

ABC Global Update

April Record Breakers

At the end of the 3rd Quarter, exports have rebounded resulting in all-time record breaking net and export shipments for the month of April. Overall total shipments are down 5.7% YTD.

	Million Lbs. Aug 2015- April 2016	% Change from Last Year
W. Europe	370,430,164	6%
Spain	135,695,604	23%
Germany	71,749,263	-24%
Italy	42,716,556	37%
Netherlands	33,573,870	-1%
UK	22,880,049	8%
France	18,270,860	16%
Belgium	16,203,348	7%
Central/E. Europe	11,596,200	-15%
Asia-Pacific	331,332,257	-8%
China	108,385,513	-2%
India	97,807,590	-8%
Japan	46,612,137	-5%
S. Korea	30,627,274	-25%
Vietnam	16,253,200	-25%
Middle East	105,039,037	-18%
UAE	41,537,605	-46%
Turkey	29,361,312	14%
Total Exports	885,127,517	-4%

California Department of Food and Agriculture Publishes 2015 California Almond Acreage Report

As a result of growing global demand and new technologies to boost efficiency, California almond production continues to rise, according to the California Department of Agriculture's (CDFA) 2015 California Almond Acreage Report.

Since 2014, total almond acreage has risen 6 percent to reach approximately 1.1 million acres, with a bearing acreage of 890,000 acres. The Nonpareil variety

remains popular with over 310,000 acres. The Independence variety has gained popularity in recent years, with total acreage growing from less than 500 acres in 2010 to over 13,000 in 2015.

Overall almond acreage in California—which produces over 80 percent of the world's almonds—has doubled in the past twenty years.

Thirteenth Round of Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Negotiations Concludes

Negotiators met in New York City recently for the thirteenth round of U.S.-EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations. Despite a high level of recent political support from U.S. and European Union (EU) leaders, no major breakthroughs were achieved during the negotiating round. However, negotiators did make significant progress on the consolidation of texts for many chapters. Additional information on the consolidation of texts is available in the following "state of play" report published by the European Commission. Despite the progress on a variety of issues, agricultural market access for sensitive sectors was not discussed, according to a statement by EU Chief Negotiator Ignacio García Berbero following the round.

Underscoring the importance of agricultural issues in the prospective agreement, a group of U.S. Senators recently sent a letter to the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) urging negotiators to address key issues such as geographical indications (GIs) and biotechnology approvals. According to media sources, the EU is conditioning its market access offer for its meat sector on the U.S. offer regarding GIs.

A fourteenth round of negotiations is tentatively scheduled for July. Additionally, EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and EU Agriculture Minister Phil Hogan will speak at a public

hearing at the European Parliament on July 14 to address agricultural concerns in TTIP, according to media sources. Both sides have stated that significant progress must be made by summer to maintain the possibility of concluding negotiations this year.

Implications for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)

The Coast Guard filed an equivalency with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and announced two acceptable container weighing methods that would be compliant with SOLAS. Please click [here](#) to read more about acceptable shipping methods. Shipping methods take into account both OCEMA and the AgTC's methods to achieve Verified Gross Mass (VGM). The Coast Guard has maintained that U.S. exporters are already compliant with SOLAS and is encouraging shippers and carriers to work together to be sure of compliance. OCEMA and carriers are discussing the opportunity to create a database for shippers to look up container numbers and the corresponding weights. OCEMA publically acknowledged shippers' concerns with verifying the container weight for containers they do not own, at the Women in Logistics (WIL) and Warehouse Education & Research Council (WERC) luncheon on May 2nd. OCEMA stated they believe that the carriers would still be responsible for any inaccurate container weights.

China's Quarantine and Inspection Administration Visits California

In April, the ABC hosted a delegation from China's AQSIQ General Administration and the ports of Shenzhen, Hebei, and Shanghai, where they are responsible for Food Safety inspections for imports. The objective of the visit was to encourage greater confidence in almond practices from the orchard to export, as well as to explain

the regulations applicable to agricultural production.

The industry tour included visits to an orchard, several handlers, and the Port of Oakland. The delegation also presented out to handlers and answered questions about the import inspection process for almonds in China.

AQSIQ was impressed with the almond industry's professionalism, food safety procedures, and good manufacturing practices. China is currently reviewing possible regulations which would enable them to recognize imports which provide reliable quality and food safety controls. ABC will continue to work closely with AQSIQ to progress discussions regarding expedited inspection procedures for almonds.

South Korea Positive List for Pesticide Residues Effective at the End of the Year

With the implementation of a Positive List system for pesticide residues, there was a concern that the appropriate maximum residue limits (MRLs) be established or maintained for almonds in Korea. ABC successfully confirmed that 63 of the 80 compounds used by the almond industry have been submitted for inclusion on the new South Korea positive Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) list by the March 31st, 2016 deadline. 33 almond MRLs have been established in Korea, or can use a proposed 0.01 ppm default tolerance. Pesticide registrants made commitments to submit data for 30 additional almond MRLs. In addition, Korea has announced that it will accept residue packages for generic compounds from the Codex JMPR, EU, or the US-EPA Evaluation Report. Korea also announced that it will maintain all current Korea MRLs (previously, these would have been deleted), bringing the almond MRL list up to 69.

Five MRLs will not be addressed for a variety of reasons, and six compounds are still unclear. The six compounds are: bifenthrin, oryzalin, carfentrazone-ethyl, norflurazon, propylene oxide, pyrethrins, and pyrimethanil. ABC will continue to work closely with registrants to be sure all data packages are submitted. The positive list will take effect on December 31, 2016.

EU Port Health Authorities Invited to California

The Pre-Export Checks (PEC) program went into effect on August 1, 2015. To build confidence in and a greater understanding of the PEC procedures, ABC will be hosting a delegation of port health authorities from the European Union at the end of July 2016. The week-long event will feature an overview of Almond Board administration of the PEC program, industry practices and documentation, and facility and orchard tours. During the week, a Pre-Export Check Seminar will be organized, including a session for industry members to ask questions about port procedures.

The participating countries will include the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands. For more information, please contact Beth Van Meter at evanmeter@almondboard.com.

New SWIFT Program Goes into Effect in India

The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has launched the Single Window Interface for Facilitating Trade (SWIFT), an initiative to speed up clearances for import consignments and improving 'ease of doing business.' Other benefits of the SWIFT program will include reduced costs, enhanced transparency, reduced duplicity and cost of compliance, and optimal utilization of resources.

The SWIFT Program expanded its services to food products on April 1, 2016. Please [click here](#) to visit the website for more information.

CODEX Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) in China

The CCPR met in Chongqing, China, April 25-30. The committee established 392 new Codex MRLs on 31 compounds of which 6 were new active ingredients. 5 new tree nut/almond MRLs were set. In addition there was discussion about the risk assessment methodology used. EU would like it to be more in line with their practices. For more information, please contact Gabriele Ludwig at gludwig@almondboard.com

CODEX Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) in Canada

The CCFL met in Ottawa during the week of May 9-13 to discuss a number of food labeling issues. A focus of the week was agreement on use of Best Before versus Use By dates, particularly the differences associated with quality versus food safety. India also presented a discussion paper for new work which would establish guidance for labeling "non-retail containers." If agreed to proceed, discussions will be initiated at the next CCFL meeting in 2017. For more information, please contact Julie Adams at jadams@almondboard.com.

Upcoming Travel

- **May 24-31, 2016.**
Swati Kalgaonkar in India for industry meetings.
- **May 29-June 1, 2016.**
Julie Adams and Richard Waycott at INC Annual Congress in San Diego.
- **June 1-2, 2016**
Elizabeth van Meter and Gabriele Ludwig at MRL Workshop in San Francisco (May 31 almond tour for Korean/Australian officials)

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The Global Update is a publication by the Almond Board of California. For more information, please contact the Almond Board at 209.549.8262 or regulatoryissues@almondboard.com. The information reported in this document is correct to the best of our knowledge.

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