



# almond facts

NEWS, VIEWS AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2018



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*Blue Diamond* photo contest winner Audrey Beyer captures her brother, Alex, and father, Brad, showing the joy in their first almond crop and optimism in the future of farming almonds.



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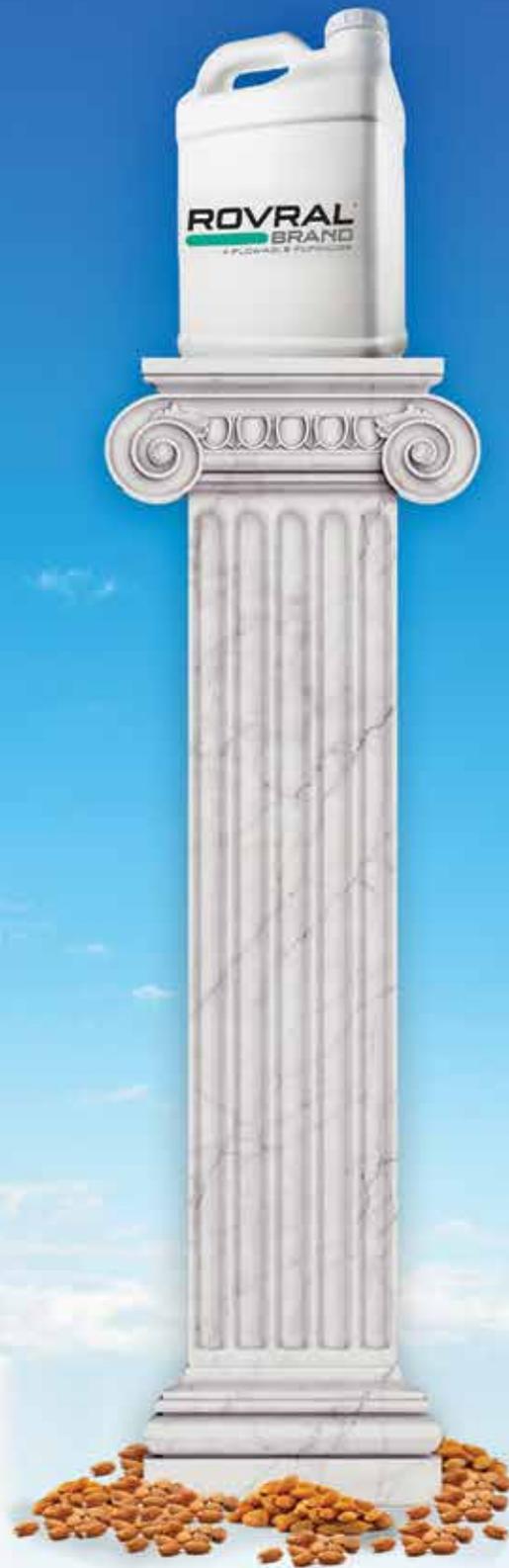
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Mark Jansen  
President & CEO



## The Value of Partnerships

*With 2018 now underway, I want to first wish everyone a happy and prosperous new year! Last year was an exciting one for Blue Diamond and I am energized for what this year will offer the cooperative, our grower-owners and the almond industry.*

The partnerships *Blue Diamond* has built are invaluable to achieving shared goals, including the preservation of family farms — not only in California but throughout the United States. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped bring positive change to the recent Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1).

As you may likely have heard, this piece of legislation was signed into law by President Trump on December 22, 2017. Prior to the signing, American farmers were faced with the real possibility of increased taxes and eliminated deductions — both would have significant financial impact. At *Blue Diamond's* November 2017 Annual Meeting, I encouraged each person who attended to contact congressional leaders and make their voices heard.

The response was extraordinary! The phone calls, letters and record number of emails ensured the perspective of California almond farmers was considered. I am pleased to report that together, in concert with other cooperatives across the nation, we positively changed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The final legislation will be beneficial to *Blue Diamond* grower-owners.

### Key provisions include:

- Preservation of the Interest-Charge Domestic International Sales Corporations (IC-DISC); and
- A new Section 199A allows farmers to receive a 20% deduction on all pass-through payments from a farmer cooperative.

This tax bill supports the economic prosperity of our cooperative members, especially our family farms. As growers continue to face increasing costs and regulations, we must be diligent in mitigating burdensome taxes. The preservation of IC-DISC and creation of Section 199A shows Congress' willingness to listen to American farmers.

One of the most admirable qualities of a cooperative is the ability of its members to come together and engage with partners to achieve a shared goal. I consider all our grower-owners, customers, businesses, communities and the industry, as part of the extended *Blue Diamond* family. The cooperative is stronger because of you!

*Blue Diamond* and the almond industry are well positioned for growth in 2018. *The Best is Yet to Come!* ♦



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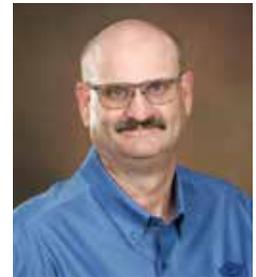
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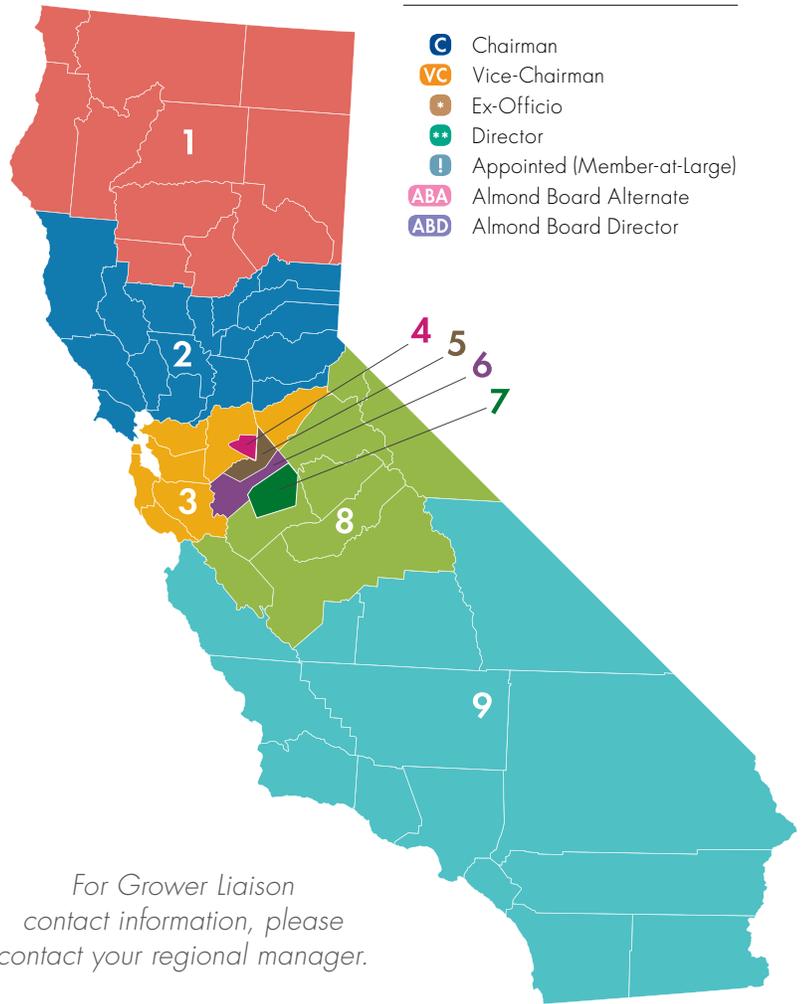
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 Phone: 916.446.8368

# 2018 Grower Liaison

## LEGEND

- C** Chairman
- VC** Vice-Chairman
- \*** Ex-Officio
- \*\*** Director
- !** Appointed (Member-at-Large)
- ABA** Almond Board Alternate
- ABD** Almond Board Director



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- Ray Antonowich
- John Erickson
- Thomas B. Martin
- Greg Long **!**
- Luke Kony **C**
- Warren Gilbert
- Rico Cinquini
- P Samantha Lewis **!**
- Gregory Watts
- Lyle Livingston
- Rick Pittenger
- Brian Erickson **!**
- Dan Cummings **\*\***
- W. Howard Isom **\***

### DISTRICT 2

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- Joe Kalfsbeek
- Matt LaGrande
- Logan Dennis **!**
- Carole M. Cain
- Cathy Marsh
- Maria Griselda Jauregui **VC**
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- Catherine L. Cain
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- Elaine Rominger **\***
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- Mike Bogetti
- Kris Thomsen
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- William J. Van Ryn II
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- Stephen Schmiedt **VC**
- Garret Mussi **!**
- Dale Van Groningen **\*\***
- John Thoming

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- Wes Eisenga **C**
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- Matt Visser
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- Bob Holmes
- Nick Alta
- Paul Adrian **!**
- Kevin Fondse **\*\***
- Kenneth Roos **\***

*For Grower Liaison contact information, please contact your regional manager.*

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- Christine Gemperle-Bacon **VC ABA**
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- Chris Miller **!**
- Steven Scheuber
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- Jeff Baize
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- Rick Scoto
- Jon-Mark Horta
- Steve Moeller
- Tim Lohman **C**
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- Scott Abraham
- Galen K. Miyamoto **VC**
- Joe Sansoni **!**
- Dan Mendenhall **\*\***
- Robert J. Weimer
- David L. Zollinger **\***

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- Curtis Bettencourt
- David Massaro
- Rusty Nonini **!**
- Ranbir Grewal
- Nayiri Saghdejian **C**
- Ryan Indart
- David Tolmosoff **! VC**
- George Goshgarian Jr. **ABD**
- Paramjit Singh
- Joey Biscay
- Norman Pretzer **!**
- George Goshgarian **\*\***
- Aldo Sansoni **\***

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- Carl Nikkel
- Mark J. Fanucchi
- Sean Shick
- Kyle Balakian **C**
- Chris Vandborg **!**
- Thomas Gruber
- Craig Fulwyler **VC**
- Jeff Parsons
- Gurcharan Dhillon **!**
- Kent Stenderup **\*\* ABD**
- Clinton Schick **\***

### *Blue Diamond Welcomes New Board Member Dan Mendenhall*



From peaches to grapes, the rich soil of Belle Terre Farms Co. has a long history of producing a variety of food crops. Dan Mendenhall is currently owner/operator of Belle Terre Farms in Merced County and has been farming there for over 20 years. His wife's grandfather, Teiichi Andow, immigrated from Japan in July of 1910 and established a 20-acre family farm in 1919.

Despite the challenges of WWII — a son wounded in the Army 442nd infantry battalion in France and Italy while his family was interned back in the states — the Andow family maintained ownership of the farm. Today, Dan has grown the family farm to 214-acres focused solely on almonds.

Dan Mendenhall assumes the seat vacated by Bob Weimer, who retired at the 2017 Annual Meeting, and represents District 7 on the *Blue Diamond* Board of Directors.

While serving on the Livingston Farmers Association board, his local huller sheller co-op, Dan realized his experience could bring a valuable perspective to *Blue Diamond*. Before returning to Belle Terre Farms in 1997, his career was set in a corporate environment where acquisitions and investments in research and development were part of the business. During his career, he learned about bringing new products to the market and global manufacturing. A significant portion of it was working in finance developing the company strategic and operating plans.

"I had been immersed in a corporate culture with its own unique politics, vocabulary and acronyms," said Dan. "As in any industry, production agriculture has its own unique culture, vocabulary and processes, which my neighbor and friends thoroughly enjoyed indoctrinating me into."

Dan's hope is that corporate experience will enable him to infuse the grower perspective into *Blue Diamond* and



facilitate better communication of values, perspectives and understanding between the two worlds. He also hopes this opportunity on the board will help him to develop as a person and grower by better understanding the almond industry and meeting new people.

---

*“My goal is to keep Blue Diamond number one by proactively adapting to the dynamic consumer marketplace.”*

---

“It is going to be key to balance today’s superior grower returns with the investments needed to prevent erosion and enhance those superior returns in the future,” he explains.

He brings valuable knowledge and experience in accounting to the board. While he successfully passed the CPA exam and proved proficient at accounting skills, Dan knew his long-term goal was to return to agriculture and chose not to pursue the opportunity to become a certified public accountant. Personal growth has shown him that the most valuable education is from being engaged in the real world.

“Degrees and certifications are good starting points,” said Dan. “But, if you want to have an impact on the world around you, one must keep learning by trying new things and even failing at some.”

Dan and his family are heavily involved in the local community and look forward

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to the future of their farm. His wife, Jan, helped develop the UC Merced campus rising to Associate Vice Chancellor of Development and Executive Director of the UC Merced Foundation board. His daughter, Lauren, is in New York engaged in healthcare administration and his son, Brad, is in Sacramento working in the field of finance. Both kids plan to return to the farm and continue the legacy of Belle Terre Farms Co. ♦

### Santa's Workshop Brings Holiday Fun to Local Children



The holiday season was a merry one for *Blue Diamond*. Team members at the Sacramento campus brought smiles, laughs and cheer to local school children. For over 17 years, the cooperative has partnered with the city's school district to bring Christmas fun to preschoolers — giving back to a community that has been home for 107 years.

*Blue Diamond Growers* hosted several holiday events for the preschoolers, which took place over two days in December and included a Santa's Workshop and gift delivery. Team members transformed the campus into the North Pole where the children experienced magical Christmas fun with cookie decorating, crafts, games and photos with Santa.

The following day, Santa and his elves delivered wrapped gifts for each child and, for the first time during the Santa's Workshop event, the doors of the *Blue Diamond* theater opened to all children at the school. The 200-seat theater was filled K–6th graders dressed in their pajamas to watch showings of the movie *Polar Express*.



Santa's gifts are donated and wrapped by *Blue Diamond* team members and funds are raised through a raffle during the month of December. The cooperative's generosity to the community was recognized by the school district and noted that *Blue Diamond's* engagement demonstrates a commitment to the success of students. ◆

# Blue Diamond Team Serves Breakfast to Homeless

According to Sacramento County, it is estimated that approximately 3,665 people experience homelessness. Team members from *Blue Diamond's* Sacramento campus volunteered for two mornings in early January to help offer a healthy and sustainable breakfast for more than 255 homeless in the community.

The cooperative partnered with Sacramento Loaves and Fishes for a community-sponsored breakfast in Friendship Park, a private park that provides activities and a safe environment for the homeless. Since 1983, Loaves and Fishes has been relying solely on community donations to feed and shelter the less fortunate in the Sacramento area. ♦



Blue Diamond team members Hermelindo Rubio and Rose Lopez Ramirez serve up healthy breakfasts to homeless in the community.



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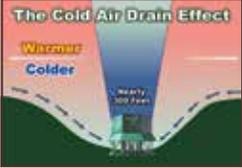
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### Cooperative Welcomes 21st Class of Young Leaders

District 4 growers Matt and Kendra Fields (pictured below) of Ripon recently learned how the structure and operations of *Blue Diamond Growers* helps support the almond industry in California. The Fields were two of the thirty young leaders who met in Sacramento for the first of three sessions in the Young Leaders Program.

The 21st annual program began with a full day of presentations that covered topics from current legislative and water issues to development of a successful farming business. Joining the young leader class this year were Assemblymembers Heath Flora (R-Ripon) and Rudy Salas (D-Bakersfield). Their interactive discussions helped to reinforce the importance of becoming an advocate for the industry and expressed the importance of effective communication.



“Writing to your legislators does make a difference,” said Assemblymember Rudy Salas. “It’s important to tell me how a bill affects you, your families and your business — what the direct impact will be.”

The class ended the day with a chance to meet members of the *Blue Diamond* Board of Directors — four are former graduates of the young leader program — and hear from keynote speaker Assemblywoman Anna Caballero (D-Wastonville), who highlighted the need for California to produce its own food.

“This becomes a national security issue,” said Assemblywoman Anna Caballero. “There is this belief that the water is being shipped to the Central Valley and there is misinformation. It’s really going to be important that the ag industry start telling its story about how important the production of agriculture is in this state.”

The following day, the class visited the *Blue Diamond* Sacramento campus for meetings with key team members who shared insights into the cooperative’s business operations including marketing, grower delivery testing and innovation.

The 21st class of the Young Leader Program will attend their second session in June to continue growing their knowledge and exposure to the almond industry. ♦

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### *Blue Diamond Fuels Athletes for Winter Olympics*

In 2014, *Blue Diamond Almond Breeze Almondmilk* and *Snack Almonds* announced a partnership with the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association to serve as the official almondmilk and snack nut of choice for the teams. We are proud to continue this partnership as the world prepared for the 2018 Olympic Games.

The U.S. Ski and Snowboard team's athletes are driven to be the very best skiers and snowboarders in the world. *Blue Diamond* is proud to support our athletes with food that helps them to maintain a performance-enhancing diet — a key element as they prepare for global competition. Team chefs have created recipes for the athletes leading up to, during and following the competition that incorporate *Blue Diamond Almonds* and *Almond Breeze Almondmilk*. ◆

Below are just a couple recipes created by U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association team chefs.



## Thai Coconut Soup

Makes 6-8 servings  
(Gluten-free optional; Vegan optional)

### Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. coconut or olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 shallot, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1 head cauliflower
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2-3 Tbsp. chili paste or Sriracha
- ¼ cup soy sauce or liquid aminos
- 2 limes, zest and juice
- 6 cups *Almond Breeze* Almond-Coconut Blend
- Two 13.6 oz. cans coconut cream
- Optional: 2 cups shredded or diced chicken or meat alternative; ½ cup peanuts, chopped; 1 bunch fresh cilantro; 1-2 sliced jalapeños; 1-2 limes cut into wedges

### Directions

1. In a large pot, sauté garlic, shallots, bell pepper, and carrots in oil with cumin and black pepper over medium-high heat. Once vegetables start to soften, add chili paste, soy sauce, and the zest and juice of 2 limes.
2. Whisk in almond-coconut milk and two cans of coconut cream until mixture comes together. Add more chili sauce, salt, or pepper as needed. Break up head of cauliflower and add to soup base. Continue cooking over medium heat until cauliflower is softened.
3. Serve as soup, or pour over shredded chicken or meat alternative for a Thai sauce.

*Serve with cilantro, jalapeños and lime wedges.*



## Sweet and Salty Chocolate Almond Cups

Prep time: 20 minutes  
Cook time: 2-3 minutes  
Makes 18 cups

### Ingredients

- 1 bag milk, semi-sweet or bittersweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup *Blue Diamond* Dark Chocolate Snack Almonds, coarsely chopped
- 24 *Blue Diamond* Almond Nut-Thins, coarsely broken

### Directions

1. Line 18 mini muffin cups with paper liners; set aside.
2. Place chocolate in a large microwave-safe bowl; microwave on HIGH for 2 to 3 minutes or until chocolate is mostly melted; stir until completely melted.
3. Stir in remaining ingredients and spoon equal amounts into prepared muffin cups.

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## Blue Diamond Almond Nut-Thins Featured on *The Ellen Show*

Talk show host and comedienne Ellen Degeneres is a huge fan of Nut-Thins and featured the go-to snack during her famous holiday special, "12 Days of Giveaways." Each season on NBC's *The Ellen Degeneres Show*, audience members receive prizes on a series of holiday-themed episodes.



On day 8 of the giveaways, the host surprised her 425 audience members with a box of Almond Nut-Thins and a gift card to Whole Foods. Additionally, the product was promoted on the "12 Days of Giveaways" homepage and on Ellen's social channels, reaching more than 166 million followers. Consumers were also directed to shop for Nut-Thins on the *Blue Diamond* online store.

*Blue Diamond* was excited to be part of this popular campaign and to share with consumers a product crafted with the goodness of almonds. ♦

## BLUE DIAMOND INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

### New Short-Term Investment Rate

*Blue Diamond Growers offers members short-term investment programs.*

The objective of this program is to serve as a competitive investment alternative for our members, and provide Blue Diamond Growers with a steady (short-term) source of funds. The interest rate effective January 1, 2018 for the program is as follows:

	SHORT-TERM INVESTMENT CERTIFICATE (STIC)
Total Investment	
Initial Investment	\$1,000
Interest Rate	2.25%

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.*

## Blue Diamond's 100 Percent Pure Sweet Almond Oil Praised for Its Purity and Quality

Blue Diamond is finding an enthusiastic reception among Health & Beauty Care (HBC) manufacturers and distributors for its recently introduced 100 percent pure sweet almond oil.

The cooperative brings its depth of experience, integrity and commitment to quality to a product that enhances many premium cosmetics, personal care products and massage oil applications. Blue Diamond produces an expeller-pressed and refined almond oil and offers it to customers around the world. The company conducts sterol testing to ensure delivering its customers 100 percent pure almond oil.



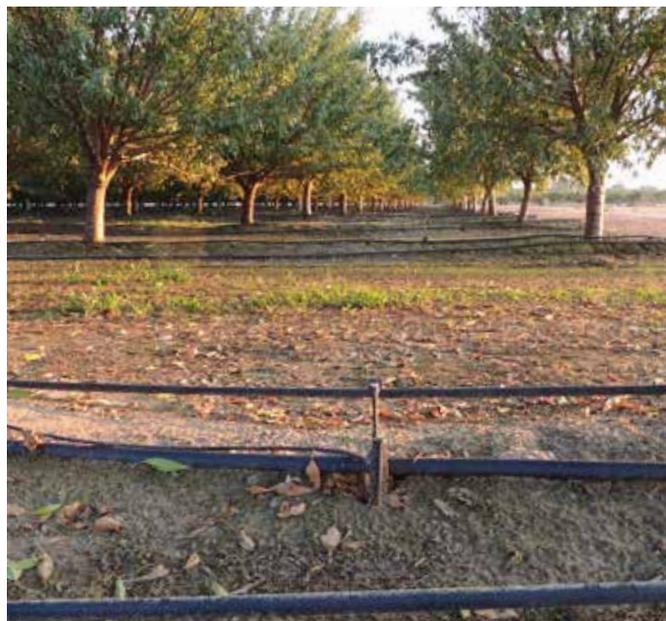
"Our sweet almond oil is an essential ingredient to reinforce what premium health and beauty products offer: softer skin, healthier hair and more luxurious cosmetics," noted Jeff Smith, director of marketing for Blue Diamond Global Ingredients Division. "It's extremely versatile — from being the preferred choice of massage professionals in its neat form to the backbone of an emulsification in a formulation." Smith added that as an exclusive almond processor, Blue Diamond is rare in this industry, overseeing the process from start to finish.

Blue Diamond's sweet almond oil offers a unique balance that combines the stability of high monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA) with enough polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) to absorb quickly. Whether applying it to the face or body, its therapeutic qualities leave skin feeling hydrated and nourished.

For more information about Blue Diamond almond oil, visit [sweetalmondoil.com](http://sweetalmondoil.com) ◆

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## Bake Magazine Features Blue Diamond Almond Flour

Leading trade magazine for the baking industry, *Bake Magazine*, takes a look at flour alternatives and the benefits of using *Blue Diamond* Almond Flour amid growing consumer interest in gluten-free and paleo diets. ♦



### Baking with Almond Flour

A new report from Technavio finds that the global gluten-free bakery market is expected to grow at a CAGR of more than 10 percent between 2017 and 2021. This is due to various factors such as the rise in the number of people with gluten intolerances and allergies along with the increasing demand for bakery products with gluten-free claims.

Blue Diamond Almond Flour is perfectly poised to leverage consumers' continued interest in a gluten-free, or gluten-restricted, diet. In recent years, consumer awareness of gluten-free options has grown significantly. In fact, the number of Americans going gluten-free has tripled since 2009, according to a study conducted by the Mayo Clinic. They found that around 3.1 million people across the United States follow a gluten-free diet and 72 percent of them are classified as people without celiac disease avoiding gluten. This growing consumer interest in gluten-free cooking and paleo diets makes almond flour a high-demand ingredient.

Jeff Smith, director of marketing, Blue Diamond Almonds Global Ingredients Division, points out that Blue Diamond Almond Flour is a popular alternative to traditional flour for baking because it contains the same nutritional properties as whole almonds, is low on the glycemic index and is naturally gluten-free. It's also important for bakers to scoop and level when measuring almond flour. Unlike traditional flour, which should be spooned lightly into the measuring cup, scoop your measuring cup directly into the almond flour then level off. Don't pack down, but use a heavier hand than you're used to. Remember to bring the measurement of almond flour you want to use up to room temperature before baking.

Generally, almond flour cannot be substituted cup-for-cup in baking applications. As a rule of thumb, fats and oils can be reduced by approximately 25 percent when baking with almond flour as the flour itself has a higher fat content com-

pared to traditional flour. Sugar may also be reduced by about 25 percent in baked goods because almonds also have a sweet flavor on their own. Bake times may need to be increased approximately 5 minutes because of the extra moisture present in almond flour.

Without the gluten as a binder, almond flour batters and doughs need a bit of firming up. Egg whites are a great binder that doesn't change the flavor. You can use whole eggs, but the yolks can add an eggy flavor. For an extra light texture, beat the egg whites with some of the sugar called for in the recipe to form a meringue. This will provide a sturdy mixture to lightly fold into your recipe. Almond flour may bake faster, so Blue Diamond recommends tenting with foil to prevent products from browning too quickly. After baking, let the items stand for 30 minutes. The center may not seem "set" but will firm up as it cooks. Baked goods made with almond flour are very moist in the center. Freezing and thawing the baked goods can help improve this texture.

In most cases, almond flours can be used interchangeably. However, for items requiring a golden or light-colored appearance, blanched almond flour is available. Natural almond flour is ideal when the requirement for a lighter color, such as in brownies or chocolate chip cookies, is not as evident.

The great thing about Blue Diamond Almond Flour is that it produces moist baked goods. Unlike traditional baked goods, those made with almond flour have more moisture. However, do not store in airtight containers. Instead, store on a tray very lightly covered, or in a container with a loose-fitting lid. Sealing the container will make the food too moist and soft over time.

The extra moisture provides a key benefit — while traditional baked goods may become dry and stale in a day or two, those prepared with almond flour stay moist for days.

BLUE DIAMOND ALMONDS



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# Washington Update: The Latest on Federal Advocacy

Over the past few months, Blue Diamond's federal advocates have been keeping a close watch on the issues affecting growers and the industry. The following are highlights on some key topics.

## Tax Reform

The focus last year during fall and winter was on tax reform. As you know, tax reform was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President just before Christmas. This period was devoted to obtaining provisions in the tax bill that benefit grower-owners and their farming businesses. The provisions focused on were IC-DISC, section 199, SALT and immediate expensing of capital acquisitions.

The Senate wanted to eliminate IC-DISC, while the House did not. In the end, the House prevailed and IC-DISC was preserved. This was very important to grower-owners since it results in tax savings. It was also possible to get limited relief from SALT. A deduction of up to \$10,000 for either state income tax or property tax was obtained.

Preserving section 199 was very difficult and required constant effort and attention. Both the House and Senate wanted to repeal and eliminate this provision and was successful. The cooperative worked on this with the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. Together, the House and Senate were persuaded that this needed to be fixed, otherwise,

co-op farmers in California and across the United States would have received a tax increase in the new tax bill. Extensive time was required to prepare and furnish sample tax returns of *Blue Diamond* members, which documented what the results would be without section 199 and IC-DISC.

This work resulted in a new section 199A, which benefits all agricultural cooperatives and their members.

## Farm Bill

Early this year, the House Agriculture Committee will take up the new Farm Bill. The Committee plans to have it on the House floor for passage in March. The Senate will work on its Farm Bill later this year.

*Blue Diamond* is working hard to prevent the Dairy Pride Act from becoming law. The national dairy industry representatives have stated that getting this Act adopted in the Farm Bill is its top priority. If successful, it would prevent labeling and selling almond milk as "almond milk." The Dairy Pride Act is a critical issue for our Congressional friends because many work with both the almond and dairy industries. This bill also impacts California rice,

soybeans and other plant-based milk ingredients.

There are other provisions on which we are focused in the Farm Bill: getting MAP authorized with increased funding and maintaining the TASC program. We are also working to maintain crop insurance for almonds.

## Trade

Trade continues to require constant attention. Immediate concern is focused on the NAFTA and Korea-US free trade pact (KORUS) negotiations. The outcome of both will have an important impact on *Blue Diamond*. The President continues to discuss withdrawing from NAFTA. This would have a direct adverse impact on sales to Mexico.

The discussions on KORUS are proceeding in a less high-profile manner. Agriculture has benefitted significantly from the KORUS, and we continue to advocate for its continuation.

Additionally, there are a range of bilateral trade issues of importance that are being carefully addressed. This includes several issues with India, which is a very important market. We continue to focus on China and opportunities to improve access to this growing market.



### Immigration Reform

The House Judiciary Committee reported out a guest worker bill late last year. This bill needs several amendments before it is passed by the House. If E-Verify is not adopted into law without a guest worker program, farm labor could be lost. The House has made progress on immigration reform and it is hoped the Senate will consider it this year. Congress will address DACA early this year and will be separate from the guest worker program. ♦



**Blue Diamond Advocate**  
**Julian Heron,**  
**Partner, Tuttle**  
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### Leading the Future of Almond Farming

*Drive by Sansoni Farms Orchards in Merced County and you will see Blue Diamond Growers signs hanging from beautiful blue posts. The Sansoni family are long-time grower-owners who bleed Blue Diamond blue. The sign posts – made by former Blue Diamond board member Aldo Sansoni – help those who pass by identify the high quality almonds of the cooperative and where they come from.*

The leading brand champion of the Sansoni family is Joe, 41-year-old single dad to two teenage boys, and nephew of Aldo. Much like their dad when he was a kid, Joe's sons enjoy learning and helping out with the orchards when they can.



Joe is a third generation almond grower, following his father Ezio and grandfather Aniceto, and a member of the cooperative's 21st class of Young Leaders. Aniceto planted the first Sansoni Farms orchard in 1947 — 70 years ago — and now the family currently farms approximately 240 acres.

"I loved growing up being able to play and work in and around the orchards," recalls Joe. "It was where I always wanted to be. I grew up shadowing my dad and learning every aspect of farming and harvesting almonds."

As a young boy, Joe often spent entire weekends and summer days riding in the pickup with his dad and helping with "anything and everything." He drove tractors and harvest machines and, when his dad was in the hulling business, even trucked inshell almonds from their huller to the *Blue Diamond* receiving station. From the office to the field, he is proud of the knowledge he gained of the family's farm operations.

---

*“I have performed every single task and driven every machine needed to produce and harvest an almond crop,” said Joe. “From my experiences, I also learned a lot about how to produce a better quality crop out in the field.”*

---

He uses this experience in his current role on the farm. Joe is in charge of the production, field, shop, and trucking operations. He is also transitioning into ownership/partnership of Sansoni Farms Orchards, allowing him to spearhead the expansion of farming operations. He is part of the Sansoni family's future in almond growing, making him an ideal candidate for *Blue Diamond's* Young Leader program.

"I am pleased to be part of the Young Leader program this year," explains Joe. "Through this program, I hope to gain a more complete understanding of our co-op and what I can do in my role as a grower-owner to help sustain our company and brand."



His experience has also taught him the importance of almond farming and benefit of almonds for consumers and the industry.

"Almonds are an amazing food source and worthy of being regularly included as part of a healthy diet for nearly everyone worldwide," said Joe. "Almonds have become such a significant player in our state and valley's economy creating thousands of jobs."

The livelihood of the Sansoni family is dependent on the success of the almond industry and Joe plans to continue their legacy of producing top quality *Blue Diamond* almonds. His goals also include learning how to improve methods for best results and make a conscious effort toward sustainability. Ultimately, he hopes to leave the best possible farming operation behind for his sons and future generations.

Joe will graduate from the Young Leader Program in November. ♦

## The Results Speak for Themselves.

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6th leaf — 135 trees/ac,	3694 lbs/ac
5th leaf — 110 trees/ac,	2500 lbs/ac
5th leaf — 140 trees/ac,	3055 lbs/ac
4th leaf — 110 trees/ac,	2332 lbs/ac
4th leaf — 135 trees/ac,	2177 lbs/ac
3rd leaf — 110 trees/ac,	1132 lbs/ac

*\*Production figures do not guarantee individual results.*

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## THE BEE BOX

### The Power of Data

Herring is a type of fish that forms aggregations, or schools to avoid predation, allow better hunting and possibly even gain hydrodynamic benefits. Herring are small but by massing in large numbers, they gain advantages from their sheer numbers that are impossible to attain by themselves. Data aggregation can be thought of similarly. Collecting data from honey bee colony health is time consuming, fraught with inconsistencies, and weather dependent but when the collections are collated and cleaned, trends begin to emerge that lead to further hypotheses. Sometimes the

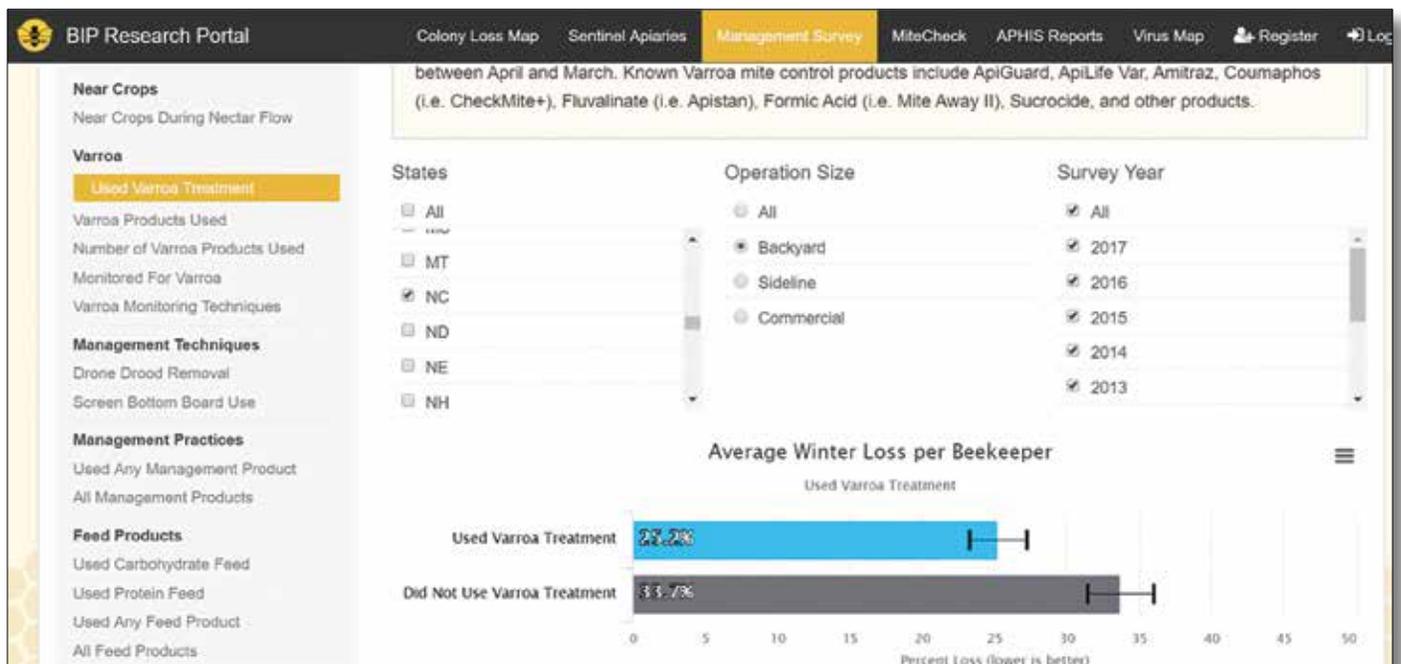
trends are counterintuitive or beg further investigations, but there is no doubting the power of large data sets in identifying issues, correlations and interactions that could not be otherwise discerned by viewing each data set by itself.

One of the objectives of the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) is to collect data from a wide variety of sources, linking management practices with colony losses and to look for trends in field data so that we can make predictive models. These models will enable us to not only alert the industry if there will be a pollinator shortage but also to

detect trends that alert beekeepers when their colony health is at risk.

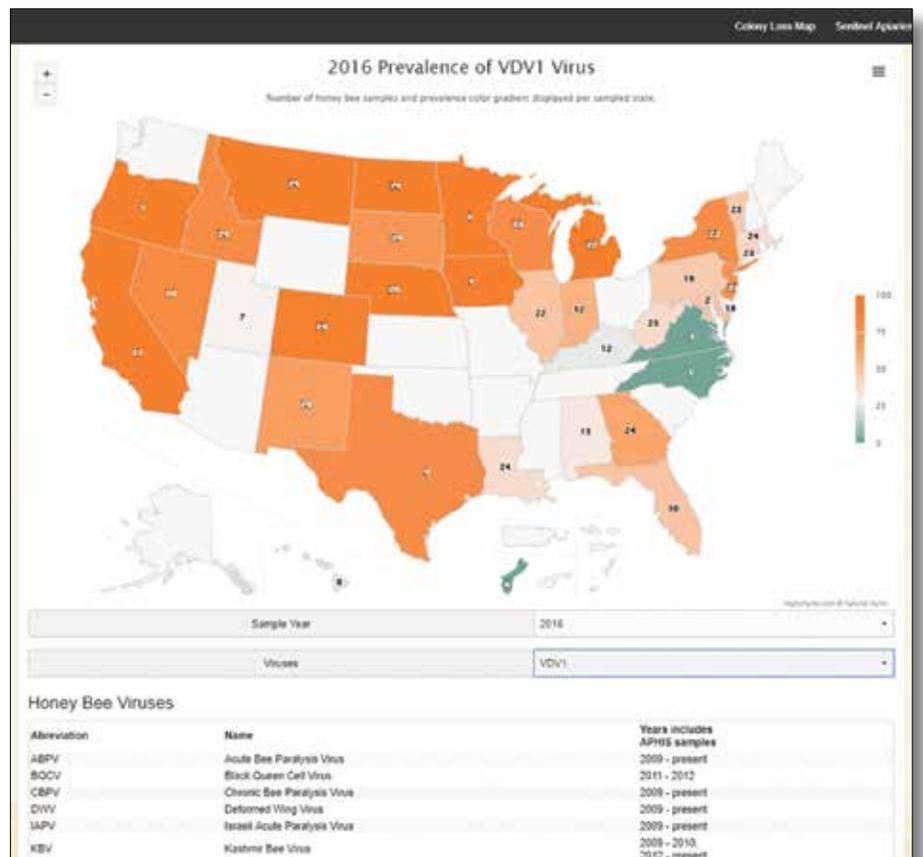
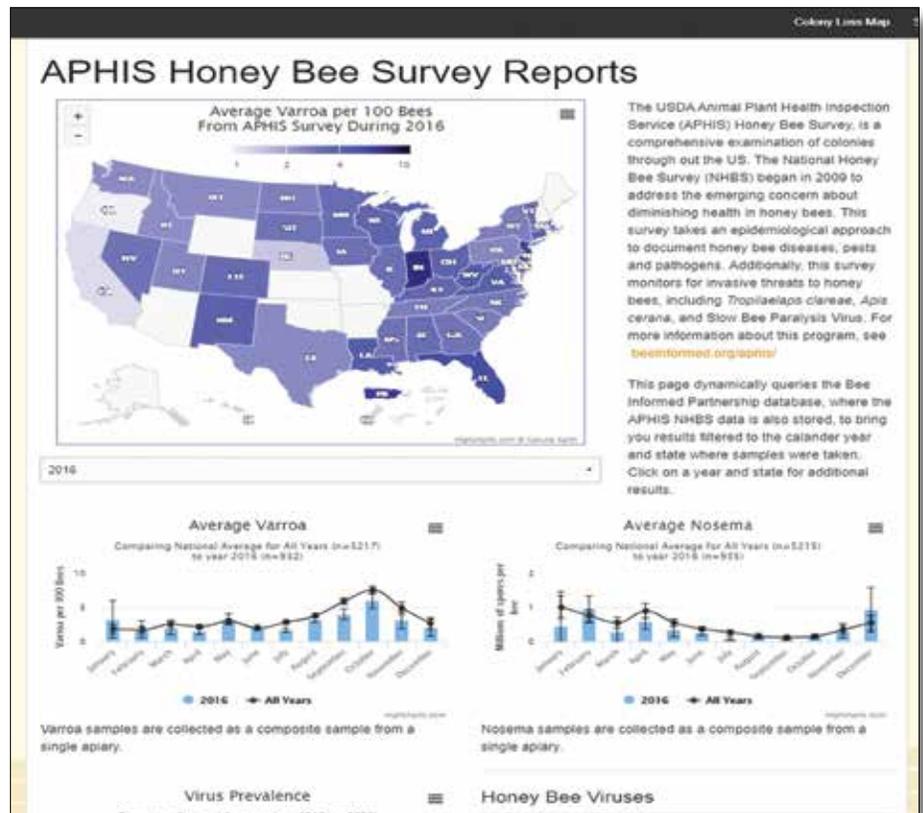
For example, one powerful tool available on our website ([bip2.beeinformed.org](http://bip2.beeinformed.org)) is our Data Explorer. Based on all years of our BIP Management and Loss survey, it dials in the management choices beekeepers make and directly links them to colony loss. Many bee groups around the country are using this as their jumping off point of discussions. You can change the year, the state, operational type, etc. and see how treatments, feeds, queen and comb management, etc. all effect losses in your area.

Below: Screen capture of the Bee Informed Partnership Data Explorer



Beekeepers are able to cycle through a suite of management choices and compare losses associated with each. This helps inform them of what they could possibly improve upon within their own operation. BIP hosts all the data and reporting (since 2009) from this federally supported effort to monitor for invasive species. This database provides a baseline of honey bee health data (Varroa, nosema, viruses and pesticide data) from which we can monitor the rise and fall of pests and pathogens in the United States. All this data is available at no cost to each state and every beekeeper. If a state has participated in this honey bee health survey, and most have, you will find specific varroa, nosema, pesticide and viral data here.

We have many other data archives that help us identify new opportunities, test new hypotheses and document the state of honey bee health in the United States. Just released is our new viral map. Several viruses are directly linked to varroa mite infestation and the only recourse that beekeepers have is to keep their varroa mite population low. Viruses are direct economic threat to United States beekeeping. By tracking the spread, prevalence and viral levels,



Top Graphic: Screen capture of the Bee Informed Partnership APHIS survey;  
Bottom Graphic: Screen capture of the Bee Informed Partnership Dynamic Viral Heat Map

we can identify emerging threats, determine if viruses are changing to become more virulent and track their impact on losses. Viral levels are a difficult and complex concept to visualize by having a dynamic heat map, this becomes a valuable tool for beekeepers, researchers, state apiarists and others.

We are now at a tipping point with our database and are excited for the next few years. Data analysis of our large data aggregation will no doubt yield exciting and provocative results in the near future. There is so much power in all this data and to return to the initial analogy, these small herring banding together, will provide a compelling and formidable tool for this industry. ♦



**Karen Rennich,**  
Executive  
Director of the  
Bee Informed  
Partnership, Inc.



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### Pollination Preparedness: Are You Ready?



As we ring in the new year, we should also prepare for almond pollination. Since pollination is the single most important factor for determining a good yield, it is never too early to begin thinking about how to keep honey bees happy and healthy once they arrive in your orchard.

Wondering where to begin? The Honey Bee Best Management Practices for California Almonds ([Almonds.com/BeeBMPs](http://Almonds.com/BeeBMPs)) outlines

how you can take your first steps toward a successful season:

#### **The Communication Chain**

Establish clear communication among all parties involved in pollination and pest management during bloom. It may be as simple as the grower and beekeeper connecting, but larger scale operations may have a more complex communication chain. It is also important to keep California county agricultural commissioners

in the loop. Updating hive locations with your local commissioner gives other growers a resource to determine if there are any honey bees in the vicinity.

#### **Grower-Beekeeper Expectations**

Communicate with your beekeeper prior to almond bloom to set expectations. Reach out as early as possible before the pollination season to discuss requirements,

such as pesticide use during bloom. Outline a pesticide plan containing which materials will be applied when and how everyone in the communication chain will be notified. A few other expectations to consider are the number of frames of honey bees, including averages and minimums; the date and location of placement in the orchard; payment amounts and terms; and when bees will be removed from the orchard.

### Prepare for Arrival

Consider the optimal placement of each hive in your orchard. Placing hives appropriately can enhance pollination. A general rule of thumb is to place an average of two hives per acre that have an average of eight frames of bees with six-frame minimum hive strength. Moving hives into orchards at about 10% bloom is recommended. Growers should provide a clear area for bee drop-off and keep access roads clear and maintained. Hives should be placed in areas with eastern and southern exposures and away from areas prone to shade or flooding. This will encourage honey bee flight. Make sure to choose locations that have appropriate buffers between pesticide-treated areas and colonies. Provide abundant water for bees to drink, so they spend time pollinating rather than searching for water.

### Assess Hive Strength and Quality

Inspect beehives as they arrive in the orchard. The inspector can be a third-party apiary inspector or the beekeeper who is observed by the grower. Make plans for who will inspect hives ahead of time.

These simple steps will get you ready for pollination and a strong start to the 2018 almond growing season. For more information, visit [almonds.com/pollination](http://almonds.com/pollination). ♦

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# Ensure season-long control of pre- and post-emergent weeds

## WEEDS REDUCE TREE HEALTH AND CROP QUALITY.

Weeds compete with trees and vines for nutrients, water and light and can impact yield and hinder harvesting practices. Weeds can even compete with target plants for uptake of insecticides and other chemicals, making the crop more susceptible to insects and disease.

While cultural and mechanical practices can provide some help in managing weed pressures, most growers utilize herbicides to deal with major threats. Whether or not resistant weeds are currently present, **having an integrated approach to weed control can mean the difference to bottom lines.**

Alion® and Rely® 280 weed program from Bayer are complementary pre- and post-emergent herbicides for tree nuts, grapes and citrus that effectively eliminate tough grass and broadleaf weeds with long-lasting residual control and excellent crop safety. **Together, Alion and Rely offer versatile application approaches to ensure you start and stay weed-free.**

Key weeds present in orchards and vineyards have been found to be resistant to glyphosate. A best practice to slow down weed resistance to herbicides includes using multiple effective modes of action in your pre- and post-emergent herbicide sprays.

## WEEDS RESISTANT TO GLYPHOSATE



Horseweed



Hairy Fleabane



Jungle Rice



Russian Thistle

## CROP SAFETY

Keep crop safety in mind when selecting a weed management program. Choose pre- and post-emergent herbicides that provide excellent season-long weed control without impact on roots, fruit or plant vigor.

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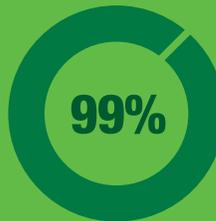
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University Trial for Jungle Rice Control by Brad Hanson, UC Statewide Weed Scientist in Chico, CA, 2014

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### RYEGRASS CONTROL



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University Trial for Hairy Fleabane and Ryegrass Control by Brad Hanson, UC IPM, Arbutle, CA, 2015

Learn more at [Alion-RelyWeedProgram.com](http://Alion-RelyWeedProgram.com)



## TIME TO CONSIDER

*I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and a great start to the New Year. The winter was dry, but hopefully adequate rains will begin to fall. The lack of rain and warmer days may accelerate bloom, which may mean that bloom will occur earlier than last year, with a similar timing to 2015. Cooler conditions, however, will delay bloom. With that in mind, below are some considerations for your operations.*

### Fungicide Sprays

Bloom will begin in early to mid-February and extend through March. Due to almond flower sensitivity to disease and weather conditions conducive for disease, most people will spray a fungicide during this period. In wet conditions, multiple sprays may be needed, while in dry years zero to one spray may suffice. Conditions that favor disease formation include rain or heavy dew, and warmer temperatures for Brown Rot, Anthracnose, Bacterial Spot, and Shot-hole, and cool, wet weather for Jacket-rot. Fungicide selection should provide coverage for the diseases of concern (see the fungicide efficacy table).

Since most fungicides work to protect the plant from being infected by killing the germinating spore, bloom sprays should be applied before rain events to provide protection for flowers, flower parts, and emerging leaf tissue. Some chemistries, such as FRAC groups 3 and 11 are able to move through the epidermis of the plant's leaves or flowers. This provides a slight curative component to these powerful fungicides and makes them a great option if a spray was missed by one to two days or there wasn't enough time to cover the acreage prior to the rain event.

Coverage from a fungicide spray will last around two weeks, unless significant rainfall occurs. If applying prior to a rain event, applications will need a few hours to dry to prevent "run-off." In rainy weather, follow-up sprays will be needed every seven to ten days. Some varieties — such as 'Butte' and 'Carmel' — are more susceptible to disease and may require a spray even in dry weather, while others — such as 'Nonpareil' are quite tolerant and may not need a bloom spray. Orchard history, weather, and your comfort level

should be the guidance in determining your bloom and springtime disease control strategy.

A fungicide program should be developed prior to bloom. Programs should be developed to prevent back-to-back application of fungicides within the same mode of action. Mode of actions is simplified into a FRAC number; therefore avoid back-to-back applications of the same FRAC number. This includes pre-mixed fungicides. An example of a rotation program for a multiple sprays for rainy weather include: First Spray: FRAC 9 (Scala, Vanguard), 2nd Spray: FRAC 11 or FRAC 7/11 (Gem, Abound, Pristine, Luna Sensation, Merivon, etc), 3rd Spray: FRAC M4 (Chlorothalonil), 4th spray: FRAC 3, FRAC 11, or FRAC 3/11 (Bumper, Tilt, Gem, Abound, Indar, Quadris Top, Quilt Xcel, etc). Note how the two applications of FRAC 11 were split by rotating away to another chemistry. Disclaimer: the fungicides listed are an example, not an endorsement for use. Please refer to Timing and Efficacy Tables for full list of tested fungicides (see fungicide efficacy table on pages 38 and 39). There are many effective fungicides not listed in this example.

For further information regarding bloom spray timings and diseases, please see the [www.thealmonddoctor.com](http://www.thealmonddoctor.com) and [ucipm.ucdavis.edu](http://ucipm.ucdavis.edu).

### Insecticide Applications at Bloom for Peach Twig Borer (PTB)

Recent research has found that applications of some insecticides timed at bloom has a negative impact on bee health. Tank mixing of products should be avoided. Alternatively, research done over 20 years ago has found that *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) can be applied at bloom to effectively control PTB without impacting bees.



*Blossom diseases can occur during wet weather and almond flowers are sensitive to a wide variety of diseases. Fungicides should be considered when inclement weather is in the forecast.*

For low populations, a single spray made during bloom should suffice. For moderate to high populations, two applications applied at the beginning of bloom and 10–14 days later should be considered. Trial work (which used Javelin WG at 0.75lbs/100 gpa) has shown these spray timings to be as effective as dormant and in-season timings using conventional insecticides or growth regulators. Please see the UC IPM page for PTB for more information and check with your pest control advisor for product availability and recommended rates.

If this timing does not fit, PTB can also be controlled with a “May spray.” This timing occurs about 300–400 after biofix, which falls around the end of April through the first two weeks of May. Often, this overlaps with the first flight of navel orangeworm timing (NOW).

Spraying an insecticide during bloom will NOT provide any NOW control.

### **Foliar Nutrients at Bloom**

Boron and zinc foliar nutrients applied either in the post-harvest period (e.g. September) or at pink bud have been shown to increase yield in almond trees in many orchard situations. Interestingly, applying these products after pink bud have either failed to increase yield or decreased kernel yields. Concentration of boron should not exceed 400 ppm of boron in solution, and good results have been shown with rates between 200–400 ppm (~0.2–0.4 lbs of boron in 100 gpa), depending on the tree’s boron status. Zinc applications appear to have a synergistic effect with boron, meaning that the combination of the treatments has been shown to

## ALMOND: FUNGICIDE EFFICACY

Fungicide	Resistance risk (FRAC) <sup>1</sup>	Brown rot	Jacket rot	Anthrax -nose	Shot hole	Scab <sup>3</sup>	Rust <sup>3</sup>	Leaf blight	Alternaria leaf spot <sup>3</sup>	PM-like <sup>5</sup>	Hull rot <sup>16</sup>
Bumper,Tilt,Propicure, Propiconazole <sup>4</sup>	high (3)	++++	+/-	++++	++	++	+++	ND	++	+++	++
Fontelis <sup>4</sup>	high (7)	++++	++++	++	++++	+++	+++	ND	+++	ND	----
Kenja <sup>4</sup>	high (7)	++++	++++	++	++++	+++	+++	ND	+++	ND	----
Indar	high (3)	++++	+/-	+++	++	++	NL	ND	+	ND	----
Inspire	high (3)	++++	+	+++	++	+++	+++	ND	+++	ND	+++
Inspire Super <sup>4</sup>	medium (3/9)	++++	++++	ND	+++	+++	+++	ND	+++	ND	+++
Luna Experience <sup>3</sup>	medium (3/7)	++++	+++	++++	+++	++++	++++	ND	++++	+++	+++
Luna Sensation <sup>3,7</sup>	medium (7/11)	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++	ND	++++	+++	+++
Merivon <sup>3,7</sup>	medium (7/11)	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++	+++	ND	++++	++++	+++
Pristine <sup>3,7</sup>	medium (7/11)	++++	++++	++++	++++	++++	+++	ND	+++	+++	+++
Quadris Top <sup>3</sup>	medium (3/11)	++++	NL	++++	+++	++++	++++	ND	+++	+++	+++
Quilt Xcel,Avaris 2XS <sup>3</sup>	medium (3/11)	++++	+++	++++	+++	++++	++++	ND	+++	+++	+++
Quash <sup>4</sup>	high (3)	++++	++	++++	+++	+++	++++	ND	++++	+++	+++
Rovral + oil <sup>8,9</sup>	low (2)	++++	++++	----	+++	+/-	++	ND	+++	ND	----
Scala <sup>3,7</sup>	high (9)	++++	++++	ND	++	----	ND	ND	+	----	----
Tebucon,Toledo (Elite**,Tebuzol**)	high (3)	++++	+/-	+++	++	++	+++	ND	+	ND	++
Topsin-M,T-Methyl, Incognito,Cercobin <sup>2,6,7,8</sup>	high (1)	++++	++++	----	----	+++	+	+++	----	++	----
Vanguard <sup>3,7,9</sup>	high (9)	++++	++++	ND	++	----	ND	ND	+	----	----
Viathon	medium (3/33)	++++	+/-	+++	++	++	+++	ND	+	ND	++
Abound <sup>3,4,7,10</sup>	high (11)	+++	----	++++	+++	++++	++++	+++	+++	+++	+++
CaptEvate*	low (M4/17)	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	----	+++	+	----	----
Elevate <sup>7</sup>	high (17)	+++	++++	----	+	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	----
Gem <sup>3,4,7,10</sup>	high (11)	+++	----	++++	+++	++++	++++	+++	+++	+++	+++
Laredo	high (3)	+++	----	++	++	----	+	+++	----	+++	----
Luna Privilege	high (7)	+++	++	++	++	+++	+++	ND	+++	++	++
Rovral,Iprodione, Nevado <sup>9</sup>	low (2)	+++	+++	----	+++	----	----	ND	++	----	----
Rally <sup>13</sup>	high (3)	+++	----	++	+/-	----	+	+++	----	+++	----
Rhyme	high (3)	+++	+/-	ND	+	++	ND	ND	++	ND	ND
Bravo,Chloro-thalonil,Echo,Equus <sup>11,12,15</sup>	low (M5)	++	NL	+++	+++	+++	++++	NL	NL	----	----
Captan <sup>4,6,12</sup>	low (M4)	++	++	+++	+++	++	----	+++	+	----	----
Fracture	low	++	+	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Mancozeb	low (M3)	++	++	+++	+++	++	+++	+++	+	----	----
Ph-D	medium (19)	++	+++	----	++	+++	+++	ND	++++	ND	+++
Ziram	low (M3)	++	+	+++	+++	+++	----	++	+	----	----
Syllit	medium (U12)	+	----	ND	+++	++++	ND	ND	+	ND	----
Copper <sup>14,15</sup>	low (M1)	+/-	+/-	----	+	+	----	----	ND	----	----
Lime sulfur <sup>12,15</sup>	low (M2)	+/-	NL	----	+/-	++	++	NL	NL	----	----
Sulfur <sup>4,12</sup>	low (M2)	+/-	+/-	----	----	++	++	----	----	+++	----
PlantShield <sup>17</sup>	low	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Copper + oil <sup>14,15</sup>	low (M1)	ND	ND	----	+	+++	----	----	ND	----	----

**Rating:** ++++ = excellent and consistent, +++ = good and reliable, ++ = moderate and variable, + = limited and/or erratic, +/- = minimal and often ineffective, ---- = ineffective, NL = not on label, and ND = no data

\* Registration pending in California.

\*\*Not registered, label withdrawn or inactive in California.

The 2017 almond fungicide efficacy table developed by the University of California. More information can be found at <http://ucipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PMG/fungicideefficacytiming.pdf>

## ALMOND: TREATMENT TIMING

Note: Not all indicated timings may be necessary for disease control.

Disease	Dormant	Bloom			Spring <sup>1</sup>		Summer	
		Pink bud	Full bloom	Petal fall	2 weeks	5 weeks	May	June
Alternaria	----	----	----	----	----	++	+++	+++
Anthraxnose <sup>2</sup>	----	++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++
Bacterial spot	+	----	++	+++	+++	++	+	----
Brown rot	----	++	+++	+	----	----	----	----
Green fruit rot	----	----	+++	++	----	----	----	----
Hull rot <sup>7</sup>	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	+++
Leaf blight	----	----	+++	++	+	----	----	----
Scab <sup>3</sup>	++	----	----	++	+++	+++	+	----
Shot hole <sup>4</sup>	+ <sup>5</sup>	+	++	+++	+++	++	----	----
Rust	----	----	----	----	----	+++	+++	+ <sup>6</sup>

**Rating:** +++ = most effective, ++ = moderately effective, + = least effective, and ---- = ineffective

<sup>1</sup> Two and five weeks after petal fall are general timings to represent early postbloom and the latest time that most fungicides can be applied. The exact timing is not critical but depends on the occurrence of rainfall.

<sup>2</sup> If anthracnose was damaging in previous years and temperatures are moderate (63°F or higher) during bloom, make the first application at pink bud. Otherwise treatment can begin at or shortly after petal fall. In all cases, application should be repeated at 7- to 10-day intervals when rains occur during periods of moderate temperatures. Treatment should, if possible, precede any late spring and early summer rains. Rotate fungicides, using different fungicide classes, as a resistance management strategy.

<sup>3</sup> Early treatments (during bloom) have minimal effect on scab; the 5-week treatment usually is most effective. Treatments after 5 weeks are useful in northern areas where late spring and early summer rains occur. Dormant treatment with liquid lime sulfur improves efficacy of spring control programs.

<sup>4</sup> If pathogen spores were found during fall leaf monitoring, apply a shot hole fungicide during bloom, preferably at petal fall or when young leaves first appear. Reapply when spores are found on new leaves or if heavy, persistent spring rains occur. If pathogen spores were not present the previous fall, shot hole control may be delayed until spores are seen on new leaves in spring.

<sup>5</sup> Dormant copper treatment seldom reduces shot hole infection but may be useful in severely affected orchards and must be followed by a good spring program.

<sup>6</sup> Treatment in June is important only if late spring and early summer rains occur.

<sup>7</sup> Make application at 1 to 5% hull split to manage hull rot caused by *Rhizopus stolonifer*.

Fungicide timings for various almond diseases. Some diseases may require multiple treatments to prevent.

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outperform either material sprayed alone. Interestingly, zinc applied alone was not found to increase yields. Other trials have found limited to no benefits from the application of other micronutrients at bloom unless nutrient deficiencies are present.

### Be Careful with Bees

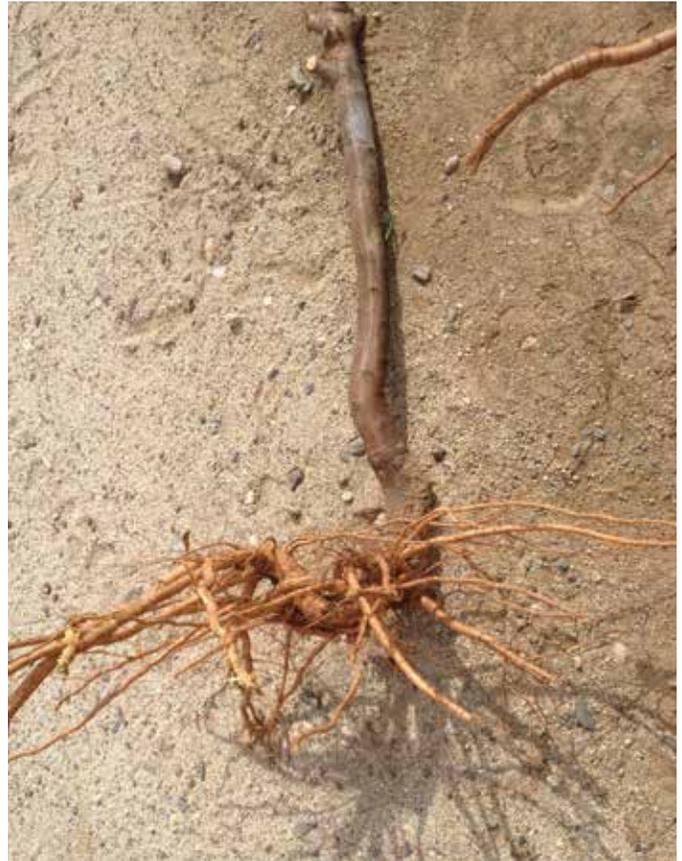
There has been a lot of concern about honey bee health related to fungicide, surfactants and insecticide applications within orchards. More is being learned every year about the impacts of pest management practices on hive health.

When applying bloom sprays, always proceed with caution and err on the side of bee safety. Avoid the fungicides Rovral, Captan, or Ziram at during bloom. These fungicides negatively impact bee hive health. Do not add any additional surfactant unless indicated by the fungicide label as these chemicals have been shown to impact bee health. Apply fungicides later in the afternoon or evening when bees and pollen are less present. It is important to also not spray too late that the fungicide does not have a chance to dry before the next foraging day. When spraying, cover or remove the bee's water source. Avoid spraying the hive directly with any pesticides. Finally, remove bees as soon as petal fall occurs as this will reduce exposure of bees to later fungicide timings.

To further help with fungicide selection, the University of California Agricultural and Natural Resources Integrated Pest Management Program has developed a website that provides toxicity information of various pesticides ([ipm.ucanr.edu/beeprecaution/](http://ipm.ucanr.edu/beeprecaution/)). Precaution rankings (I, II, III) have been created based on the currently available scientific studies. The table does include effects on bee brood if research is not available. Lack of toxicity data for honey bee brood means that there is no data currently available, not that the material has no impact.

### Proper Tree Planting

When planting a new orchard, it is important to take the proper precautions to avoid tree loss. Trees should



*Plant trees carefully! Make sure holes are large enough to fit the entire root system. Avoid wrapping or bending roots in order to fit into a smaller hole as this will cause "J-rooting."*

be planted as soon as possible after delivery. Prior to delivery, make sure the field is prepared, which includes ensuring that soil fumigants have completely dissipated, soil clods are broken down and workable, and large amounts of organic material (e.g. grass clippings, compost) are not present in the planting areas. Berms are recommended for most soils to prevent crown infections by Phytophthora. Berms may not be needed in soils with high infiltration rates. If planned, berms should be pulled prior to tree planting. Do not pull berms as an afterthought: soil covering the graft union will increase the risk of Phytophthora.

To prevent root drying, keep the roots moist and cover with a tarp when being transported within the field. Do not prune tree roots unless they are broken. Holes should be dug at the time of planting if possible, but if not, as

close to the timing of planting to prevent “glazing” of the soil by the sun. If the holes are dug with an auger or prior to the planting day, slice the sides of the whole with a shovel to break any crust that may have formed. When planting, the hole should be large enough to fit the entire root system without bending or wrapping. Forcing trees into planting holes causes “J-rooting” and increases the chance of crown gall and tree loss. Plant the tree high enough so that the nursery soil line is just above the current soil line. Backfill the soil and compact gently around the tree’s base to remove air pockets. Tank the tree in with 4–5 gallons of water to help settle the soil. Trees should be headed at 32”–36,” staked with the stake placed 12” from the tree, and side branches pruned to 1/4”. Fertilizers should not be applied until there is 8–10 inches of new growth.

Planting may not always go as planned due to weather. Hand planting crews have an easier time than machine planting due to limited field access. If planting delays occur, trees should be placed into cold storage at the nursery as soon as possible to reduce the risk of leaf out and weakened trees. Keep trees in cold storage until ready to plant. Unless there is no other option, do not take delivery of trees and store them in bins or plant them in a temporary location at the farm. On delivery, check tree roots to make sure they are healthy and living (should be white in color). Trees planted late (e.g. mid-April) should be painted white to reduce sun-burn risks.

### Herbicides

This is a good time to apply any pre-emergent herbicides. Orchard weeds need to be surveyed to determine any specific challenges. The pre-emergent product and burn-down partner selected should provide control for the whole spectrum of weeds within the orchard. If trying to manage summer emerging grasses (i.e. goosegrass or junglerice), a second, late spring-times pre-emergent application could be considered. Most pre-emergent products need to be “watered-in” with either an irrigation or rainfall to have efficacy.

Delays in pre-emergent herbicide application from rain can create a few issues. Rain events knock down debris that can hinder the application or uniform incorporation of herbicides. If not able to re-clean the berms, avoid pre-emergent herbicides that are more tightly bound to organic matter (e.g. Alion®, Prowl H2O®). Consistent rains also limit field access which, in combination with warming temperatures in the spring, increases weed germination and rapid growth. Delayed applications of pre-emergent materials will likely require tank mixing with burndown herbicides and possibly even a separate, post-emergent herbicide application. On very sandy soils, high rainfall events may also move some pre-emergent herbicides into the tree rootzone, which may impact plant performance if the tree is active. Reduce rates in these situations.

### The Final Thought

There is a good chance that this winter will be dryer than average, and most certainly we will have less rainfall than last year. A dryer winter typically means warmer days, which will accelerate tree development, increasing the risk of frost damage. Be wary of the cold nights as below freezing temperatures should be mitigated with frost management techniques. This could include the application of irrigation water, management of cover crop, or other mechanisms to increase heat within the orchards. ◆



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