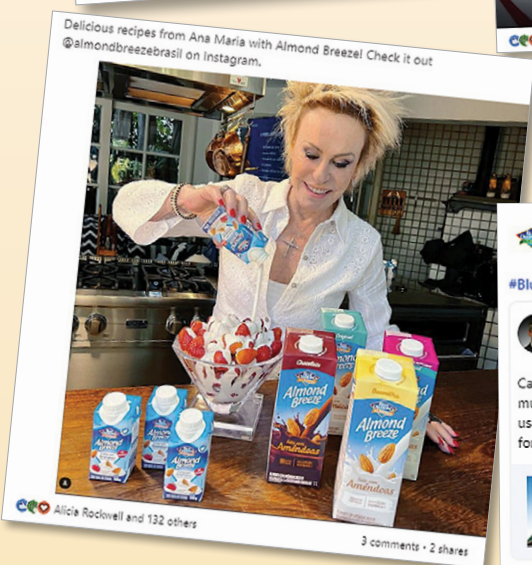
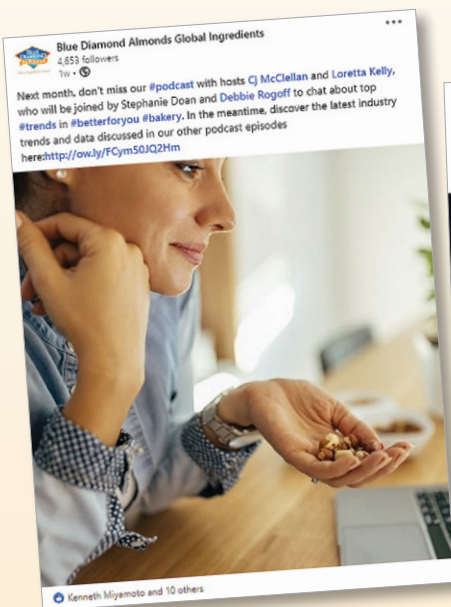
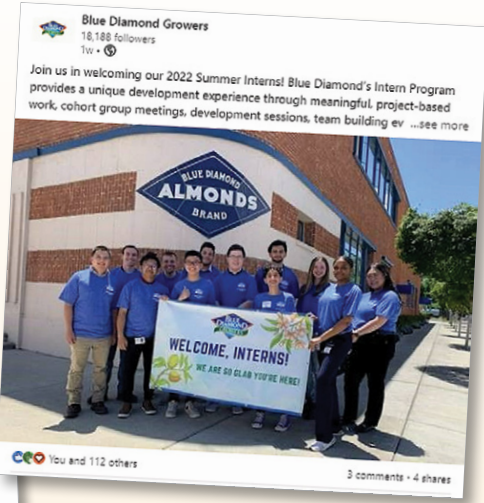
Farm Bureau and participated in several other local agriculture organizations. He was a member of *Blue Diamond Growers* and served as the District 7 board member for over a decade. He was instrumental in the establishment of the *Blue Diamond Growers* Foundation which was designed to provide scholarships to promising students from California’s Central Valley who are attending a college that offers a 4-year degree in Agriculture. He even served as the Foundation’s first president.

According to family, Bob loved and faithfully served all the people in his life. He enjoyed sharing a “day in the life of a farmer” with guests and traveling to *Blue Diamond* events with his wife of 31 years, Kristin Rae. He is survived by his wife, daughter, son, stepdaughter, sons-in-law, daughter-in-law, nephews, and grandchildren. ♦

#WeAreBlueDiamond Social Media Activity



This month, we celebrated our national freedom on the 4th of July, created a great podcast chatting about “better-for-you” almond-based products, and tuned into top Brazilian chef, Ana Maria’s newest *Almond Breeze* recipes. *Blue Diamond* was also featured in the American Journal of Transportation for our innovative ideas on circumventing the congested ports. Finally, we celebrated our summer interns and also ran our *Blue Diamond* Community Grant cycle until mid-July; grant recipients will be awarded in September. ◆





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BLUE DIAMOND INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

Current Investment Rates available as of August 1, 2022

Blue Diamond Growers offers members short-term and long-term investment programs.

The objective of these programs is to serve as a competitive investment alternative for our members and provide *Blue Diamond Growers* with a steady source of funds. The interest rates effective August 1, 2022, for the program are listed here:

	Short-Term Investment Certificate (STIC)	Long-Term Investment Certificate (LTIC) (Maturity Date of 6/30/2025)
Initial Investment Required	\$1,000	\$50,000
Interest Rate	3.25%	2.95%
	(Variable, subject to change)	(Fixed rate)

For more information, contact your local Regional Manager, or Member Services at (209) 545-6225.

This summary does not constitute an offer to sell or a solicitation to purchase investment certificates. We will provide a package of documents for the programs to those members who are California residents and who express an interest in participating in the program.

Beer-Battered Onion Rings

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cooking Time: 20 minutes Difficulty: Easy Servings: 25

Ingredients

- 2 large Vidalia onions
- ½ cup cornstarch
- 1 cup *Blue Diamond* Almond Flour
- ½ cup *Blue Diamond* gluten-free flour blend (see recipe in the sidebar)
- 1 cup beer
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 4 egg whites
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- Vegetable oil for frying

Directions

1. Peel and slice onions to ½-inch rings and separate. Dredge onion rings in cornstarch.
2. Place remaining ingredients except oil into a blender and blend until smooth.
3. Place oil into a heavy-bottomed pan, about 2-inches deep. Heat to 350°F.
4. Dip individual onion rings into batter with a fork and carefully place into hot oil. Fry for about 1 minute until golden, then flip. Fry for an additional minute. Fry onions in batches.
5. Remove from oil and let drain on paper towels before serving.

Gluten-Free Flour Blend:

- 2 cups brown rice flour
- 2 cups white rice flour
- 2 cups tapioca flour
- 1 cup corn starch
- ¼ tablespoon xantham gum

Simply sift all ingredients together thoroughly and store any amount you do not use in an airtight container. The gluten-free flour blend keeps in the fridge for up to three months or in the freezer for up to six months. Just remember to bring the measurement of flour you want to use up to room temperature before baking for optimum texture and consistency.



Almond Breeze Banana Coconut Ice Pops

Prep Time: 3 hours 30 minutes Difficulty: Easy Servings: 1



Ingredients

- 2½ cup *Almond Breeze* Blended with Real Bananas Almondmilk or *Almond Breeze* Unsweetened Original Almondmilk Coconutmilk
- 1¼ cup sliced or diced firm and ripe bananas
- ½ cup toasted coconut flakes

Directions

1. Place ½ ounce (about 2–3 slices) of banana in the bottom of each ice pop mold. Pour ¼ cup of your choice of *Almond Breeze* Almondmilk over bananas.
2. Place ice pop mold on a tray in the freezer for 30–45 minutes (this helps hold bananas in place before adding more almondmilk). Once partially frozen, add 3–4 more banana slices and top all ice pops off with more almondmilk, leaving a quarter of an inch at the top to allow for expansion when freezing.
3. Freeze for 2–3 hours or overnight. Before serving, pour ½ cup *Almond Breeze* Almondmilk in a small bowl. Remove ice pops from container and dip the tip of each ice pop in the almondmilk and then roll in the coconut shavings.

Meet *Blue Diamond's* 2022 Summer Interns!

This summer, *Blue Diamond* has 13 college interns participating in a 12-week internship. *Blue Diamond's* Intern Program provides a unique development experience through meaningful, project-based work, cohort group meetings, development sessions, team building events, field and site tours, and regular coaching.

We are proud to share that each year several interns are hired on as full-time *Blue Diamond* employees upon completion of their internship.

The 2022 interns are involved in Manufacturing, Engineering, Marketing, Operations, Maintenance, Process Improvement, IT, Public Affairs, and Supply Chain. They will absorb valuable insight into the almond industry while learning new marketable skills and developing key relationships within their teams. ♦



We are pleased to have the following interns in our program this summer:

Alex Ochoa,

University of California, Merced -
Engineering Intern (Turlock)

Kevin Aghassi Lelham,

University of California, Merced -
Engineering Intern (Turlock/Salida)

Cameron Dhanowa,

University of Pacific, Stockton -
Manufacturing Processing Intern
(Sacramento) *not pictured*

Freshta Malikzada,

UC Davis -
Maintenance Intern (Sacramento)

Chris Coats,

UC Davis -
Maintenance Intern (Sacramento)

Justin Roaquin,

San Francisco State University -
IT Intern (Sacramento)

Isaiah Johnson,

University of California, Merced -
Operations Intern (Turlock)

Michael Chiu,

UC Berkeley/UCLA -
Process Improvement Intern
(Sacramento)

Marissa Goldston,

Sacramento State University -
Process Improvement Intern
(Sacramento)

Jasmine Dawson,

California State University, Chico -
Product Marketing Intern
(Sacramento)

Micaela Angela Esguerra,

Sacramento State University -
Product Marketing Intern
(Sacramento)

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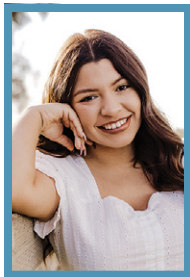
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25 Students Awarded *Blue Diamond Growers* Foundation Scholarship

To ensure the success of agriculture in the years to come, it will demand the dedication and hard work of the next generation. The Blue Diamond Growers Foundation selected 25 young people to receive a scholarship for the 2022–2023 academic year. The Foundation assists students who are passionate about making a difference in their communities and influencing the future of agriculture.

Meet this year's Blue Diamond Growers Foundation scholarship recipients and read excerpts from each of their essays where they described their goals for the future.



Vanessa Anaya (Winters, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Biochemistry

I'm highly interested in pursuing medicine, specifically surgery. Growing up, I witnessed a distinct lack of representation in medicine for people who looked like me. As the first Mexican surgeon in my community, I'll have the opportunity to save lives and show others from similar backgrounds that there is a place for them in whichever path they choose. However, my journey throughout Ag Education, FFA Regional Office, and my involvement in Career Development Events have shown me how vital agriculture is. Although I am pursuing a role in medicine, I hope to continue to use the knowledge I've gained as an FFA member to serve as a mentor for future agriculturists. In the future, I plan to assist FFA programs coach teams and partner with California FFA in leading conferences that focus on agricultural advocacy.

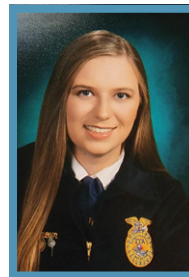


Jenna Bates (Livingston, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Ag Systems Management

I plan to join an agriculture establishment that allows me to help increase their production, market products for them, or create new technological systems. My participation in the FFA and agricultural education has introduced me to food production and safety, livestock production, and communications and marketing. I

plan to use my hands, mind, and heart to make a difference in our world. I will contribute to an industry that feeds our society. I have learned skills in promotion, communication, and innovation. I plan to use these skills to incorporate new ways to market and grow all sectors of agriculture.



Mia Brown (Modesto, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO, UC Davis or CSU Chico
Major: Horticulture

My goal is to become a professor in Horticulture and Plant Sciences. After I graduate, I plan to work in the industry to gain more practice and hands on experience before pursuing a PhD. I would like to focus on research, outreach, and teaching. I am very passionate about teaching my community and society about agriculture and where our food comes from. I also want to focus on making ag education accessible to more students. I am a special education student, I have autism, ADHD and dyslexia. My involvement in ag education built my confidence, expanded my knowledge, and allowed me to find my passions and dreams.



Joseph Carlos (Orland, CA)

Fall 2022 School: UC Davis
Major: Ag Education

My long-term goal is to own and manage a family farm independently. Until then, I would like to acquire more experience in the agricultural world.

It is for this reason that I am choosing to study management and agriculture classes. I would like to learn how to farm and harvest more efficiently. I would also like to develop a more efficient form of communication that helps the farming communities. I plan to share it (my knowledge) with those around me because I believe that the future of agriculture lies in helping each other grow and sharing beneficial information. The agricultural community thrives on unity instead of competition. While friendly competition is still a great way to speed up growth and provide inspiration.



Princesa Ceballos (Porterville, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Plant & Soil Science

I chose my major because of my participation with the FFA. I hope to concentrate on plant protection in hopes of gaining hands-on experience to obtain a job as a Pest Control

Advisor in the San Joaquin Valley. I will be able to develop sustainable solutions necessary for the continued advancement of technology, irrigation, and cultivation. As a Pest Control Advisor, I will ensure the safe and healthy harvest of crops to allow for the safe consumption of produce. Along with developing sustainable agricultural methods that will reduce water usage and increase crop yield.



Andrew Copeland (Oakdale, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Stanislaus State University
Major: Plant & Soil Science

I would like to become a Pest Control Advisor (PCA) after graduating. I have a background and experience in almonds and would like to continue working with them by either farming

or consulting. I can help others use sustainable practices

that can help future generations. This can benefit society by ensuring quality products while not compromising the continual use of land for many years to come. They (PCA's) advise farmers on modern practices when it comes to spraying and fertilizing and help ensure that the farmer gets good yields while maintaining quality.

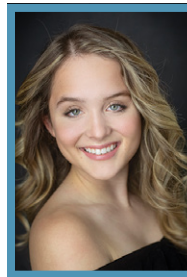


Morgan Dennis (Maxwell, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Oklahoma State University
Major: Agribusiness

I am in my second semester at Oklahoma State University and involved in the Freshmen in Transition (FIT) program, the Ferguson College of Agriculture's Living Learning Program.

I have been offered an internship with the Vann Brothers working at their almond huller. I also plan on applying to obtain an internship with HDR, a consultant for the site's Reservoir Project. I plan to obtain a job in agriculture using my new knowledge to feed into society physically and mentally. From food to clothing I hope to be able to assist the agricultural community with providing for the world.

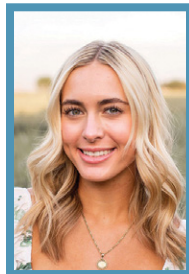


Holly Doherty (Dunnigan, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Agribusiness

I grew up in a family that farms rice, almonds, walnuts, and raises registered Black Angus Cattle. Our almonds are sold to *Blue Diamond*. I have grown more interested in the business side

of the farm, and when I entered high school, I joined the FFA program. I started my own business, Bird Creek Beef, where I market and sell the meat from our small cattle operation. Since growing up in agriculture I decided that getting a degree in Agriculture Business would be the wisest option for me. Upon graduation I plan to return to my family's farm by using the marketing and business skills I gained. Not only will I be able to help the farm with smart business decisions, I also will use my experience and knowledge to educate the community about farm to fork food.



Delainee Fernandes (Tulare, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Agribusiness

Agriculture has advanced far beyond working the soil and caring for animals, it has evolved into varying businesses requiring detailed and precise measures. The businesses consist of but are not limited to marketing, advancing technology, environmental sustainability, processing, management, and production. I chose Agricultural Business to combine my love for mathematics and passion for agriculture. After college, I intend to return to my hometown to work as an agricultural accountant for a bank or business and aspire to manage and operate a farm of my own.



Frank Fernandes (Tulare, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Ag Systems Management

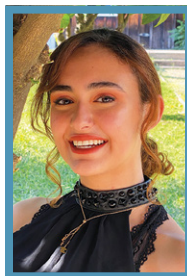
Having grown up learning from my dad on our family farm, I know I will enjoy making a career out of it. I am majoring in agriculture systems management and possibly minoring in agriculture business. This will help me in accomplishing my goal of coming back to manage the farm someday. I hope to apply the knowledge I received in college to the farm by applying better practices for water consumption from crops and using new technologies to increase productivity or quality. I hope to figure out ways to use water more efficiently and save water and money. Farming is also an important job as it supplies food for everyone, so finding cheaper and more efficient practices benefits everyone.



Joshua Hack (Turlock, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Modesto Jr College
Major: Agribusiness

I am a student at Modesto Junior College where I am double majoring in Ag Business and Mathematics. I will be obtaining my A.S. in Ag Business this summer and my A.S. in Math in the spring of 2024. After I complete my A.S. degrees I plan to transfer to Cal Poly SLO to major in Bio Resource and Ag Engineering. With my degree I hope to work in the irrigation industry, either designing irrigation systems for farmers to optimize their individual situation or work towards a more sustainable water system to help farmers maximize their allotted water and have enough water to grow their crops. I want to work to be part of the solution to the water crisis in California so that the farmers have enough water to effectively grow their crops.



Farnaz Haghghat (Folsom, CA)

Fall 2022 School: UC Davis
Major: Psychology

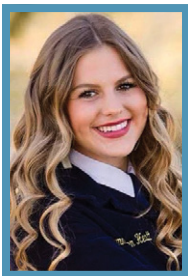
With psychology as my desired degree, I can make a profound impact within California's society, with a special focus on our agricultural department. I can propel American agriculture through research which can include how to obtain, retain, and maintain workers towards our agricultural department. Initiating practices that attract workers to our field allows for diversity in our work environment. Our mental health is equally as important as our physical health, and with California's vast agricultural program, our employees work in varying degrees and in various specifications. Through therapy, we would be promoting a positive and equitable work environment for all workers.



Garrett Hesser (Valley Springs, CA)

Fall 2022 School: UC Davis
Major: Ag Education

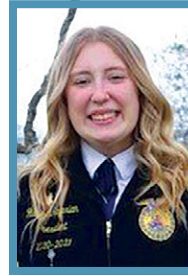
Growing up on a cattle ranch in the foothills of Calaveras County I developed a love for the land and growing passion for watershed and rangeland management. After witnessing the Butte Fire devastate our county in 2015, I was determined to do more for my community and pursue an education and career that could prevent these catastrophes. I became a volunteer firefighter which has allowed me to embrace many leadership roles believing that when we empower each other in positive ways, meaningful change can happen. My experience working for the fire department along with my upbringing on a cattle ranch has influenced me to pursue a degree in Environmental and Ag Education along with a minor in Watershed and Rangeland Management. This degree will allow me to pursue a professional career dedicated to educating and protecting our precious natural and agricultural resources while also running our family's cattle operation and serving as a volunteer firefighter. I want to live a life of service, giving back to my community while working to inspire others to care for our watersheds and forests.



Remmington Hewitt (Pleasant Grove, CA)

Fall 2022 School: University of Oregon
Major: Agribusiness

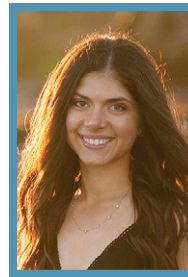
I have reached a point in my young life where I may be considered successful by those who know me best. I will be attending the University of Oregon to continue my educational and athletic careers. It is my goal to always be a listener in times of conversational conflict and indeed be the one to act upon my leadership background and confidently speak up. As the class valedictorian, the student body, class, and FFA presidents it's been my pledge to explore ways to bring awareness to our campus culture while maintaining my beliefs and morals.



Rachel Majarian (Visalia, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO
Major: Ag Communications

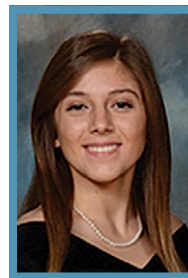
Once introduced to the career of Ag Law, I became very excited to fight for a cause that I believe in. Pursuing a degree in Ag Communications, with the career goal of being an Ag Lawyer will allow me to support the community that I live in, along with supporting agriculture in our state and beyond. After receiving my bachelor's degree in Ag Communications, I will need to attend law school and pass the Bar Exam. It will be a very rigorous pathway to my goal, but I am confident that with my drive and determination I can do it. Being a lawyer will allow me to give back to an industry that has given me so much.



Brooke Miranda (Turlock, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Clemson University
Major: Ag Law

As a daughter of a dairy farmer, my parents have taught me the importance of agriculture and the impact it has on our world. My plan is to major in agribusiness or agri-law to learn more about the rights delegated to farmers, such as land and water. I would advocate for CA farmers and agriculture by pursuing my career here in the CA valley. I will support the rights of farmers and continue to spread the good of our California agriculture. With all the hate towards agriculture, it motivates me to help inform people of all the good ag brings our world.



Caitlyn Morgan (Red Bluff, CA)

Fall 2022 School: CSU Monterey Bay
Major: Plant & Soil Science

Upon graduating from California State University Monterey Bay and obtaining my bachelor's degree in Agricultural Plant and Soil Sciences (AGPS) with a minor in Biology, I plan to attend graduate school to pursue a Master's or PhD in Agronomy or Plant Pathology. I also intend to obtain my PCA, Certified Crop Advisor, and Organic Inspector licenses. I then plan to work as an Agronomist, overseeing crop production and soil management efforts for seed

companies and growers. My coursework will provide me with all the materials I need to develop expertise in crop management, including crop physiology and life cycles, the role of soil, water, nutrient and pest management on crop quality, yield, sustainability, and profitability, as well as relevant laws and regulations.

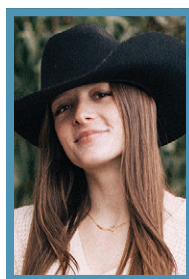


Morgan Oliveira (Hilmar, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Modesto Jr. College
Major: Ag Communications

As a future agriculture educator, I know I hold a truly important task, inspiring the future generation to be a part of the agricultural industry. My goal is to continue my current mission as a

leader within the FFA organization: helping members create their own passion for agriculture. I plan on earning my associate degree in Agribusiness before attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo to earn a master's degree in Agriculture Communications and a teaching credential. My future education will not only help me to serve the agriculture community in terms of advocating for it, but also helping others advocate for it.



Hailey Pasley (Chowchilla, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Abilene Christian University
Major: Bio-Environmental Science

While participating in the Stanford Medical Youth Science Program, I completed an in-depth research project on a public health issue. My topic revolved around the impacts of

different pesticide applications on rural communities. As a public health professional, I intend to spotlight the issues that those working in agriculture face and the importance of investing in and protecting agriculture in our Valley. By drawing attention to the challenges that we are facing as an agricultural community, I can work to improve the future of agriculture, which benefits society since we all rely on agriculture every single day.

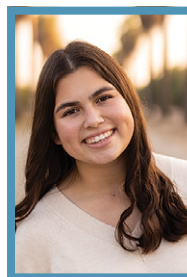


TJ Rohwer (Chico, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Oregon State University Honors College
Major: Bioengineering & Mechanical Engineering

I have always found great pleasure working with my hands, and constructing functional mechanisms, but have always been similarly

fascinated with the workings of biological systems and living organisms. The double major program allows me to pursue work in the field of mechanical engineering with a focus on agricultural robotics technologies. An example is the Mummy Assassin, a robot developed by InsightTrac Robotic Mummy Removal. From there I can grow my skill set to include more human assistance-oriented robotics. From an agricultural perspective, these technologies and devices will help the industry remain competitive for years to come. I'm aiming to return to Sacramento Valley to continue helping out on the family farm.



Mallory Sutherland (Bakersfield, CA)

Fall 2022 School: CSU Fresno
Major: Agribusiness

Agricultural education and the Future Farmers of America organization is what sparked my interest in serving others as a leader. With this degree, my investment and role in the future

of agriculture, my desire is to become an advocate for the agriculture industry. As an advocate, I can give insight to those who have been misinformed regarding agricultural topics. When the globe begins to recognize the relevance of agriculture in their own lives, communities will start to work together to feed the rapidly growing population. Creating a world that is agriculturally literate and works together as one is making my community a better place at this very moment.



Stephanie Temnyk (Turlock, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Arizona State University
Major: Molecular Biosciences and Biotechnology

I am on track to begin my master's in Fall 2022 (concurrently with my bachelor's) and my PhD in Fall 2024.

I have already experienced the scientific process in joining a lab team

researching the effects of light duration (photoperiod) on indoor vertical strawberry gardening. The implications from this research pave the path for higher yields, lower costs, and improved fruit quality. Overall, my efforts serve to better understand the science of plant varieties, unlocking the mechanisms of poorly understood genes and tracing their evolutionary history. The research I perform can help me to one day boost horticultural yields for farmers and broaden plant nutritional profiles for undernourished communities.



Carson Vanella (Chico, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Utah State University
Major: Agribusiness Management

I hope to manage my family's almond and walnut farm in northern California. I am very interested in Farm and Ranch Management. This particular major perfectly aligns with my goals. I am

also very interested in Agribusiness. I think that studying Agribusiness will allow me to help the farm grow further. Not only that but the flow of crops and money will benefit the economy and, in turn, society. With the knowledge I will learn from both areas of study, I will surely be able to help my family's farm grow and improve.



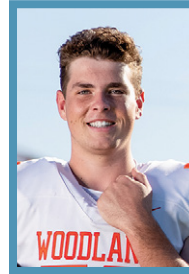
Erin Vierra (Los Banos, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Oklahoma State University
Major: Ag Education

Once I receive my bachelor's degree, I plan to move back to California to obtain my teaching credential. As an ag teacher I will be able to contribute to our next generation by

reiterating the importance of where our food and fiber come from, preserving and preparing future generations in agriculture. I plan to innovate through the classroom

with laboratory instruction, leadership development, and provide hands-on learning. I believe there has never been a more important time than now to teach our youth to understand how agriculture and natural resources impact our lives through the quality and abundance of our food supply.



Blaine Wilson (Woodland, CA)

Fall 2022 School: Cal Poly SLO or UC Davis
Major: Ag Systems Management

My career interests include working in plant breeding or in the seed development industries. My hope, when finished with school, is to put my knowledge and connections to use

in the agricultural industry in California. To impact the efficiency of land use or help create disease-resistant seed varieties or even influence how and where plants will be grown will only benefit and support our farmers and our consumers. ♦

If you wish to donate to the Blue Diamond Growers Foundation to support next year's students, please make checks payable to "Blue Diamond Growers Foundation" and send to:

**Attn: Finance Dept.
Blue Diamond Growers
1802 C Street
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Thank you for your contributions and support!





Current Updates in our Nation's Capital

President Biden nominated Mr. Doug McKillop as the Agricultural Ambassador at USTR. Ms. Alexis Taylor was nominated to be Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs at USDA. These appointments are very helpful for agricultural trade and filling these two positions is very important for us. It places agriculture trade negotiators in position to work on market access.

President Biden announced his Indo-Pacific Economic Framework at the end of May. The framework outlines a partnership with 12 other nations, including Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. China is not included in this agreement. This, in conjunction with President Biden's remarks that the United States will defend Taiwan if China invades, will cause tensions with China to rise.

It is expected that the world will experience a significant grain and wheat shortage due to the ongoing Ukraine conflict. It has now been over 130 days since Russia first invaded

Ukraine. There are global concerns around food insecurity and accelerating food inflation.

Inflation continues to impact every American. Chief economists report that central banks are increasing interest rates at the fastest pace American's have seen in more than three decades. Due to increasing inflation, the Biden Administration is trying to respond. In May, President Biden released a three-part plan to tackle inflation in an opinion article in the Wall Street Journal. His three points include relying on the Federal Reserve to control inflation; making things affordable for families; lastly reducing the federal deficit. Both Republicans and Democrats are frustrated with the rising inflation and labor shortages. It is expected that this will be an important issue in the midterms.

In-person work in the Federal government has returned. Senior officials at the Agriculture Department were called back to work in person at the end of February. Now most USDA employees are back in the office.

The House Agriculture Committee continues to host hearings in preparation for the new Farm Bill. Areas of focus for *Blue Diamond* include increased funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC), pest and disease research and support, crop insurance and climate conservation funding.

Shipping shortages continue to affect Americans. Congressman Jim Costa introduced The Ocean Shipping Antitrust Enforcement Act (H.R. 6864) on February 28. This bill removes antitrust exemptions for foreign flag shipping carriers from federal antitrust laws and addresses unfair business practices that hurt American business. The bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation for consideration.

The Senate introduced a similar bill to the House's Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2021 (H.R. 4996). S 3580 known as the Ocean Shipping Reform Act of 2022. This bill passed unanimously in the Senate and was signed by President Biden last month. This new law will create more transparency for U.S. agricultural exports, as it requires international ocean carriers to officially report the number of empty containers being transported. This will work to support growth and further development of American exports. ♦



Blue Diamond Advocate
Julian B. Heron,
Senior Partner,
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SUSTAINABLY SPEAKING, WITH DR. DAN

Regenerative Agriculture and *Blue Diamond Growers*

I've mentioned to readers previously that the concept of regenerative agriculture is rapidly gaining favor with customers and even government agencies. I know that the idea of yet another sustainability trend in agriculture makes some growers nervous. There are some aspects of this trend which make many leaders in almonds nervous, for good reason. That said, I've been researching this trend for several years now, and I think there is good reason to think that Blue Diamond is well-suited to address customer requests for a regenerative agriculture approach through things many of our growers are already doing as part of the Blue Diamond OSIP (Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program). I'll explain why this is the case, even in dealing with those things that seem to be barriers.

So, what is regenerative agriculture, and how is it different from sustainable agriculture? First, there is no legal definition, nor even one generally agreed upon in the industry. How regenerative is defined depends on who you ask.

To further complicate matters, there are two competing schools of thought on the definition. One school advocates for regenerative organic agriculture. To these folks, regenerative agriculture is certified organic production plus additional practices and principles to make it regenerative. This is sometimes called the "beyond organic" approach. There is even a "Regenerative Organic" certification.

The second school tends to resist the certification route or the organic-plus route and says there is a spectrum of regenerative agriculture principles. To these folks, one can be a conventional farm (not organic certified) and still be pursuing regenerative agriculture on your farm. I favor this second approach.

I have heard critics say that regenerative agriculture is just a rebranding of sustainable agriculture. Some people act as if this were true. Certainly, for some idealist sustainable agriculture advocates, regenerative agriculture is what they always had in mind for sustainability on farms. Thus, in that sense, the term "regenerative" does rebrand the ideal of sustainability. But most advocates of regenerative agriculture likely would say that their definition goes beyond what they see in typical sustainable agriculture efforts. A commonly

expressed sentiment is that sustainable agriculture programs have tended to focus on "doing less harm" to people and planet, but what we need are farming systems that make things better for people and planet. That is, they regenerate the earth and make it better than it was before.

So, what are the practices and principles of regenerative agriculture? The Chesapeake Bay Foundation put out a summary of five principles which occur in many definitions of the term:

1. Minimizing soil disturbances

Regenerative agriculture uses farming practices such as limited or no-tilling that minimize physical, biological, and chemical soil disturbances.

2. Soil coverage

Instead of relying on tilling, regenerative farming practices focus on keeping the soil covered with vegetation and natural materials through mulching, cover crops, and pastures.

3. Increased plant diversity

Diversity is an essential component in building healthy soils that retain excess water and nutrients. It can help farmers obtain revenue from other sources and it's beneficial to other wildlife and pollinators.

4. Keeping living roots in the soil as much as possible

Having living roots in the soil ensures that fields are never bare. It can be done by farming practices such as planting winter cover crops or having land in permanent pasture. Keeping living roots in the soil aids in stabilizing the soil, retaining excess water and nutrient runoff.

5. Integrate animals into the farm as much as possible

Manure produced by livestock can add valuable nutrients to the soil, reducing the need for fertilizers, and increasing soil organic matter. Healthy soils capture large amounts of carbon and water and reduce the amount of polluted runoff.

(Source: Sudan Smith, <https://www.cbf.org/blogs/save-the-bay/2021/08/what-is-regenerative-agriculture-and-why-is-it-re-emerging-now.html>)

Let's think about each of these in the context of almonds:

1. The first principle is not hard for almond farms — most almond farms stopped tilling 40 years ago. Minimal soil disturbance? Check.
2. The second is harder for some. Herbicide companies still often advocate a fully weed-free orchard floor. Of course, many almond orchards maintain just a weed free tree strip and leave resident vegetation in the row middles. But to be considered regenerative, an almond orchard likely needs to have as much vegetation in the middles as possible. A cover crop is ideal.
3. Cover cropping also addresses the third ideal — increasing plant diversity. Regenerative advocates are concerned about the loss of

habitat for birds and insects (especially pollinators and beneficials). Cover cropping that also benefits pollinators, such as that used by many of our member farms, has great alignment with regenerative agriculture. If there truly isn't enough water available for cover cropping, a diverse perennial hedgerow for pollinators next to the orchard is another option for increasing biodiversity.

4. A combination of a non-tilled, perennial almond orchard and cover cropping or resident vegetation also serves to address the fourth principle of keeping living roots in the soil year round as much as possible. Research increasingly shows that the soil microbes become more diverse and resilient from the year-round presence of

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5. The fifth principle is very problematic for the almond industry. Our food safety Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) discourage livestock and other animals from entering the orchard. This is to prevent introduction of potential pathogens which could cause human illness — and product recalls which could be very damaging to our ability to sell almonds. Fortunately, while some regenerative agriculture advocates insist on this fifth principle, many others are more understanding of food safety situations such as ours and do not insist on animal integration.

An overarching theory behind these regenerative agriculture principles is that the combined use of them will also increase the capture of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to fight climate change, while also increasing the soil's ability to capture and retain rainfall under both wet and dry conditions to make crops more resilient to floods or drought.

If you are familiar with the *Blue Diamond Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program (OSIP)*, you know we promote cover crops for bee health. In reading this, you probably realize that when almond orchards do a good job with cover crops, they align well with these regenerative agriculture principles. The fact that a significant portion of our members in the OSIP program are certified with Bee Friendly Farming is a great starting point for *Blue Diamond* when

we discuss regenerative agriculture with customers. And this demonstrates that our programs are not basic sustainability efforts but have elements which can be called regenerative.

If you want to see how one major food company is investing heavily in regenerative agriculture in their supply chain, General Mills has become a leader. More information is available on their website at [generalmills.com/how-we-make-it/healthier-planet/environmental-impact/regenerative-agriculture](https://www.generalmills.com/how-we-make-it/healthier-planet/environmental-impact/regenerative-agriculture) or scan the QR code to read on your phone. ◆



Dr. Dan Sonke,
Director of Sustainability,
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THE BEE BOX

Tips and Tricks for Planning and Planting Cover Crop

If you've never tried to cover crop, it can seem a little daunting, but it shouldn't be. In this article we will go over a few helpful tips and tricks to help growers begin the cover crop journey or even assist seasoned cover croppers in honing their skills.

Cover cropping is essentially adding a new tool to your orchard toolbox. Like any tool, there are a few suggestions that can help with implementation and success. Be patient as you begin the journey, knowing that you will probably make some mistakes along the way. The cover crop tool can be an effective one for many underlying issues growers face in their orchards, but it's not a silver bullet and it has to be managed well.



Credit: Project Apis m.

I like to encourage growers to think of cover crop as a part of a holistic management program, something like their IPM or even a nitrogen or water program. In my view, there's a big difference between planting a cover crop, and managing a cover crop. Management programs like nitrogen or IPM require time, thought, and proper execution to do correctly;

when done right, they yield big successes and paybacks, and can cut out other expensive and time-consuming tasks. Like any good management program, it's only as good as what you put into it. The same is true with cover crop and everything starts with the fundamentals of planning.

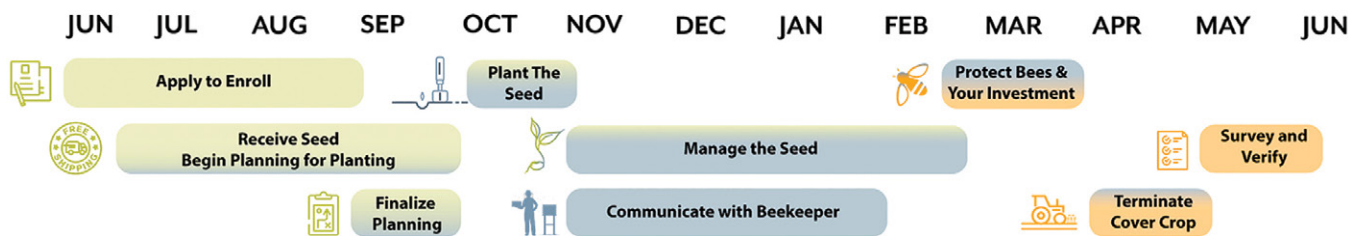
Planning

June through September is the time to start the planning process for your cover crop planting and season. This is when Seeds for Bees has its open enrollment period, when we send out seed, when we seek to give technical consultations to growers prior to planting, and when we begin finalizing all the necessary aspects that go into planting after harvest.

In our new **Seeds for Bees Management Quick Guide**, we start planning for planting in the early summer when our application opens for Seeds for Bees. There are three fundamental questions at this point in the planning period:

- 1. How much seed do I need?** The answer is dependent on planting method, seeding rate, and width of planting in orchard alley, to name a few.
- 2. What kind of planting method will I utilize?** Broadcast, grain drill, no-till drill, etc.
- 3. What kind of mix do I want to plant?** A mixture of multiple families of seed or just a straight one-family mix like our Pollinator Brassica.

Once these questions are answered, you are well on your way to a successful planting.



1. How Much Seed Do I Need?

How much and what kind of cover crop will depend on many factors. Generally, this can be answered when the grower decides how they will plant—by what method/implementation, plus answering what the corrective goals for the soil may be. If you are doing a no-till drill with a 5-foot planting width, for example, you will need to run some math. The basic formula is this: cover crop planted width divided by the tree row width (the distance across the rows, not down the tree line). This will give you a percentage of the acreage needed to plant the whole. Then multiply that by the overall tree-planted acres of the orchard, followed by the seeding rate. Let's run an example:

It's your first year planting cover crop. You want something easy, something that will take off, break up compacted ground, decrease nematode population, and get some deep taproots in the ground for water penetration. A straight brassica mix is chosen for all these reasons. You find access to a no-till drill that will plant one pass in 5-foot lengths in their 22-foot tree-to-tree across orchard alley and is planting a 100-acre block. Here's the basic formula:

$$\text{Planting width} \div \text{by tree-to-tree spacing across} \times \text{total orchard acres} = \text{cover crop acres to be planted}$$

This is then multiplied by seeding rate of mix and method chosen. In this case, you'd need 23 acres of seed, planted at an 8lb rate, so it would be 8lbs x 23 acres, or 184lbs of seed needed for the planting. Of course, another option would be to do a double pass and get 10 feet of cover crop in the alleys, which would then just double the cover crop acreage, multiplied by the same rate with this seed mix.

2. What Kind of Planting Method Will I Utilize?

Every grower will have to answer for themselves what kind of method of planting can be utilized for their orchard. We suggest trying to find a no-till drill as this is one of the most

effective methods for a good germination, but others can have great success too if other factors are done well. For example, if you cannot find a planting drill of some sort, a broadcaster on the back of an ATV has worked well for many of our growers, especially if they follow that up a pass with a spare piece of chain-link fence after the broadcast.



Photos: Left: the short and compact Land Pride PS15 Series has a chain link attached by the grower to help cover the seed once its set. Right: grain drills can also be used in the orchard if the bottom branches of the canopy will allow, and many times produce a wider planting width with one pass. Credit: Project Apis m.

3. What Kind of Mix Do I Want to Plant?

If you are new to planting, I would suggest you start with a straight brassica mix of some sort, like our Pollinator Brassica. It has three mustards, a canola, and a radish. This is an effective mix to start with because the brassica seeds are small and relatively homogeneous in size (makes things easy with planting method), brassicas have a generally strong germination, take in any Central Valley scenario, and grow on relatively little amounts of water. Brassicas offer tremendous soil health and bee health benefits, too.

Once you are walked through these basic questions of planning, things start to make sense. And once you plant the first year, the second year becomes a breeze. We are here to consult you to make sure you are on the right path for a successful cover crop stand this year.

Prepping and Planting

Over the years, I have tried many things during planting to help get a good stand for when the bees arrive before almond bloom.

“There is one fundamental factor that takes precedent over all the other tips and tricks: Timing of cover crop planting. If I plant early in October, get a good germination, and keep things moving by watchful management, I always have a successful cover crop stand before, during, and after bloom, which is the goal.” — Rory Crowley

I can get consistently successful cover crop stands because I farm in the North up in Chico and have an irrigation system that has total coverage above 90%. This means that I can irrigate the middles where cover crop is planted. Some growers, however, especially those south of the Delta, may not be able to irrigate where they've seeded and they must rely on winter rains. In a drought cycle, this is tough, but we encourage seasoned cover croppers to try a new tactic this year if they're on drip or micros.

Water-Wetting Zone Tactic:

If you are in the kind of a scenario where wetting patterns from drip or micros don't go to the center of the drive row, try to plant a 3'-4' strip of seed on your wetting pattern right after harvest, and then come back two weeks before a measurable rain is forecast to finish up in the middles. This will require an offset drawbar on a drill or planter, and/or may require some unique broadcasting, but it's easy.

Why are we encouraging you to plant on your wetting patterns this year? The most basic answer is what has already been said, cover crop planted in early October will give you and bees the greatest chance for success. Secondly, most growers put on a post-harvest irrigation after harvest. To initiate the cover crop germination and early growth cycle requires

so little water that cover croppers can piggyback on these last shots of irrigation. It serves as a time to capitalize on a practice that you already do (post-harvest irrigation) and use it for the next practice (cover crop germination and initial stand). You can take advantage of this irrigation for more than just one last drink for your almonds.

If it's your first year, and you have drip or micros, just wait until the first measurable rain, and try to capitalize on that for the first planting. I've planted just prior to the first measurable rain and had a good germination afterward, but I have also planted just after if the ground is just right. Catching the moisture at the right time after precipitation can work well in some contexts. Even a light spritz in orchards with higher total coverage by their irrigation systems can help the drill or implement place seed more strategically for the germination.

Soil Preparation:

In terms of prepping the soil in an almond system, it is my opinion that not much needs to be done, especially if you use a no-till drill. For any seed to be set well, a good seedbed with loose, fertile topsoil and little to no weed competition is ideal. **Look no further than what you just did for harvest and post-harvest floor work!** If you put a float down after harvest to smooth things out, in most cases your loose-soil, no-weed seedbed is ready for planting. Again, if you are broadcasting, a bit more could be done on the back end once the seed is cast, like the chain-link method mentioned earlier. The main point here is that **almond growers are already primed most of the time for planting cover crop right after harvest because their orchards are already worked up and ready for this kind of practice.**

PAm is working diligently this year to get seed to your doorstep before October 1. We are also here to answer any questions you have about the process. We are here for your success. If we get this seed in at the right time, right mix, right rate, right place (sounds like a nitrogen management program!), grower, beekeeper, and bees create a win-win-win scenario. Let's get to work. ♦

Seeds for Bees encourages the use of cover crops to increase the density, diversity, and duration of bee forage in California orchards, farms, and vineyards, while improving soil health. First year Seeds for Bees enrollees are eligible for a \$2,500 discount off their total seed purchase. Second year enrollees are eligible for a \$1,500 discount off their total seed purchase. If you want to learn more about Seeds for Bees and planting cover crops in your orchards, check out our ***NEW*** Quick-Guide where you can access resources, enrollment information, and technical guidance, at: bit.ly/sfb-quick-guide, or visit ProjectApism.org/Seeds-For-Bees.



Rory Crowley,
 Director of Habitat
 Programs, Project Apis m.
Rory@ProjectApism.org

Remember, the deadline to enroll in Seeds for Bees is **August 31, 2022**, so act fast!



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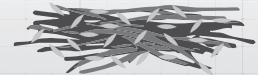
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THE ALMOND BOARD

Almond Board hosts Corporate Screenings for Thor: Love and Thunder to Celebrate Marketing Partnership

The Almond Board is wrapping up fiscal year 2021–2022 with a bang by capitalizing on the broad appeal of Marvel Studios and its iconic Thor franchise.

In June of 2022, the Almond Board started running ads in five key almond-loving countries — the United States, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Italy, and India to promote both California almonds and the new movie Thor: Love and Thunder. To learn more about the partnership visit the link: almonds.com/why-almonds/thorloveandthunder.

To celebrate this monumental partnership and the release of the movie, Marvel and the Almond Board hosted three private corporate screenings July 7 to 9 in Chico, Modesto, and Fresno. More than 250 people associated with the almond industry were able to watch the movie as well as the Thor-themed almond commercials from the five countries.



Almond industry members gather in Chico for a private screening of Thor: Love and Thunder.

The five regional ads, showcasing California almonds and Thor's weapons were shown before the movie began. Each unique spot builds upon the marketing efforts already in place in the targeted countries. To view each spot, visit the Almond Board's campaign landing page that features more background on the partnership: almonds.com/why-almonds/thorloveandthunder. The campaigns took place from May 31 to July 31, 2022.

Article contributed by the Almond Board. ◆

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TIME TO CONSIDER



Time to Consider welcomes *Blue Diamond* Regional Manager, Trent Voss!

Trent Voss grew up in the Hughson area in the Central Valley where his family farms almonds and peaches. He's fourth generation in the area. He earned his bachelor's in Ag Studies from Stanislaus State University while also receiving his PCA and CCA licenses. Voss served as a PCA for Wilbur Ellis for 10 years in Hughson. He jumped at the chance to join *Blue Diamond* as a regional manager since it opened better conversations with growers. Voss said, "I grew up in a farming family and have worked as a PCA for several years in Stanislaus and Merced Counties. My experiences have taught me the importance of relationships. I joined *Blue Diamond Growers* to build lasting relationships with growers, so they have a partner to turn to when needed. Being an advocate for farmers is a core principle of mine, and I am happy to represent the growers of *Blue Diamond*."

Harvest Considerations

Harvest is coming! Harvest is coming! I know it may not be as serious as the British invading, but it can still be a highly stressful time for growers. By channeling my inner Paul Revere I'd like to go over some points to keep in mind as we enter this busy time.

Irrigation is vital before and after harvest. Kernel weight will continue to increase through the month of July. Depending on the water situation, irrigating at 100% ET will lead to full kernels at harvest. While the normal practice for many growers is to decrease applied water at the initiation of hull split in an effort to mitigate hull rot, trees under excessive water stress during the harvest period can have a reduced kernel weight. Returning to normal irrigation right after shaking is important, not only for tree stress, but for next year's crop as well. According to the UC Davis Publication "*Drought Tip: Drought Management for California Almonds (ucanr.edu)*," <https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8515.pdf> severely stressed post-harvest orchards had a 52% reduction in bloom density and a 94% reduction in fruit set, resulting in a 73.6% reduction in the following year's yield. Those on drip irrigation can apply water as soon as the almonds are clear of the drip line. Those with sprinklers or flood will have to pre-plan, so harvest is done in a timely manner to be able to get back to normal irrigation. Always keep in mind, the first irrigation for next year's crop starts after this year's harvest.

- As growers enter the home stretch, pest management still needs to be at the forefront of mind. **Navel orangeworm**, one of the leading causes of rejects, needs to be addressed prior to harvest. An insecticide application made at hull split will help reduce the level of damage. Growers with a high Navel orangeworm population may have to look at a second application, depending on the insect flight and hull split timings. Please consult with your PCA on the correct timing and products for your orchard. Timely harvesting can also reduce Navel orangeworm damage by avoiding the late generation flights of the insect. Keep in mind however, shaking before the nut has fully matured can result in "peelers." Shaking too early can also cause problems if your crop is stockpiled after harvest due to excessive kernel and hull moisture.
- As the summer temperatures increase so does **Mite** pressure. In a year where input costs are high, it may be a hard decision to make an extra treatment for mites. Not treating a mite flare up can result in reduced production

the following years. Heavy mite pressure leads to early defoliation, which leads to reduced photosynthesis, resulting in reduced flower production the following year.

- **Ants** are what I like to call “The Silent Pest” at harvest time. In many cases, growers do not believe they have an ant issue, but they might not be able to see the damage. Ants are capable of consuming the entire kernel, leaving only the skin of the almond. This skin is then lost through the pickup machine or at the huller, and the damage never shows up as a reject. Even though it may not be showing up as reject, it still creates a financial impact for the grower. A simple way to scout for ants is to take an empty water bottle with the cap off, place a few plain almonds, potato chips, or a hot dog inside, and set it in the orchard. Check the bottle 24–48 hours later and see if any damage has occurred. This easy scouting method, along with a discussion with your PCA can provide guidance on treatment. I am sure there are enough growers who get trash dumped in fields, so don’t forget to remove the bottle when you’re done!
- **Weeds**, a grower’s never-ending nightmare. I know there must be some growers out there, like me, who feel that we don’t control weeds, we just manage them. A pre-harvest herbicide application along with a close mowing of the orchard floor is one of the best options. The reason this works well is healthy weeds die easier. I know it sounds backwards but if a weed is stressed it hardens off and weed spray materials tend to be less effective. Mowing after the weed spray also helps breakdown the dead weeds prior to harvest. This will allow for a more efficient harvest.
- After all the prework is done, it’s finally time to harvest. But when should you harvest? This photo shows the stages of **Hull Split**. In early shake situations, where growers may be trying to avoid Navel orangeworm damage, they may be looking at shaking at 2c. Growers who may be delivering inshell, will be looking at 5 or 6. Independence variety growers might say they have all those stages on a tree at one time! In the end it depends on the orchard, and what works well for its specific situation.
- **Dust** is another hot topic at harvest time. It is important for growers to take steps to help reduce dust. Controlling equipment speed, monitoring sweeper head height, and making sure to blow dust into the field rather than into

roadways are all ways to help reduce dust. The Almond Board of California has some great information on dust reduction that can be found here: almonds.com/almond-industry/orchard-management/harvest/dust-reduction.

- After the grower has shipped the harvested material to the huller, it will more than likely be **stockpiled**. This is quite common and has increased in recent years due to the sheer size of crops being delivered. Again, the Almond Board of California has some Best Management Practices for Stockpiles that can be found here: almonds.com/almond-industry/orchard-management/harvest/stockpiling-harvest. The main takeaway is to make sure the almonds are dry before stockpiling. Best practices stipulate no more than 12% hull moisture AND no more than 6% kernel moisture. Another informal measurement is, “If you have to ask, they’re too wet.” If dry weather is present, have stockpiles open so moisture can escape. In the event of wet weather make sure the stockpile is covered and not placed in a low spot where water could accumulate.

Once harvest is complete, it is time to start preparing for the next season. It is recommended to have tissue samples taken in July to check the nutrition of the trees. A hull sample should also be done. This is separate from a tissue (leaf) sample, because it will give accurate results for boron levels. If boron levels are low, post-harvest is an excellent window to eliminate the deficiency. Soil samples can also be taken at this time and will provide you information on if you need any soil amendments in the post-season. It is best to go over this information with your PCA/CCA and a plan can be set forth.

Lastly, the field staff at *Blue Diamond Growers* is here to help during this busy time. If you have any questions about delivering, concerns about wet deliveries, or just need some information, please contact your Regional Manager. Good luck and have a happy harvest! ♦



Trent Voss
Regional Manager
Blue Diamond Growers

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Classified ads for personal use — not as an additional means of advertising commercial ventures members may own. Ads are limited to a maximum of 10 lines and may be submitted to Blue Diamond regional manager or the editor at:

**Editor: Blue Diamond Growers
P.O. Box 1768, Sacramento, CA 95812**

**Or contact BDG Communications
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Unless advised otherwise, ads will run two consecutive issues. To guarantee placement, classified listings must be submitted by the 10th of: January, March, May, July, September & November.

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3000-Series HEDGER

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