



almond facts

NEWS, VIEWS, AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

MARCH-APRIL 2024



Steve Schult Receives
2024 Rock Star of the
Supply Chain Award

Mental Health Matters

Bee Friendly
Farming and OSIP



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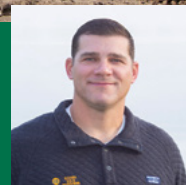
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18 Steve Schult Named "Rock Star" of the Supply Chain by *Food Logistics*

Blue Diamond's Vice President of Global Supply Chain, Steve Schult, recently received the 2024 Rock Star of the Supply Chain award from *Food Logistics*! Enjoy an inside scoop into his unique background and leadership style that have contributed to his great success in the industry.

20 Mental Health Matters

It's no secret that times are tough. This article dives into a few ways to maintain a healthy mindset and how friends can look after one another, encourage each other through times of increased stress, and continue supporting those they care about to keep stress manageable.

28 Bee Friendly Farming and OSIP

Pollinator Partnership (P2) is proud to be part of *Blue Diamond's* OSIP for the third year. P2 shares some great information on Bee Friendly Farming Certification (BFF) which assists farmers in protecting, preserving, and promoting pollinator health and contributes to achieving the next OSIP level.

ON THE COVER:

The beauty of the almond bloom season is in full swing. Photo credit: Jake Sonke



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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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Kai Bockmann
President & CEO



When I look back at where we started, I am proud of how the team has come together to develop a new strategic plan and set it into action. We remain focused on strengthening our core business, accelerating international markets, and expanding into new areas such as food service. Now, we are beginning to see the result of our efforts and we continue to persist despite all the headwinds. Those headwinds are not small — lower price of almonds, poor crops impacted by significant weather events, and a high inflationary environment are challenges that we have all been facing. However, we are starting to see some real wins, and the team and I are excited about our growth plans for Blue Diamond.

We have secured some great deals with large supermarkets and grocery chains across the U.S. and will continue to grow our relationships with these big retailers, among others. You have heard me say that expanding our international footprint is key for our growth and the Canadian market is one of the areas where we are building the brand and distribution. Soon you will start to see us on the shelves in Canadian retail stores such as Dollarama and Walmart. From co-branding agreements to new partnerships in the pipeline in Asia and Europe, we are leaving no stone unturned. I am looking forward to sharing further details with you on these wins and more. This April, I will join Mel on a webinar to talk about our progress, so keep an eye out for the link and tune in.

As you all know, last year's weather during the bloom proved difficult. This year we are looking a bit better! Although we had storms in the early days of bloom that saturated the orchards and hindered bee activity, particularly in the Sacramento Valley, weather conditions have provided ample opportunities for pollination. Right now, the orchard backdrop across the landscape is stunning. We will have to wait and see what the weather conditions will be like now through mid-April before we can determine the size of the crop. However, I am optimistic and very much looking forward to seeing what this year's harvest will look like.

In addition to the crop challenges from last year, *Blue Diamond* has also been facing tough market conditions and consumers have been choosing cheaper options in the snack nuts and plant-based milk categories. Although we expect to see an uptick as soon as consumer confidence increases, we know consumers can be unpredictable. These are challenging times and *Blue Diamond*, like almost every business right now, has had to manage through that. Thankfully, as a 113-year-old company, this is not our first experience with challenging times, and we know how to weather the storms.

Above all, we need to ensure we are cost efficient and one of the ways we have done that recently was through staff reductions. During COVID-19, we strengthened our organization to be able to support the demand and now, like many other companies, we have cut back and realigned with current market conditions. Importantly though, while we have pulled back in some areas, we continue to grow in others, specifically sales. We recently hired a Director of Canada to grow that important market for us and a Director of Food Service to target new partners and customers in this space. *Blue Diamond* continues to grow aggressively in these targeted areas where we know we can get the greatest returns.



I am incredibly optimistic about what lies ahead for us. We have an excellent growth plan, and we will continue to gain momentum as we strengthen our core, break into new markets and areas, and create enablers and efficiencies. What turned us into the global almond powerhouse we are today won't get us to where we need to be tomorrow. The path is not linear, but the destination is set, and I am excited about what lies ahead. I look forward to sharing more with you during the April webinar and when I am out in the field with Mel. ◆

Kai

Kai Bockmann
President & CEO

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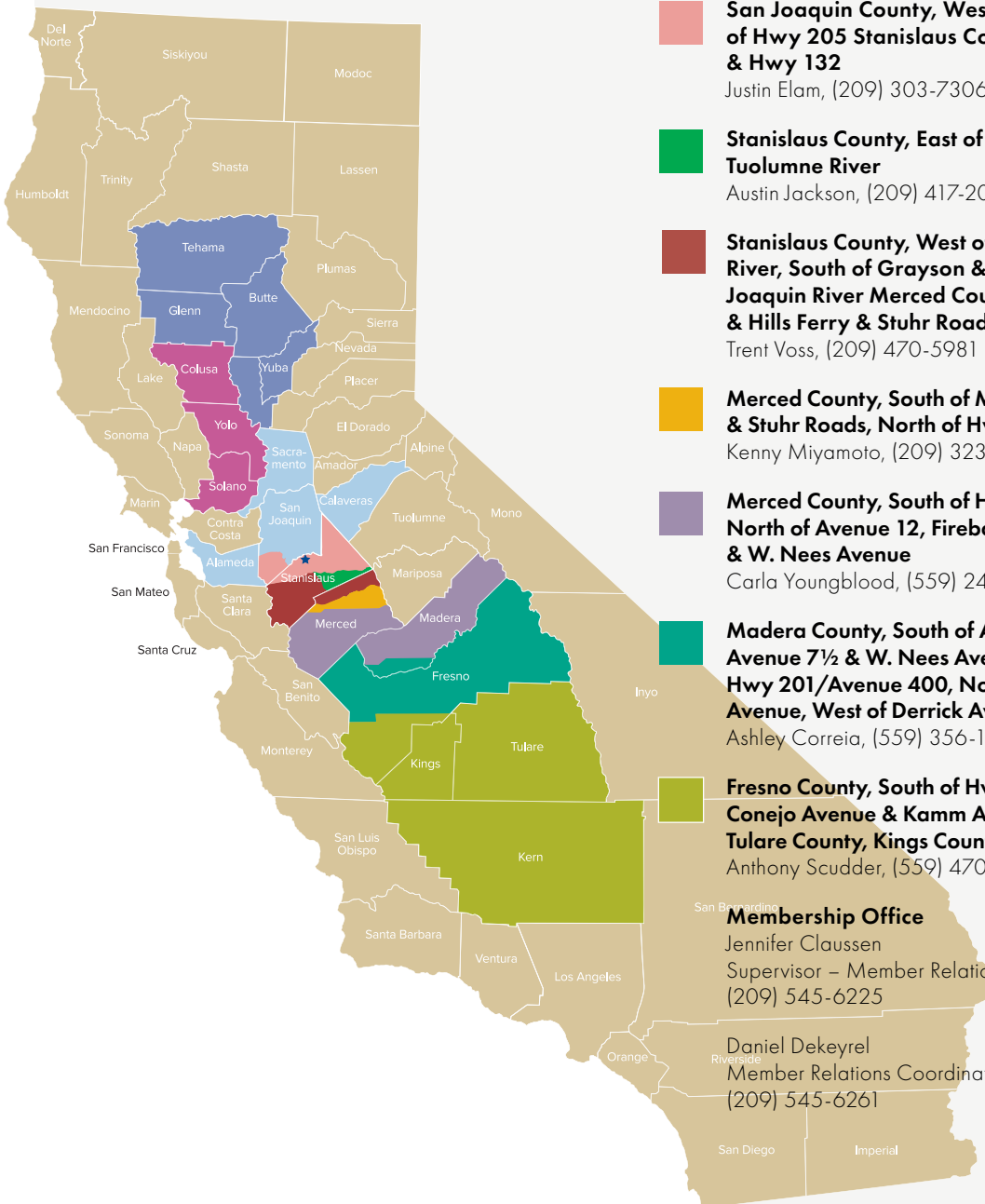
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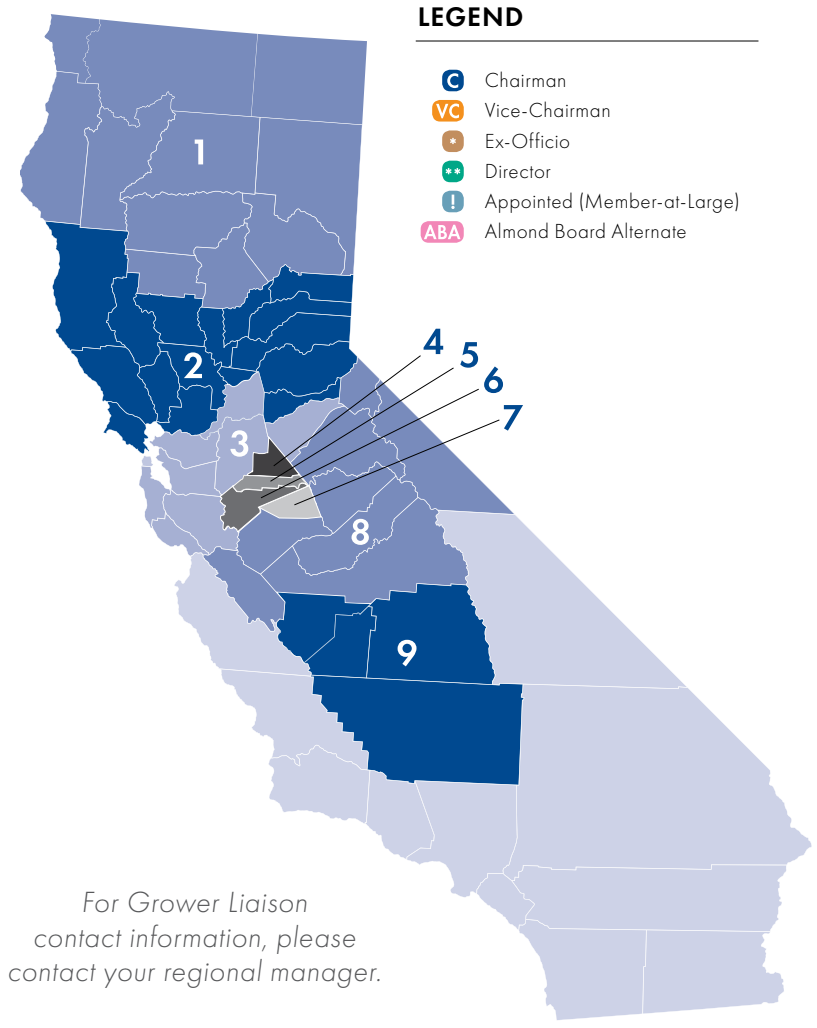
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Almond & Oat Named Editor's Top Pick — *Food & Beverage Magazine*

Great news! Almond Breeze® Almond & Oat Blend was featured at spot number three out of 56 of the "Editor's Top Pick" in Food & Beverage Magazine's "Products to Watch 2024." The roundup included a product image of Almond Breeze® Almond & Oat Blend with the description:

"Almond meets oat in a dreamy blend. Combining the delicious flavor of the best California almonds with the creaminess of oats. Almond Breeze® Almond & Oat Blend is a dreamy, alternative milk that can be enjoyed by the glass or as a deliciously creamy swap for dairy milk in any usage occasion. Try it out in coffee, cereal, baked goods, savory recipes, and more!"

View the feature on page 61 of the digital issue. <https://bit.ly/almondandoataward> ♦



1 37th Street Bakery

Discover the culinary charm of the 37th Street Bakery's all-weather sandwich, with layers of dark, high-quality buns, rich buttermilk dressing, and perfectly cooked meats. This additional creation, featuring a hearty roast, adds a sensory depth to the local favorite. Sandwiches are the perfect canvas for your favorite fillings. Enhance the experience with a side of fresh-cut fries, and you'll have a meal that's as satisfying as it is delicious. The 37th Street Bakery's dedication to quality and customer service is evident in every bite. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local dining.

3 Almond Breeze®

Almond meets oat in a dreamy blend. Combining the delicious flavor of the best California almonds with the creaminess of oats, Almond Breeze® Almond & Oat Blend is a dreamy, alternative milk that can be enjoyed by the glass or as a deliciously creamy swap for dairy milk in any usage occasion. Try it out in coffee, cereal, baked goods, savory recipes, and more!

4 Amazonella

It's time to enjoy the benefits of the Amazon wildflower honey. Made with the finest organic, sustainably sourced honey from Amazonella, this honey is perfect for your morning coffee, smoothies, and more. It's a natural sweetener that adds a touch of sweetness to your day. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local honey.

5 Appassionata Estate

Appassionata Estate crafts exceptional Pinot Noir and white wines with sustainable practices in Sonoma, California. Founded by world-renowned winemaker David "Doc" D'Amico, the estate is rooted in old-world traditions and a love for the land. It's a place where the "great wine" is not just a goal, but a way of life. The estate's commitment to quality and customer service is evident in every bottle. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local wine.

6 Bataccal Family Vineyards

The Bataccal Family Vineyards (Bataccal Family) is a family-owned and operated winery in Sonoma, California. Founded by world-renowned winemaker David "Doc" D'Amico, the estate is rooted in old-world traditions and a love for the land. It's a place where the "great wine" is not just a goal, but a way of life. The estate's commitment to quality and customer service is evident in every bottle. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local wine.

7 Barramundi Wines

Barramundi Wines is a family-owned and operated winery in Sonoma, California. Founded by world-renowned winemaker David "Doc" D'Amico, the estate is rooted in old-world traditions and a love for the land. It's a place where the "great wine" is not just a goal, but a way of life. The estate's commitment to quality and customer service is evident in every bottle. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local wine.

8 Bell's Reines

Baked and breaded, Bell's Reines are delicious, golden-brown, and perfectly crispy. They're the perfect snack for any occasion, whether you're looking for a quick bite or a treat to share. Visit us today for a taste of the best in local snacks.

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Current Investment Rates available as of August 1, 2023

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 to provide *Blue Diamond Growers* with a steady source of funds. The interest rates effective August 1, 2023, for the program are listed here:

	Short-Term Investment Certificate (STIC)	Long-Term Investment Certificate (LTIC) (Maturity Date of 6/30/2026)
Initial Investment Required	\$1,000	\$50,000
Interest Rate	6.25%	4.25%
	(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.

#WeAreBlueDiamond Social Media Activity



In social media this month, we celebrated team members who make a difference at Blue Diamond and highlighted several recipients of a Blue Diamond Community Grant. We also applauded Almond Breeze® Almond & Oat Blend for being recognized by Food & Beverage Magazine. And we celebrated National Agriculture Day by highlighting a fourth generation grower family, the Mohlers! ♦

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For many years, Blue Diamond Growers has provided small grants to local nonprofits that work to promote at least one of the two pillars of our Community Giving Program: Agricultural Education and/or Health & Wellness. Let's meet this week's Blue Diamond Community Giving recipients!

Second Harvest of the Greater Valley's (@localfoodbank209) year-round Food Assistance program, a grant recipient of Blue Diamond's, partners with other nonprofits throughout the Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties to feed community members in need, helping ensure that residents of any neighborhood in the region can access food assistance nearby.

With Blue Diamond Growers' grant, Salvation Army Turlock (@salvationarmyturlock) provided nourishment to around 150 families, impacting approximately 750 individuals in the Turlock area. Salvation Army Turlock adapted to the needs of home-bound individuals by delivering food boxes directly to their homes, further expanding the reach of their program.

Central California Food Bank (@cencalfoodbank) used funding from Blue Diamond Growers to fuel their comprehensive feeding programs, which provide food to over 300,000 people each month, including 100,000 children throughout Fresno, Madera, Tulare, Kings, and Kern counties. Central California Food Bank fosters strong partnerships with local farmers, food processors, and grocers that allow them to provide fresh produce to community members in need.

The support of Blue Diamond Growers allows Sacramento Food Bank and Family Service (@sacfoodbank) to source healthy food to supplement their network of local food pantries. Grant funds were used to purchase fresh produce and healthy food staples for more than one in four people in Sacramento County who are at risk for hunger.

#communitygiving #bluediamondproud #wearebluediamond



Alicia Rockwell and 74 others

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Blue Diamond's Almond Breeze Almond & Oat Blend made the #3 spot in Food & Beverage Magazine's Products to Watch 2024 list! 🏆 With all the flavor of almondmilk and the creaminess of oatmilk, the new Almond & Oat Blend is everything you want in a non-dairy beverage.

The digital version of the magazine can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/48Lqo7X> (page 61). We're so glad to see our innovative, new products receiving this fantastic recognition.

#BlueDiamondProud #WeAreBlueDiamond #AlmondMilk



You and 162 others

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Continual learning is key to growth and progress. Blue Diamond Growers team member, Fernando Rojas shares how the co-op embraces ongoing education.

In order to move forward we must keep learning. The management team at Blue Diamond Growers encourages team members to learn continually. From Front Line to Shop Floor leadership, the learning never stops. This prepares leaders to share these teachings to team members. The learning cycle is always moving.

Favorite Blue Diamond Product: XTREMES Ghost Pepper 🌶️

#BlueDiamondSpotlight #LifelongLearning #WeAreBlueDiamond #EmployeeSpotlight



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It's National Agriculture Day! We're proud to be a grower-owned cooperative.

Every day, we strive to deliver the best value for each grower, and their family, who entrusts us with their almonds. Our almonds get a strong start on multi-generational farms like the Mohler family, a four-generation (and counting) operation!

These almonds go on to the grocery stores and products that you enjoy globally. From our Blue Diamond family, we're proud to consistently deliver the benefits of almonds to the world!

#nationalagday #wearebluediamond



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Achieving success is a shared victory. Alex Teel, Maintenance Team Lead, shares how the Blue Diamond team spirit drives us forward.

"I enjoy working for Blue Diamond Growers because of our unmatched culture. Everyone is a team no matter what part of the facility or what facility. People are always willing to help one another even from facility to facility. The people who work for this company are truly special and it is truly an honor to work for such a great team and company!"

My favorite almond is Blue Diamond Sweet Thai Chili snack almonds."

#BlueDiamondSpotlight #PlayToWin #WeAreBlueDiamond #EmployeeSpotlight #BlueDiamondProud



BLUE DIAMOND GROWERS


EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Alex Teel
Maintenance Team Lead
Salida, CA

The people who work for this company are truly special and it is truly an honor to work for such a great team and company!

Jeff Hatfield and 49 others

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Very Veggie Spring Green Breakfast Casserole

Cook Time: 90 minutes Difficulty: Medium Servings: 12

Ingredients

2 sweet potatoes, cubed	12 large eggs	½ teaspoon black pepper
10 to 12 ounces mixed mushrooms, quartered	½ cup <i>Almond Breeze</i> ® Unsweetened Original Almondmilk	4 ounces crumbled feta cheese
1 bunch asparagus tender parts, chopped	1 garlic clove, minced	1 bunch scallions, chopped
Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling	½ to 1 teaspoon <i>Blue Diamond</i> Sea Salt Almonds	1 cup frozen peas, thawed

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. On one baking sheet, spread the sweet potatoes, on the other baking sheet, spread the mushrooms and asparagus. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with pinches of salt and pepper and toss to coat. Roast the sweet potatoes for 30 minutes, placing the baking sheet with the mushrooms and asparagus in the oven to roast during the final 10 minutes.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, garlic, ½ to 1 teaspoon salt (use ½ teaspoon salt if using the feta cheese, use 1 teaspoon salt if skipping the feta cheese), and black pepper.
3. Reduce the oven temperature to 350°F. Lightly spray a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with non-stick spray. Place all the sweet potatoes evenly in the bottom of the baking dish. Add half of the remaining vegetables and spread out evenly. Sprinkle with ½ of the feta cheese. Add the eggs, the other half of vegetables, sprinkle with the remaining feta.
4. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until the eggs are set. Let the casserole sit for 10 minutes before serving.





Honey and Blackberry Cheesecake with Gingersnap Crust

Prep Time: 35 minutes

Bake Time: 73 minutes

Difficulty: Medium

Servings: 6-8

Recipe and image courtesy of the National Honey Board

Ingredients

For Crust:

2 cups (about one 8-ounce package) crushed gingersnaps

¼ cup melted butter

For Cake:

1½ lbs. cream cheese, softened

¾ cup honey

⅓ cup heavy cream

1 Tablespoon vanilla

1 teaspoon *Blue Diamond* almond flour

⅛ teaspoon salt

4 large eggs

1 pint fresh blackberries

To Garnish (optional):

1 pint fresh blackberries

Honey

Natural Sliced *Blue Diamond* almonds

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Combine crushed gingersnaps and butter in a medium bowl. Transfer mixture to a 9-inch springform pan. Firmly press the mixture into the bottom of the pan to form an even layer of crust. Bake at 350°F for 8 minutes. Remove from oven, reduce heat to 300°F and allow crust to rest.
3. Meanwhile, beat cream cheese at medium speed in a stand mixer for 3 to 4 minutes. Add honey, cream, vanilla, flour, and salt. Beat until mixed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating between each addition. Beat mixture until just combined. Pour cream cheese mixture into the prepared crust. Drop blackberries on top of mixture. Bake at 300°F for 65 minutes. Turn off oven and leave cake in oven for an additional hour. Remove and allow to cool.
4. Run a knife around the sides of the cheesecake.
5. Cover and chill overnight.
6. Remove sides from pan. Serve with additional berries and drizzle with honey, if desired.



Blue Diamond Almonds Named Official Snack of the Big Ten Conference

Blue Diamond is thrilled to announce it is partnering with the Big Ten conference, the oldest major collegiate athletic conference in the United States. As part of the agreement, *Blue Diamond Almonds* has been named the "Official Snack of the Big Ten Conference."

"Watching sports is the ultimate snacking occasion," says Maya Erwin, Vice President, Marketing and Innovation at *Blue Diamond Growers*. "What attracted *Blue Diamond* to this partnership are the common values shared by the two organizations. Both have been delivering quality products that bring joy to audiences all over the world for more than 100 years. And just as importantly, both have continued to innovate and evolve to stay on trend and maximize people's enjoyment. We are proud to partner with the Big Ten as their official snack to help fuel fans with our craveable energy on game day."

This is a great year for *Blue Diamond* to partner with the Big 10 because the conference is adding four new teams in September (USC, UCLA, Oregon, and Washington). This makes the conference span across the United States from New Jersey to California. Additionally, Big Ten schools have among the largest fanbases in the country, with over 57 billion minutes of live and recorded sports viewed in the past year.

As an official partner of the Big Ten conference, *Blue Diamond* will have a strong presence at prominent Big Ten basketball and football events over the next 18 months through on-site sampling for game attendees, in-stadium signage, digital and social media opportunities, and other activations. Smart snacking just got a whole lot easier for Big Ten enthusiasts!

Blue Diamond Almonds will also have on-air presence in football and basketball games airing on the Big Ten Network, generating over 22 million impressions.

Blue Diamond's first commercials aired in January during men's Tuesday night basketball games, and *Blue Diamond's* first on-site appearance was in early March for the Big Ten Women's Basketball Tournament in Minneapolis, and the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament. Keep an eye out for *Blue Diamond's* exciting appearances during the upcoming games! Visit the Big Ten website (bigten.org/index.aspx) for more information about the conference and events. ♦

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Blue Diamond Vice President of Global Supply Chain, Steve Schult, Receives 2024 Rock Stars of the Supply Chain Award

Steve Schult, Vice President of Global Supply Chain at Blue Diamond Growers, was recently awarded the 2024 Rock Stars of the Supply Chain Award by Food Logistics, a publication dedicated to the cold food and beverage industry. The Rock Stars of the Supply Chain Award is a prestigious recognition in the supply chain world and a testament to Schult's work to ensure the continued success of Blue Diamond Growers.

Food Logistics recently named Steve Schult as the recipient of the 2024 Rock Stars of

the Supply Chain Award: Lifetime Achievement category, which honors industry leaders and executives who have made outstanding contributions to the supply chain industry. The Lifetime Achievement category holds two requirements: recipients must have at least 10 years of documented experience working in supply chain for the food and beverage industry and must also work for a consumer-packaged goods (CPG) company that has at least 5% of its cargo shipped in freight for both dry and refrigerated shipping.

Early in his career, Schult served in the U.S. Coast Guard, cultivating a strong sense of duty and a desire to help others while in the service. The ideals of honor, respect, devotion and treating others with care are central to the U.S. Coast Guard, aligning closely with Schult's personal philosophy.

Schult's experience with supply chain leadership started in the home, before he ever entered the workforce. His mother was a candymaker with See's Candies. "I remember being able to tell what kind of candy she was making by how she smelled when she came home," Schult said. He remembers his mother explaining the difference between a good frontline supervisor and a bad one: good supervisors didn't necessarily tell their employees what to do, they asked, "what can go better?" As Schult's mother put it, "No matter what position you hold, always ask your team how they are doing and what can go better. And always have good shoes."

After his time in the service, Schult married his wife then entered the world of supply chain logistics, working for CPG companies such as Otis Spunkmeyer, Dryer's Ice Cream and Nestlé. Schult took his mother's advice to heart, always listening to the needs and insights of his team (and investing in quality footwear for lots of time on his feet).

Schult has come to value what he calls, "oscillating." As he puts it, "You have to be able to do the work on all parts of the supply chain to know how to do all parts of the job." Blue Diamond Growers recognized the need for someone with this outlook on supply chain leadership. Schult can often be found pulling on his boots to go speak with employees on the warehouse floor, or out to the orchard to walk with growers. He understands that leaders need to learn to shift between making high-level strategic decisions and executing those decisions in the orchard or on the warehouse floor.

Schult's leadership within the industry doesn't stop with the cooperative. He represents Blue Diamond Growers and

the California agriculture industry on the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) and the California Freight Advisory Committee. As a delegate on the FMC, Schult works with some of the largest shipping and railway companies to protect American agriculture from future impacts. Schult sits alongside representatives from large corporations like Amazon and Walmart, granting *Blue Diamond* visibility on a national level. Since the COVID-19 pandemic brought about supply chain issues, industry leaders have become supply chain experts who provided knowledge and insight for the U.S. government. Schult often represents the almond industry and almond growers saying, "As a supply chain executive, it's no longer about influencing your own company; you need to be active in the broader market community. Politicians need experts to provide context and background to deliver laws and legislative changes."

A recent result of Schult's work with the FMC is the removal of legal limitations that severely limited the flow of goods through several major U.S. ports. With help from the Almond Alliance and various industry partners, Schult and other FMC delegates removed certain restrictions on shipping container trailer chassis that had severely limited shipping efficiency.

While the scope of his work ranges from warehouse floors to executive boardrooms to Congressional committees, Schult always has an ear open to almond growers' needs and issues to keep an eye on. Schult encourages growers to pay attention to two particular issues in the news: violence in the Red Sea and the drought in the Panama Canal. Although the two events are on opposite sides of the planet, both can seriously impact ocean shipping

routes, critical resources that give *Blue Diamond Growers* access to international markets. As Schult puts it, when shipping times get longer, fewer boxes of almonds are sent on the ships.

When Schult looks back on his career, he sees both success and failure, "There is no perfect path. Your greatest lessons will be learned from your greatest failures." Indeed, Schult says that his greatest failures and "misses" have been his greatest opportunities to learn and adjust, meaning that the next time those challenges came around, he knew what was needed to succeed. As he put it, just as this past year was a harvest with incredible challenges, the cooperative is setting itself up to overcome those challenges when they come again in the future.

When Schult began his career with *Blue Diamond Growers*, he looked forward to an opportunity to coach and teach at the warehouse floor level while also making high-level strategic and logistical decisions. "I wake up and live my dream, working with farmers and growers and ranchers in the orchards. Very few people in the CPG industry can say they can touch from the floor to the store." ♦



Jake Sonke,
Corporate Communications Intern,
Blue Diamond Growers



When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Talk

In recent decades, suicide rates have risen across the nation, with suicide becoming the 11th most common cause of death in the United States, a 36% increase from 2000 to 2021. Unfortunately, the farming community is not exempt from these tragic statistics. In 2021, the National Rural Health Association indicated that the suicide rate amongst farmers may be up to 3.5 times higher than the general U.S. population.

It's no surprise that farming contains a unique set of stressors. Any number of things could go wrong on a farm, and most of them are outside of our control: weather conditions that damage the crop, domestic and international markets that can adversely impact the price of almonds, unexpected changes in policy or legislation that enforces how we run our farms, and so forth. In any given year, we confront one or more of these obstacles with a measure of determination and a stiff upper lip. We say to ourselves, "This year's bad, but there's always next year." "We'll get through it, we always do." "This farm belonged to my grandmother, then my dad, now me. We've lasted this long; we'll last a little longer."

The past few years have put the industry — our farms, our families, our communities — through the wringer. If it wasn't the bad weather conditions during the 2022 and 2023 bloom, then it was the decreased market demand for almonds and declining prices following the COVID-19 pandemic or the massive storms hitting our friends in the south during harvest. Each of these events, and we know that there were more than just three, is a potential source of stress. We are naturally equipped to handle a small number of stressors every day, but when the stressors pile up without relief, we see the adverse effects of prolonged stress.

So, why do we need to talk about these issues? Let's look at the numbers. According to the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), rural populations like farming

communities have shown a significantly higher suicide rate than urban areas. Available information indicates that the suicide rate amongst farmers is 3.5 times higher than the general population. A 2020 study that focused on suicide rates by occupation revealed that the suicide rate for farmers, ranchers and ag managers accounted for 43.7 deaths per 100,000 population. This rate is significantly higher than that of the overall population and is the sixth highest rate throughout occupational groups.¹

Prolonged stress can reduce our ability to "see the bigger picture" harming our view of the world. When our view becomes obscured by life's problems, it's easy to isolate and detach, which can lead to feelings of despair. We may exchange normal, healthy habits like eating a balanced diet, going to bed on time, and regularly catching up with friends and family, for unhealthy habits like excessive drinking and smoking or increased isolation. Problems like low yields, tight finances or bad weather could evolve from manageable to overwhelming. With our view of the world so obstructed, tragic actions like suicide, a long-term solution to short-term problems, may be more easily considered.

Even if you aren't struggling with prolonged stress, it's more than likely that you know someone who is. It's important to be on the lookout for warning signs, like significant changes in a person's demeanor or in the upkeep of their farm.

¹ <https://extension.psu.edu/why-we-need-to-keep-talking-about-farm-stress>

Know The Warning Signs

When loved ones, neighbors or others you care about are experiencing mental health challenges, they may not even realize it. **Heres how you can identify someone who may be at risk.** ²

Changes in routines or social activities	Decline in the care of domestic animals	Increase in illness or other chronic conditions
Increase in farm accidents	Decline in appearance of the farmstead	Decreased interest in activities or events
Signs of stress in children including struggles with school	Learn more about recognizing the signs of chronic stress, depression or suicidal intent and what you can do to help at NY FarmNet .	

Looking out for each other doesn't have to be a daunting task. The next time you see a friend, ask how they're doing and include questions like, "how are you doing today?" which can open the door to deeper conversation and encourage them to get some of that stress off their chest. If they decide to open up, don't worry about providing a perfect solution; sometimes, just listening makes a world of difference. Your care and comfort may even allow them to discover some solutions. As *Blue Diamond* Regional Manager Carla Youngblood put it, sometimes that person "really just needs to vent, to talk, to kick some dirt."

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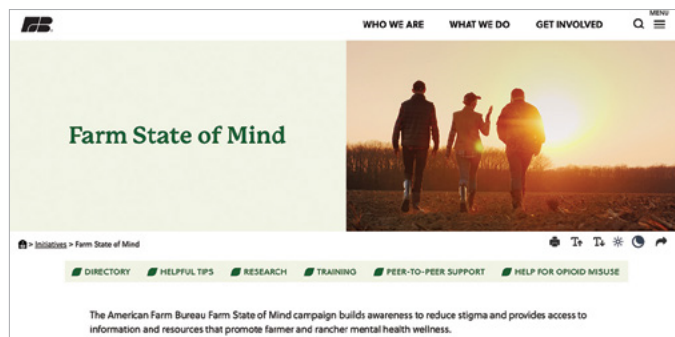
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Your own health is vitally important as well. While there's no one-size-fits-all method of removing stressors in life, establishing healthy habits is good for the body and the mind. Find small activities that are important to you that help you unwind and relax. These habits might include turning off the news, calling a close friend, or spending time in groups like church, clubs or other larger social settings. Maintain those good habits, even during hard times, which will help you cope when those times come. We don't invest in our farming equipment and wait for it to break down, we do maintenance along the way to extend the life and quality of the equipment. So, let's treat ourselves with the same care and compassion we treat others with!

These kinds of conversations can be awkward, but when it comes from a place of deepest care and concern, do not worry. Don't be afraid to share personal tips to cope with hardship; it may help others learn to cope as well. If a friend reaches out for help, encourage them, lend a listening ear, and let them know you're there for them to help them get through their challenges. What matters most is showing genuine care. Our encouragement to our friends and neighbors, especially during hard times, can go a long way and may mean more than you know.

Resources:

Need Help? Know Someone Who Does? Visit the Farm Bureau's "Farm State of Mind" website for more information.



Five Steps to Help Someone in Emotional Pain³

- 1 Ask
- 2 Be there
- 3 Stay connected
- 4 Keep them safe
- 5 Help them connect

Visit the [National Institute of Mental Health](#) website for more information.

Coping with Stress and Anxiety⁴

- 1 Connect with others
- 2 Take breaks from negative news or influences
- 3 Prioritize your health and well-being
- 4 Take time to unwind
- 5 Recognize when you need more help

Visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) website for more information.

Want to equip yourself with more resources to help your neighbors? Visit mindyourmelon.org for more thoughts, concepts and resources that encourage proactive choices and lifestyles. ◆



2, 3, 4 <https://www.fb.org/initiative/farm-state-of-mind>

Mallorie Hayes Receives “Emerging Leader” Award from CMTA

Blue Diamond’s Government and Public Affairs Manager, Mallorie Hayes, was selected as one of the recipients of the Emerging Leader Award as part of their Women MakingCA Awards by California Manufacturers & Technology Association (CMTA). The Emerging Leader Awards were given to rising female talent who have made significant contributions to the community and industry and excelled early in their careers. Hayes underwent a rigorous selection process involving numerous exceptional nominees and was ultimately chosen for her impressive accomplishments and inspiring dedication to the community and the manufacturing industry.

Hayes’ blossoming career with Blue Diamond began upon her graduation from California State University, Chico. She was brought on as the Public Affairs intern nearly a decade ago and has since taken massive steps in her field. At the conclusion of the internship, Hayes was hired as the Communications and Government Affairs Coordinator, then was promoted to Associate Public Affairs Manager and served in that role until she was, once again, promoted to Government and Public Affairs Manager in 2020. Her years of dedicated service to Blue Diamond have yielded



Hayes pictured with Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen

wonderful results for the cooperative including growing the cooperative’s presence within local communities, mitigating harmful legislation such as a 3,000% increase of a business tax, building robust relationships with elected and community leaders, and creating a regular public affairs update, “At the Capitol,” for growers.

“Mallorie’s work on behalf of our almond growers, the cooperative and the community is remarkable and impactful,” said Alicia Rockwell, Chief Government Affairs Officer. “Her authenticity, depth of issue management and communication savvy set her apart as a fierce advocate in matters that matter most to Blue Diamond, and she is truly deserving of this great recognition.”

“Working at the intersection of agriculture, food and manufacturing means keeping a strong finger on the pulse of what is happening in the industry, the government and even the public.” said Hayes. “Making sure the voices of the cooperative and our growers are heard throughout is important work, and it is a privilege to do it.”

Hayes was recognized during CMTA’s Women MakingCA Conference on March 5 in Sacramento. Blue Diamond is proud to have such a wonderful employee receive this great honor! ◆



Ananda Rochita (VP of Communications, CMTA) with Mallorie Hayes

Christine Ivory Receives ATHENA Leadership Award

Christine Ivory, *Blue Diamond* Regional Manager for District 1, was recently selected as the ATHENA Leadership Award recipient by the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce. Ivory was nominated for the award by *Blue Diamond* grower, Kelli Evans, from Live Oak, CA. The ATHENA Leadership Award recognizes women in any industry who prioritize professional excellence, support others in the community, and advance in their leadership skills.

As part of Ivory's nomination for the award, Evans and several other women in agriculture provided examples of Ivory's active mentorship and advocacy throughout her years in the industry. This mentorship often began during high school or younger, as Ivory opened doors to scholarships, internships and other career-propelling opportunities. Ivory sets an inspiring example to her mentees and peers and shares a myriad of valuable knowledge, whether it be agricultural, professional or personal.

Prior to her start with *Blue Diamond Growers* in 2017, Ivory worked as a District Manager for Pacific Coast Producers, an agricultural cooperative specializing in canned fruits and tomatoes for various private brand customers. Throughout her career, Ivory has been active in volunteer and civic groups, including the Almond Board of California, the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation, the Yuba City Economic Development Commission, the American Cancer Society, and more.



“Christine’s position within Blue Diamond takes many different pathways from supporting the growers, male and female, throughout her geography.”

— KC Stone, *Blue Diamond Regional Manager (District 3)*

“She provides support, encouragement and education to make strong members of the cooperative... I know for a fact I would not be excelling in the almond industry if it was not for her support and guidance.”

— Kelli Evans, *Blue Diamond grower*



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With election season well underway, more than 2,000 bills introduced in the California legislature, and the deadline for Congress to pass funding bills draws near, it's safe to say the world of government and politics is an eventful one.

Fortunately, Congress has passed six of 12 appropriations bills, including legislation that funds the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. However, the remaining appropriations bills are unfinished and include funding for departments that expired at midnight on March 22, 2024. These bills include approximately 70 percent of discretionary spending and funding for the Department of Defense, Homeland Security and Health and Human Services. A deal remains to be seen due to disputes over immigration and border provisions in the Homeland Security appropriations bill.

The Farm Bill, or lack thereof, remains a critical priority for agriculture. At the end of last year, Congress extended Farm Bill programs through September 30, 2024. The

Agricultural committees will attempt to pass a Farm Bill during an election year, which is no easy task. As of now, neither the House nor Senate Agriculture Committee has introduced their own version of the Farm Bill.

In California, the State legislature is in full swing introducing more than 2,100 bills this year, a decrease from the record-breaking 2,700 bills introduced in 2023. Priorities for the legislature include artificial intelligence (AI) and retail theft. The budget deficit will have significant impacts on bill proposals with new estimates suggesting a \$73 billion deficit. This is causing the administration and legislature to halt, delay or defer spending for critical programs while finding new sources of revenue for the state. The agriculture industry will see this firsthand as it fights for funding for important programs and negotiates the governor's proposed mill tax, which could increase fees on pesticides.

California held its primary elections on March 5. As expected, voter turnout was dramatically low in California

and across the nation. While some races have been called, others are too close and will not be finalized until results are certified April 12. California's only proposition on the primary ballot and a priority for the Newsom administration, Proposition 1, has not been called yet. However, opposition to the proposition has indicated they believe it will pass. What is certain, though, is that this begins the race to November 5.

Your *Blue Diamond* Government Affairs team is actively monitoring all legislation and working with industry associations and regulatory agencies to comply with new laws. If you need additional information or have a concern, please reach out to Mallorie Hayes mhayes2@bdgrowers.com or Alicia Rockwell arockwell@bdgrowers.com. ♦



Mallorie Hayes,
Government & Public Affairs Manager,
Blue Diamond Growers



**Breaking Out of the Shell —
42nd Annual Almond Alliance
Convention**

The Almond Alliance Convention is being held on April 22-25 and is designed to provide education and inspiration. Members will take a comprehensive journey through the What, How, Who, and Why of the Almond Alliance's rapid expansion and growth as a national trade organization and the results delivered that have become the foundation for what is to come.

"*Breaking Out of the Shell*" is welcoming back some of the greatest industry assets, including Stacey Henderson of Henderson & Hatfield for the latest in state and federal labor law and a favorite economist, Matt Clark of Terrain, for key industry insights. Keynote Speaker Marion Tupy will share his controversial and counterintuitive examination of why population growth and freedom to innovate make earth's resources more, not less, abundant. For more information about the 2024 Almond Alliance Convention,

visit almondalliance.org

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THE BEE BOX

What is Bee Friendly Farming?



Pollinator Partnership is happy to be part of *Blue Diamond's* Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program (OSIP) for the third year. *Blue Diamond's* OSIP is based on documenting the high level of performance of their growers in farm sustainability including orchard management, environmental issues, and occupational health and safety practices. There are two tiers of OSIP that growers may participate in. The highest level, Triple Diamond, includes completing the California Almond Stewardship Platform assessment, taking a carbon footprint assessment, and achieving Bee Friendly Farming Certification.

Bee Friendly Farming Certified (BFF) is a certification program from the 501 (c) 3, award-winning non-profit Pollinator Partnership, whose 25-year history has allowed it to grow into the world's largest non-profit focused exclusively on pollinator issues. BFF works with farmers to help protect, preserve, and promote pollinator health

through science-based Best Management Practices. BFF works with farmers to incorporate affordable, simple, science-based guidelines, like offering nutrition and habitats for bees and other pollinators, and through Integrated Pest Management strategies.

Bee Friendly Farming Certified practices include cover cropping, hedgerow planting, buffer strips, and Integrated Pest Management, which provide numerous benefits to farmers and ecosystems. Farmers are supported through this process and can meet the certification criteria by using a combination of these practices.

How Does a Farm Qualify?

The criteria are straightforward and easy to understand for buyers and growers, but they may require an investment in the on-the-ground management of the orchards or farming operation. These growers must commit to the following science-supported practices:

1. Offer forage to provide good nutrition for bees on at least 3% of land. Forage can be temporary, including cover crops.
2. Provide bloom of different flowering plants throughout the growing season, especially in early spring and late autumn. There is no minimum land coverage for seasonal bloom.
3. Offer clean water for bees if not inhibited by government-mandated water restrictions.



Longhorn bee, almond orchard. Photo credit: Miles Dakin, Pollinator Partnership



Cover crop almond, February. Photo credit: Billy Synk, Pollinator Partnership

4. Provide permanent habitat for nesting through features such as hedgerows, natural brush, buffer strips, or bare ground.
5. Practice Integrated Pest Management to reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals.

How to apply for Bee Friendly Farming?

Create an account and apply at the BFF login page (www.pollinator.org/bff-cert/apply). When necessary, BFF team members will reach out for follow-up information. Before certification can be awarded, all information must be verified. Certification decisions will be delivered 4–6 weeks after submission of all necessary documents and information. **To qualify for Blue Diamond's OSIP, you must submit your materials to Pollinator Partnership by April 12, 2024.**

To Include:

- Photos of your:
 - Habitat
 - Forage
 - Clean water provided for the bees
- List of non-cropped, flowering plant species provided for bee forage.
- A farm map with detailed information including habitat, forage, and water locations clearly labeled.
- Details on your operations pest management protocol, including monitoring/identification practices, decision-making steps, prevention techniques, intervention (application conditions, drift management, etc.), evaluation, and resistance management.

To upload additional photos, maps, and pertinent material, email bff@pollinator.org.

Proof of current good standing in other accepted certifications will allow you to bypass significant portions of the application form, such as the California Almond Stewardship Platform, California Certified Organic Farmers, USDA Certified Organic, and others are all programs that will help expedite your application process. If your specific certification option is not available in the application, please reach out to bff@pollinator.org for more information or to have it considered.



Cover crop almond, February. Photo credit: Billy Synk, Pollinator Partnership

The BFF second-party verification program requires an annual certification fee of \$45.00 USD due yearly on the grower's anniversary date of certification. Every third year of BFF certification, members will be required to complete a Three-Year Compliance Form. The compliance form follows the same process as your initial application for certification and will allow you to show us how you are continuing to help pollinators, express any changes to your operation over the last three years, and ensure that you receive continued recognition for your accomplishments. Submission of all required documentation and associated

Compliance Form are due one month prior to the anniversary of your certification. This process should take approximately 30–45 minutes to complete when the proper documents have been previously prepared.

Are There any Additional Resources Available?

Pollinator Partnership has prepared several guides to aid in your pollinator habitat project efforts. The Bee Friendly Farming Handbook (<https://bit.ly/beefriendlyfarminghandbook>) can be used to learn the ins and outs of the BFF program.

Utilize this guide to navigate the certification process, including but not limited to BFF criteria and what material is required to meet certification standards, understanding the difference between the second and third-party verification process, and the Three-Year Compliance process.

A Technical Guide for Farmers and Ranchers in California (<https://bit.ly/farmerrancherguide>) has been created for farmers and ranchers who want to protect and promote pollinators on their land. Actions that support pollinators improve farm productivity as well as the resiliency of farm and ranch operations. This guide can be used as a quick reference on individual topics or can be read in its entirety for a deeper dive into the subject. It provides guidance on how to support and protect pollinators and other beneficial organisms that are essential to resilient and productive farms in California.

The Find Your Roots Tool (www.pollinator.org/find-your-roots-tool) is based on the lists of native plants that support pollinators from our Ecoregional Planting (www.pollinator.org/guides) guide series. Guides contain detailed information on pollinators, how to help them, and feature specific ecoregional information. Use this tool to make it easier to create customized plant lists for your region and requirements.

Pollinator Partnership currently has funding available for farmers in California to install pollinator habitat and implement best management practices. Visit www.pollinator.org/bff/ag-funding for details. ◆



Miles Dakin,
Director of
Bee Friendly
Farming,
Pollinator
Partnership

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THE ALMOND BOARD

Fumigation Regulation Changes, Deadline Extension Nearing

The California Department of Pesticide Regulations (CDPR) has created new licensing categories this year for fumigators, whether soil or non-soil applications. Because of an administrative backlog in getting people trained and approved, CDPR has granted an extension of enforcement until the end of March. Industry members need to make sure they are compliant soon or they could face serious fines.

The extension on enforcement of the new rules by county ag commissioners was announced in mid-December after concerns were raised at The Almond Conference earlier that month.

The updated regulations affect more than people associated with the almond industry.

“The new Soil Fumigation (Category L) is required for individuals who perform pest control using a pesticide labeled as a fumigant to control soil pests in sites including fields, forests, golf courses, greenhouses, and individual tree or vine hole sites,” according to guidance put out by the California Association of Pest Control Advisers. “Individuals who previously performed this type of pest control under the Field Fumigation (Subcategory O), which is no longer a subcategory after Dec. 31, 2023, will have to obtain the new Category L if they wish to continue performing soil fumigations.”

In the almond industry, fumigation typically happens at either one of two times.



The first situation is to treat the soil before a new almond orchard is planted. Pre-planting fumigation combats several pests — primarily nematodes — as well as replant disorder. The treatment is carried out by a specially licensed applicator (Qualified Applicator License (QAL)).

The second situation is the use of post-harvest fumigants to treat stockpiles — nuts in storage and/or prior to shipment. These instances fall under the “non-soil fumigation” licensing category. These fumigants are most commonly at the huller/sheller or processor, though stockpiles can be on a grower’s land. Post-harvest fumigations are aimed at limiting insect damage while the nuts are stockpiled as well as during storage.

A treatment is often required to meet export phytosanitary requirements. Most handlers have employees certified in fumigation to handle this task; if not, a PCA or QAL would be called in.

Regardless of who is carrying out the treatment, those people must follow the new training and certification requirements by March 31 to continue to fumigate.

A CDPR official said the new regulations are part of a broader federal effort to raise the bar around certification and training requirements for licensed applicators and pest control advisers across the country.

“It’s a lot of changes for a lot of people,” said Karen Morrison of the CDPR during one of the breakout sessions at The Almond Conference.

Anyone with questions about licensing should visit www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/license/liccert.htm at the CDPR’s website or email LicenseMail@cdpr.ca.gov or Alicia.Scott@cdpr.ca.gov.

Article contributed by the Almond Board of California ◆

Almond Board's QR Code: A Leap in Transparency & Stewardship

The Almond Board of California has introduced a groundbreaking QR code to redefine consumer interaction with the almond industry. Spearheaded by Kath Martino, ABC's Europe and strategic communications lead, this innovative initiative aims not only to engage consumers but to showcase the industry's commitment to responsible almond cultivation.



Inspired by a mural in Milan, the QR code features icons representing objects associated with almond orchards. What sets it apart is its impressive size, suitable for large-scale placements like billboards. The earthy and natural colors convey a subliminal message of goodness associated with California almonds, emphasizing transparency and stewardship.

Live for only for just a few months, the QR code has recorded hundreds of scans, strategically placed in high-traffic areas like transit shelters and

airports. The Almond Board's goal is to promote the stewardship practices happening within the industry. The QR code provides transparent access to information, addressing consumer concerns about water usage, pollinators and waste associated with growing almonds.

Looking forward, the Almond Board plans to diversify its advertising strategy, exploring print media opportunities, especially in Germany, where print magazines still hold sway. The aim is to continue finding innovative ways to tell the industry's stewardship story and engage consumers effectively.

Martino also emphasized the importance of influencers, citing a Deloitte study that positions social media influencers as the most trusted source of sustainability information. The Almond Board leverages influencers to provide credible perspectives on almond cultivation, further emphasizing the industry's commitment to stewardship.

The Almond Board's QR code initiative marks a bold leap toward more transparency, sustainability, and consumer engagement. As the almond industry evolves, Martino and the ABC team remain committed to shaping concise narratives that resonate globally while promoting responsible stewardship practices happening within the California almond industry.

Article contributed by the Almond Board of California ◆



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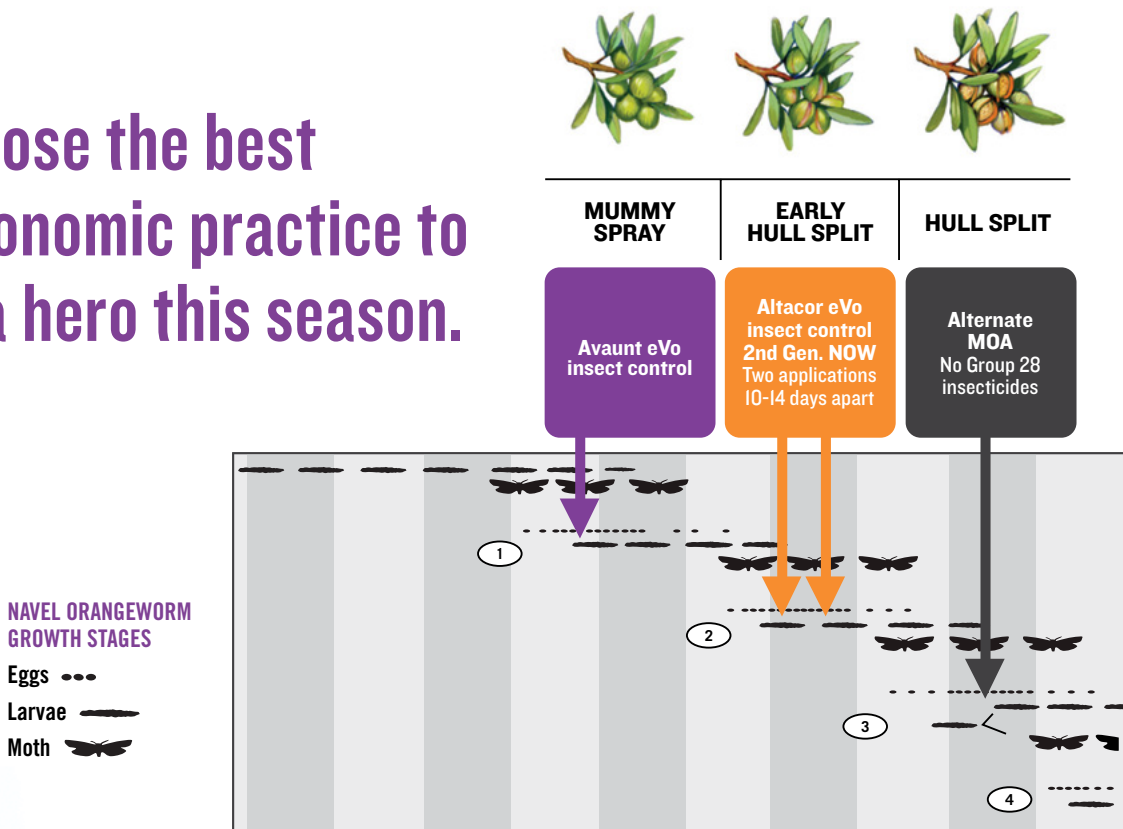
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The EPA label for Avaunt eVo insect control contains the following statements: This product is highly toxic to bees exposed to direct treatment on blooming crops or weeds. Do not apply this product or allow it to drift to blooming crops or weeds if bees are foraging the treatment area.

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TIME TO CONSIDER



2023 was a year many almond growers would like to forget. Navel Orangeworm, also known as NOW in the industry, was by and large the main reason for pain and discomfort for growers last year. So of course, I am going to write an article that is going to make growers relive this terrible reject year. Why would I want to do that, you might ask? In hopes that you can avoid it again this year! In this article I am going to dive into the level of damage experienced in 2023, what may have caused it, and what can be done in 2024 to prevent it. Finally, we'll examine how much money can be lost due to this severe level of damage.

Saying that the 2023 damage from NOW was extensive would be an understatement! For the 2023 crop, 55% of Nonpareil deliveries were graded at the S1 level (standard grade not receiving quality meat or inshell premiums). Those deliveries had an average reject percentage of just over 5%. Keep in mind that the level to achieve quality on meat deliveries is 2% or lower. Did the pollinizer varieties fare any better? Aldrich had 55% of deliveries graded as S1 with an average reject percentage of 4.9%, and Monterey had 60% of deliveries graded at the S1 level with an average reject percentage of 4.7%. I know that's a lot of numbers thrown at you, but to boil it all down, 2023 was one of the worst reject years on record. This is even worse than the last difficult year in 2017 which we refer to as the "The Wreck."

What caused the "Great Rejection" of 2023? As with many things, there were several factors that influenced the outcome. The first being a lack of winter sanitation. Heavy rainstorms and difficult market economics led to a reduction of winter shaking and mummy nut destruction. The lack of winter sanitation led to a large emergence of overwintering NOW, whose population increased as the year continued. This population was also increased by a high number of abandoned or poorly maintained orchards. Growers also experienced a prolonged bloom, which in turn, caused a prolonged hull split. Many growers commented on the variability they experienced during hull split, and how they had green nuts with little to no split, while also having

nuts that had been ready to shake for some time. This variability made it difficult to time Hull Split applications and left many orchards vulnerable without protection against NOW. Lastly, market economics played a role in the high reject numbers. Low pricing plus the high cost of inputs has forced many growers to cut or be very selective on what they can or cannot do in their orchards. All these scenarios combined into a perfect storm that led NOW to thrive throughout the 2023 crop year.

What can you do in 2024 to prevent repeating 2023? Hopefully, as a grower, you decided that winter shaking is a must, and you completed your winter sanitation during the dormant period. This also includes thoroughly mowing and destroying mummies after shaking. It is impossible to spray your way out of a situation later in the spring when mummy nuts are left in the tree. Mating disruption may be a good option to help reduce NOW damage. Though not new, this technique may be new to many almond growers throughout the state. Mating disruption uses pheromones that confuse the NOW moths and prevents mating. Typically, pheromones work well on large rectangular blocks. If you have a smaller operation, you may want to ask your neighbor if they are interested in mating disruption and then you can combine your orchards into a larger block. Mating

Comparative Values at Varying Reject Levels

Total Meat Pounds	RJS%	Yield		TGM	Base	Total Premium		Total Value	Loss	Incremental Loss	Value/TGM	Opportunity Loss
		RJS Wt	2,400			Rate	Amount					
		Price	\$			1.50						
2,400	0.00%	-	-	2,400	\$3,600.00	\$0.185	\$444.00	\$4,044.00			\$ 1.685	\$0.000
2,400	1.00%	24	24	2,352	\$3,528.00	\$0.175	\$411.60	\$3,939.60	(\$104.40)		\$ 1.675	(\$0.044)
2,400	2.00%	48	48	2,304	\$3,456.00	\$0.115	\$264.96	\$3,720.96	(\$323.04)	(\$218.64)	\$ 1.615	(\$0.135)
2,400	3.00%	72	72	2,256	\$3,384.00	\$0.050	\$112.80	\$3,496.80	(\$547.20)	(\$224.16)	\$ 1.550	(\$0.228)
2,400	4.00%	96	96	2,208	\$3,312.00	\$0.045	\$99.36	\$3,411.36	(\$632.64)	(\$85.44)	\$ 1.545	(\$0.264)
2,400	5.00%	120	120	2,160	\$3,240.00	\$0.035	\$75.60	\$3,315.60	(\$728.40)	(\$95.76)	\$ 1.535	(\$0.304)
2,400	6.00%	144	144	2,112	\$3,168.00	\$0.025	\$52.80	\$3,220.80	(\$823.20)	(\$94.80)	\$ 1.525	(\$0.343)
2,400	7.00%	168	168	2,064	\$3,096.00	\$0.015	\$30.96	\$3,126.96	(\$917.04)	(\$93.84)	\$ 1.515	(\$0.382)
2,400	8.00%	192	192	2,016	\$3,024.00	\$0.005	\$10.08	\$3,034.08	(\$1,009.92)	(\$92.88)	\$ 1.505	(\$0.421)
2,400	9.00%	216	216	1,968	\$2,952.00	(\$0.005)	(\$9.84)	\$2,942.16	(\$1,101.84)	(\$91.92)	\$ 1.495	(\$0.459)
2,400	10.00%	240	240	1,920	\$2,880.00	(\$0.015)	(\$28.80)	\$2,851.20	(\$1,192.80)	(\$90.96)	\$ 1.485	(\$0.497)

Assumes Nonpareil Meat Deliveries

Assumes full premium for Chipped & Broken and Foreign Material = \$.055

disruption is not a silver bullet and will not make a disastrous situation appreciably better. NOW treatments will still be needed and should be timed to the hull split. If you were to not complete winter sanitation, a mummy spray, which is typically made in the latter half of April, may be necessary. While no one wants to introduce an additional treatment early in the season, this is the first opportunity to reduce the population that will ultimately attack the new crop at hull split. Properly timing the hull split application is vital, but remember, the pollinizers split at a different time than Nonpareils. This may seem like common knowledge, but a second hull split application to target pollinizer varieties may be needed, especially if populations remain high. All these practices will help reduce damage from NOW.

The last question you may ask is “How am I supposed to afford those practices?” I’d say you may not be able to afford not to do them. Orchard input costs have been high, which has led growers to make difficult financial decisions. You will see in the chart above that just going from a reject level of 2% to 3% you lose an extra \$224.16 per acre. At the current reject percentage of 4% for the 2023 crop year, growers could have possibly lost \$632.64 per acre. That is a good amount of money that can be used to control NOW and improve a grower’s bottom line.

Is NOW going to be an issue for the 2024 crop year? The short answer is yes, but it’s more complicated than that. As growers you know NOW is going to be in your orchards, so the real question is what are you going to do about it? The answer to that question can be the difference between meeting quality standards and leaving money on the table.

Be sure to review these best practices with your PCA and develop a plan for 2024. Good planning and timing will go a long way to achieving higher quality premiums, which are much needed in this current market environment. NOW has already caused enough distress and lost profit; do not let it take more from you this year. ♦

Plan for Good NOW control in 2024

- Be sure to mummy shake and destroy mummies.
- Consider if mating disruption fits your orchard.
- A “mummy spray” can provide an added level of control.
- Well timed hull split sprays are essential.
- Consider the losses incurred by not investing in control.
- Develop a plan for NOW control with your PCA for 2024.



Trent Voss,
Regional Manager,
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