



PANOCHÉ CREEK
PACKING, INC.

IN A NUTSHELL

Predictions and Trends for the California Almond Market

January 2010

Market update:

Wow!!!! Am I repeating myself?? December shipments @ 147,478,289 pounds are up 50% vs. December 2008. Nothing to be said that would suggest any clarity from this side. Smashing shipping records at price levels that are palatable to you farmers are occurring in the midst of one of the worst economic times in the past 100 years.

I am vaguely aware of the other nuts (walnuts, pistachios, pecans, hazelnuts) that all have a good head of steam. I am certain this contributes to the unprecedented price and shipping phenomena in almonds. Ironically, Spanish almonds have been trading at a discount to California almonds this year which is extremely unusual.

So now we head into bloom. Will the January shipping number be huge? Will El Nino rains arrive and shrink our 2010 potential? Will Australia's supply (which is growing as quickly as prices have moved in the past 6 months) have any impact on market conditions?

Farming News: by Barry Watts

Bee Business...

Here we are again; we are awaiting bloom and trying to figure out how many hives to use. I'm not sure that last year was the best year to measure your new "hives per acre" theory!! The upside this year seems to be that hive prices may have come down a bit, making this decision somewhat less painful.

How many hives should I use? I get asked this question all of the time. The real question is what will the weather be like during bloom? I think most people will be close to last year's game plan, maybe a few more hives which is mainly due to the recent rally in almond prices. Regardless of how many hives you use, it is essential to get full production from each one.

What can we do to maximize each hive? Placing bees on the outside of the orchard can help in many ways. Bees usually leave their hives to forage during daylight when temperatures are between 55 to 60°F. Spotting hives in early morning sunlight will help heat the hives. Colonies that get treated with orchard sprays have a higher mortality rate and a lower overall strength of the hive. Usually, there is more room on the outside of the orchard. This allows for hives not to be stacked which allows for each hive to get more sunlight. Keeping the soil firm and weed free around the colonies will keep the area warmer, allowing the bees to forage earlier. Mowing flowering weeds will keep the bees in the trees instead of on the ground.

Grower's Corner: by Frank Roque

February Payment

Our February pool payment will bring the Nonpareil variety up to \$1.10/lb and all other varieties up to \$.75/lb.

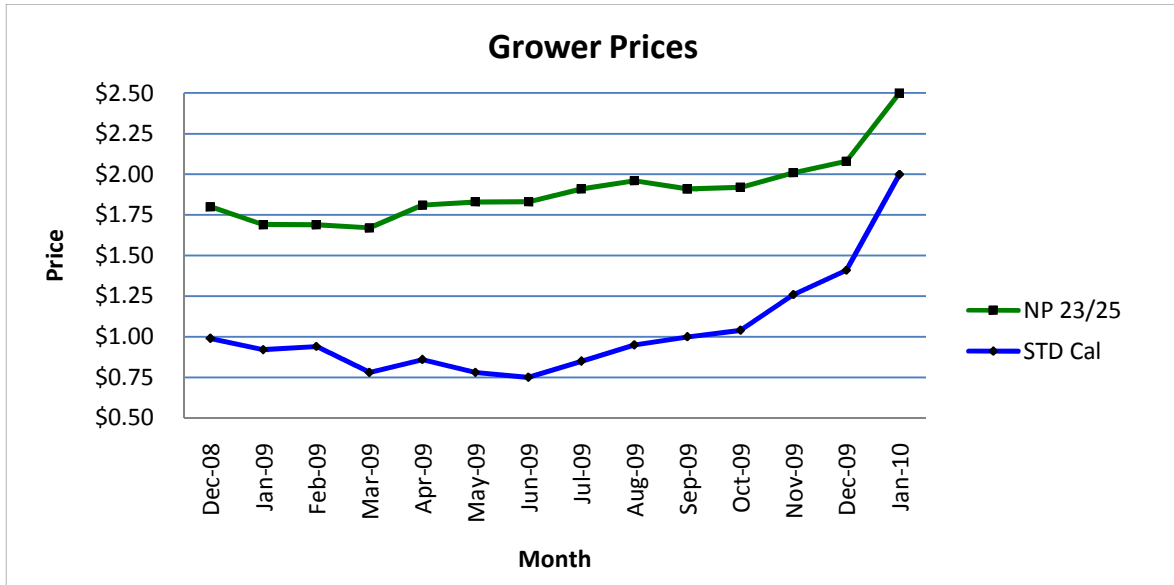
	<u>Payment</u>	<u>Total</u>
Nonpareil	\$.20	\$1.10
All Others	\$.15	\$.75

We will start sending payments February 25, 2010. Please call me if you have any questions.

“ALMOND MARKETING NONPAREIL”

What a difference a year makes!

Last year growers were hoping we were sold out at harvest. This year they are hoping we haven't sold a pound.



The swing in price differentials between Nonpareil and California varieties has been unprecedented. There were many days spent over the summer talking Butte/Padre growers off the ledge (including myself). By the end of harvest there were tree removal cancellations all over the state. We all thought supply and demand would eventually correct the dollar plus difference but who ever thought it would be this much, this quick. It is good to be a Butte/Padre grower again. We cannot forget the rough times because they may be back but it sure makes us appreciate the good times.

