



# IN A NUTSHELL

Predictions and Trends for the California Almond Market

June 2009

## Market update:

The May shipping numbers were up an impressive 36% over May 2008. This is a much needed shot of adrenalin in what feels to be a perpetually eroding market looking for some positive direction.

Below you will see in Frank's column that we are yet to be in a position to publish our final prices on the 2008 crop. Ironically, when you have some good contracts on the books it makes life difficult for your buyers who are on the wrong side of said contracts. With that, we spend a lot of our time fighting with our buyers to take their shipments. We are still shipping contracts negotiated 12-14 months ago at prices 20-50 cents above today's replacement levels. Many of these contracts should have shipped out 2-4 months ago. While we fight these battles with our buyers, it leaves our farmers holding the bag and for that we apologize. However, much of the industry will carry out 20-25% of their 2008 crop. We are fortunate that we are on track to have only 10-12% of your pool almonds on hand by August 1, 2009.

Following all the shipping numbers, we did a pretty good chunk of business. However, prices seem to be on par with pre-shipping number levels. Our latest field prices are:

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| Nonpareil 25/27  | \$1.70 |
| Nonpareil 27/30  | \$1.61 |
| California 23/25 | \$1.00 |
| California 27/30 | \$ .88 |
| Others           | \$ .70 |

## Grower's Corner: by Frank Roque

### ***2008 Crop Pool***

As much as we would like to announce our final payment now, we just don't feel comfortable doing so. An additional payment will be made in July. We are confident that we will continue our reputation of being a leader in our industry and that our final returns will reflect that. Our goal is to announce our final payment in mid-July and make the final payment in mid-August.

|                  | <u>June</u> | <u>July</u> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Nonpareil        | \$1.58      | \$1.66      |
| Sonora           | \$1.12      | \$1.41      |
| Carmel /Monterey | \$1.12      | \$1.23      |
| Other            | \$1.01      | \$1.09      |

The July pool payment will be mailed on July 17.

## Farming News: by Barry Watts

### ***Smaller Crop Could Mean More Damage***

This year's lighter yields bring an added risk of increased pest damage. That is to say that you have the same relative pest population, but the number of nuts is much less this year. It truly would be a sad sight to see a Navel Orange Worm pinhole, or a little bit of ant feeding on a size 22 Nonpareil. Now is the time to take action against these pests. Ant baits are being applied right now, and growers and their PCAs are trapping for Navel Orange Worm and Peach Twig Borer.

*Continued on back*

**Ant Damage** – You probably know if you have the Pavement Ant or the Southern Fire Ant in your orchard but if you don't, tell your PCA to identify which ants are present. Ants are easily controlled with baits and sprays. Baits are a great value relative to their cost per acre and are simple to apply. Most bait needs to be applied 4 – 8 weeks prior to the nuts being on the ground. Growers with high ant pressure have had great success by applying one bait 8 weeks ahead of harvest and coming back with a different bait 4 weeks before harvest. Older orchards with an average number of ants typically need to be treated one time. Contact your Pest Control Advisor for advice on your orchard.

**Worm Damage** – Navel Orange Worm (NOW) and Peach Twig Borer (PTB) are our primary worm pests that affect our quality. Hull-split (or right before) is when both of these worms start presenting a danger to our almonds. NOW is the biggest problem in most growing regions. By now, you or your PCA have a good idea of the NOW biofix, but it is just as important to have Black egg traps baited with almond presscake treated with almond oil in several locations in the orchard. Trapping NOW eggs will tell you exactly when your orchard needs to be sprayed. Remember to trap as high as possible as this is where almonds begin to split first and will compete with your bait for attraction. Biofix dates are a great back-up to actual trapping. Controlling NOW at hull-split is not the easiest task. Timing and chemical efficacy are critical. Discuss with your PCA the different chemical options available as every orchard has different requirements. Some orchards have such severe pressure that 3 or more sprays are needed, and choosing the most effective chemistry for each time is important.