



# IN A NUTSHELL

Predictions and Trends for the California Almond Market

March 2009

## Market Update:

Shipments for February were incredible. Up 35% over February 2008 and enough to wake up buyers who thought more negative news was on the horizon. Buyers, for the most part, believe that the 2009 crop will be big (1.3 billion +) and that the carryout from the 2008 crop will be nearly 500 million pounds. Maybe both those assumptions are accurate. If March shipments are anything like February, things are looking better.

Shipments from our company will be very strong in March so I am a believer. Believer of what I can't put into scientific terms but it seems that low priced almonds do move well. Following the shipping figures, we have paid the following prices for 2008 crop:

Nonpareil 27/30	\$1.43
California 25/27	\$ .95
STD unsize	\$ .81

Demand for 2009 crop exists however sellers don't seem interested. 2009 crop prices have been trading at a discount compared to 2008 crop but for now seem to be at parity.

## Grower's Corner: by Frank Roque

### 2009 Crop Seasonal Pool Signups

We are in the process of renewing our pool contracts for the 2009 crop year. I know all growers would like to see our final numbers prior to committing for another year. But we know from the recent past that our final pool prices will not be announced until after the new crop pool is closed. Since we are the first to announce every year, who would you compare it to? So let's get the paperwork out of the way. As you can see by our April payment, we are going to have another strong year.

### April Pool Payment

In these times of economic uncertainty and weaker almond pricing we are going to continue our tradition of paying as much as we can as soon as we can. At this time we are happy to announce that we will be making our next pool payment in April. We will start mailing payments on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

	<u>YTD</u>	<u>April</u>
Nonpareil	\$1.21	\$1.40
Sonora / Carmel / Monterey	\$ .75	\$1.00
Others	\$ .75	\$ .90

***Save the Date for our Annual Grower Appreciation Trap Shoot  
April 24, 2009 at Isla Vista Farms!!!***

“ALMOND MARKETING NONPAREIL”

## 2008 Crop Pool Nonpareil Size Program Schedule

As our industry continues to evolve and we continue to have these record crops, meat size continues to be even more important. The 2008 crop year was similar to the 2007 where we saw average meat sizes on all varieties on the small side; thus making large almonds even more valuable.

<u>Kernel size</u>	<u>Payment per lb.</u>
18/22	\$0.31
22/25	\$0.15
25/27	\$0.03
27/30	\$0.00
30/32	-\$0.06
Smaller than 32	-\$0.35

Your premiums will be added to your April payments.

## 2008 Crop Estimate Contest

For the first time ever we can almost call the victory for Frank Zonneveld a month early. The February Position Report shows receipts at 1,590,656,715. The official \$1,000 winner will be announced in our April newsletter. These are the closest numbers:

Ray Floyd	1,688,694,301
Frank Zonneveld	1,585,500,000
Louie Crettol	1,563,782,001

## Farming News: by Barry Watts

### Bloom Diseases

I am starting to see a little Brown Rot and Shot Hole show up in some orchards. Most of us got our first spray applied without too much trouble and now we are looking to put on a second, if the weather calls for it. The second spray, if needed, will likely need to control both Brown Rot and Shot Hole as both are present and we have a good amount of leaf in the orchard now.

### Spider Mite Sightings

We are seeing Twospotted spider mites on orchards in Fresno and Kern Counties. These mites are found huddled up on the tip of the micro-sprinkler as well as on some of the leaves near the crotch of the tree. It used to be very uncommon to find mites so early in the year but after the last three seasons, I can't say that anymore. You or your PCA may want to scout your orchard as finding mites this early will change how you manage mites this season. Early mite populations can get out of control very easily and will be very hard to manage throughout the season.

### Ground Squirrels

Ground squirrels breed once a year, averaging seven to eight per litter. In the central valley they breed from February through April. The young emerge from the burrow at about six weeks of age. They typically feed on green grasses and plants as they emerge from the burrow in the spring and switch to seeds and nuts when the grasses begin to dry down. Now is a great time to fumigate or trap for ground squirrels, especially since you get the added value of eliminating the litter. Controlling these squirrels now will only make the summer easier.

### Frost Reminder

Moist, firm orchard floors conduct and store heat better than a dry, loose floor. When wetting your soils, you should concentrate on the first foot. Monitor soil moisture after strong winds as this is usually when soil dries out and could possibly be colder. If you must have a groundcover, make sure that it is mowed as close to the ground as possible. Cool air is not able to blow out of an orchard with groundcover as easily as one without.