



# almond facts

NEWS, VIEWS, AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2019

*Happy Holidays*

Annual  
Growers Meeting

Investing in  
International Growth

Things  
That Matter



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# Contents



- 18**  
FIELD TEAM

---

- 20**  
NEWS IN A NUTSHELL

---

- 24**  
CULTIVATING SUSTAINABILITY

---

- 28**  
ANNUAL GROWERS MEETING

---

- 38**  
ADVOCACY REPORT

---

- 42**  
IN YOUR ORCHARD

---

- 54**  
CLASSIFIED ADS

## Features

### **6** President's Corner

Adapted from his 2019 Annual Meeting speech, President and CEO Mark Jansen highlights business achievements and acknowledges *Blue Diamond's* everyday heroes.

### **12** Chairman's Message

Chairman Dan Cummings talks about how *Blue Diamond* is investing, innovating, and inspiring for the future in remarks adapted from his 2019 Annual Meeting address.

### **22** Investing in International Growth

*Blue Diamond* team members recently traveled to Mexico on a three-day ag trade mission led by U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### **28** Things That Matter

What do growers need to pay attention to in order to achieve optimum returns? Mel Machado, Membership Director, shares the "things that matter."

#### ON THE COVER:

*Blue Diamond* wishes all our readers a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year.



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*Blue Diamond*, the world's largest processor and marketer of almonds, exports to 90 countries.

*Almond Facts*, established in 1922, is published bimonthly by *Blue Diamond Growers*, 1802 C Street, Sacramento, California 95811, phone: 916.442.0771. Address all correspondence to the Editor, *Almond Facts*, P.O. Box 1768, Sacramento, California 95812. Advertising subscription rates provided upon request.

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Mark Jansen  
President & CEO



## Everyday Heroes

*Growing up, I had the good fortune of knowing my parents were proud of my accomplishments, no matter how large or small. Their support was a powerful influence in my life. Every year, I hope it's obvious how proud I am of you, our 3,000 farm families and also our 1,800 dedicated team members. Therefore it's only appropriate that this year's annual meeting theme is Blue Diamond Proud.*

At the meeting, attendees heard from several groups of *Blue Diamond* team members that represent multiple roles and all three locations. Their stories and heroism will give us many reasons that we should all be proud.

How does one become a hero? By performing small acts of quality. And a small act can be as important as a large act. Many of you are familiar with the parable of The Widow's Two Mites. As a reminder, this very poor woman gave an offering of two small copper coins, which equaled a penny. Yet, even as others contributed large sums of money, her gift was the greatest! You cannot give more than all you have. That's why it is an act of quality. And acts of quality have a tendency to spread.

Our team member recognition program is called *Blue Diamond Proud*. Since its inception 18 months ago, team members have recognized extraordinary acts by their co-workers 2,000 times. There are four levels of awards and the very highest is the President's Award. As you may have guessed by the name, this award is given by me. Last year, for advancements in product innovation, creating millions in cost savings, and for heroism in the Sacramento fire and its subsequent recovery, I gave a President's Award and a reward check to 12 employees.

Each year, our growers, entrust us with your year's work in the form of the almond crop. And it is our mission to maximize your short and long term returns. We have 20 years of good

records tracking the return performance of *Blue Diamond* versus other almond handlers. During this time *Blue Diamond* has not only been the safest and most trusted source, but it has also been the best. From the millennial in 2000 to our own Centennial in 2010, *Blue Diamond* beat the competition by an average of \$.01 per pound. And more importantly, unlike every other competitor, *Blue Diamond* never had that really bad year. Consistency is an act of quality.

You will remember, I started the goal of achieving a \$.10 a pound advantage. For your 2018 crop, once again, we delivered. We beat all competitors! And we did so with an amazing \$.145 average! Most importantly, we continued to establish the expectation that we are consistently the best. And *Blue Diamond Proud!*

By choice, *Blue Diamond* is a growth business. Not only is it more fun to grow a business, but it is also the best way to serve growers, team members, and customers. You will recall that our pace of growth, for several years, has made us unique amongst food companies. We are proud that this year, based on volume growth, revenue growth, and market share growth, *Blue Diamond* was named the fastest-growing middle or large-sized food company.

While we were excited to be recognized as the U.S. growth leader, lesser-known is that our *Blue Diamond* global branded sales also exceeded our plans, growing three times



Back row: Rebecca Hinojos, Bobby McCuan, Mary Ann Henriques.  
Front row: Mark Jansen, Song Fang, Anne Root Becraft

- From the in-depth web videos: the Gemperles, Chandlers, Indarts, Bocks, and Martinez families.
- And, of course, from our *Almond Breeze*® commercials: the Indart and Romero families.

What pleases me most is the obvious pride our growers have in being part of *Blue Diamond*. Please contact Ben Goudie if you have interest in learning more about becoming a member of our social media team or marketing efforts.

You may think it is unusual that we celebrate a retirement for someone who has only worked at *Blue Diamond*

as fast as our domestic business! *Blue Diamond* outpaced the competition in snack nuts, almondmilk, and healthy crackers.

We have a long time-horizon when planning *Blue Diamond*'s growth. Last year at the annual meeting, attendees learned about almond flour, almond oil, and high protein almond flour. We were busy again this year, with a record 20 new products launched.

What makes *Blue Diamond* unique is that we are owned and governed by our growers. We're proud to be a co-op and proud that every grower has an equal voice when it comes to the best interests of *Blue Diamond*. Last year I challenged our growers to find the way you were most comfortable in marketing on behalf of *Blue Diamond*. You responded. Whether it was through social media posts, TV advertising or walking in the Rose Bowl Parade, our growers were leaders in growing *Blue Diamond* and *Almond Breeze*®!

Let's recognize some of our star *Blue Diamond* growers:

- From the Rose Bowl Parade: On January 1<sup>st</sup> we asked you to smile, walk and wave for two hours.
- From social media, our most active online ambassadors, *Blue Diamond* individuals and families, made over 600 posts and created well over two million views.

for six years. However, when every year he has been with us, this is the person who consistently saved us millions of dollars, you will understand why I am making an exception.

I recruited Ken Lehman to *Blue Diamond* to build the Supply Chain function. Amongst their many accomplishments, we were able to celebrate just last month with his team and our partner U.S. Cold Storage the grand opening of our new, state-of-the-art, 40,000 pallet warehouse. Even better, it replaces six northern California warehouses, eliminates thousands of truck miles, and is a stone's throw from our Turlock plant. This is the latest example that has allowed his team to contribute half of these tremendous savings. Please join me in thanking and celebrating this retiring hero. Ken, I wish you all the best in your move to San Diego.



I had the honor to interview some of our everyday *Blue Diamond* heroes at the annual meeting.

First, I welcomed Sales Director, Bobby McCuan, and Site Training Coordinator, Rebecca Hinojos.

**MARK:** Bobby, what brought you to *Blue Diamond*?

**BOBBY:** Nine years ago I started at *Blue Diamond* as an intern in the Quality Assurance department. The position was temporary, but I took a chance so I could work for this great company. After three months in the new internship, *Blue Diamond* created a permanent position for me. I took that as a good sign that they liked me.

**MARK:** Knowing you, I'm sure that they did. What do you tell other people about working at *Blue Diamond*?

**BOBBY:** I truly love working here because *Blue Diamond* recognizes hard work, and that hunger for growth in the younger generation. There is also no shortage of role models who encourage you to go for your dreams. John Wagaman was one of my first role models. He worked in sales for over 40 years and after a long chat with him, I knew that sales is what I wanted to do! *Blue Diamond* has given me the opportunity to begin from an intern, to Quality Assurance Coordinator, International and Domestic Customer Service Representative, Product Marketing Manager, Sales Manager, and I recently started my new role. I was first in my family to graduate from college. My entire family is so proud to say "He's only 34 years old and he is a Sales Director for *Blue Diamond* in the Global Ingredients Division!"

**MARK:** Congratulations! Who are your customers?

**BOBBY:** I handle some of our largest accounts. They include Post, Hershey, and Kellogg. The best part about being the point person for these accounts, is hearing them tell me how much they love *Blue Diamond* and how our standards for quality far exceed the competition! Mark, they applaud us for always being on the cutting edge of innovation. Last but certainly not least, they tell me how great our people are to work with! It takes an army to do what we do, and I want to personally thank everyone who contributes in our reputation.

**MARK:** I agree! Hear! Hear! Rebecca, how did you find out about *Blue Diamond*?

**REBECCA:** In April 2014, I attended a Job Fair and noticed

the *Blue Diamond* booth. The compensation, benefits, and free sample packs were enticing. The representatives said "*Blue Diamond* is innovative. There are always new and exciting projects you can be part of." What really stood out was the Educational Assistance Plan. *Blue Diamond* will reimburse the cost of your tuition, textbooks and parking up to \$5,000. It was obvious that *Blue Diamond* is a company where there was opportunity to grow and develop.

**MARK:** What position interested you?

**REBECCA:** My goal was to be an Operator at the Turlock facility. Unfortunately, I did not receive the position I applied for. Later, through a temp agency, I was hired as a sorter at Turlock. It wasn't a guaranteed position, but my goal was to get my foot in the door so I was willing to accept any role. After a short while, I was hired at our Salida plant as a full-time Production Laborer.

**MARK:** Once your foot was well and truly in the door, how long did it take to get your dream job?

**REBECCA:** I couldn't have been more excited to officially be a *Blue Diamond* team member. Less than a year later, in November 2015, I reached my original goal of becoming a Machine Operator, though I wasn't ready to stop there.

**MARK:** That was not the end of your story?

**REBECCA:** I was determined to grow with *Blue Diamond*. In 2016, I took the position as a Machine Operator with the new manufacturing facility in Salida. What was unique about this position was that the building wasn't even built. Four team members and I worked with our Turlock and Sacramento team members to train on their existing lines. We took what worked at their site and adopted those processes in Salida, as well as looking at any opportunity to improve the efficiency of the line. During this process, we developed training materials and standard operating procedures that would build the success of both the Pasteurization and Flour Lines.

**MARK:** No wonder those start-ups were so successful!

**REBECCA:** Thank you. In May 2019, I accepted my current position as Site Training Coordinator at Salida.

**MARK:** You have far exceeded your original goal. What prepared you to take on so many new roles?

**REBECCA:** Each position gave me the tools and insight to be successful in the next position. I have also looked to my mentors to help guide me. Denise Horn who has been with the company for 40-plus years has helped me understand the Main Production Line. Mary Ann Henriques and Juanita Nungaray have introduced me to the world of Safety and Continuous Improvement. I've enjoyed every role I've been in! As long as *Blue Diamond* is growing, I know I will have a place to grow alongside the business.

**MARK:** Yes. You absolutely will.

I want to thank Rebecca and Bobby for sharing their successful career journeys at *Blue Diamond*.

It makes me *Blue Diamond* Proud that each day we send our team members home safely to enjoy time with their loved ones. We have real heroes in the area of safety who make this possible, just like our Safety Manager in Salida, Mary Ann Henriques.

**MARK:** What brought you to *Blue Diamond*?

**MARY ANN:** A co-worker from Diamond Foods in Stockton, Dennis Bettencourt called looking for a referral for a Safety Professional. Since I teach Safety Classes, he thought I may have a student I could recommend. When I found out where the position was located, I asked, "Is it alright if I apply?" He seemed please I was still interested after he told me, "You will be taking a pay cut."

**MARK:** Then why were you interested?

**MARY ANN:** Career accomplishment and making a difference were more important than matching my salary. The plant wanted to become Cal/VPP and I was interested in helping to achieve that status, it is a big challenge.

**MARK:** What does Cal/VPP stand for?

**MARY ANN:** California Voluntary Protection Program. Cal/VPP recognizes employers and their employees for

implementing safety and health programs that effectively prevent and control job hazards. These companies are considered to be the leaders in the field of workplace safety and health.

**MARK:** What was the first initiative you implemented in Salida?

**MARY ANN:** Reviving the Safety Committee, I started running our meetings like a 4-H Committee and keeping minutes. We set up Safety Champions for our Core Champion areas and started developing them as SME.

**MARK:** It sounds like you have a background in agriculture?

**MARY ANN:** When I was younger, for 10 years I was in 4-H and a proud member of Modesto High School FFA. I have also acquired several university degrees. Today I live on my brother's dairy, in my grandmother's old house, where I grew up. We are the third generation.

**MARK:** Great leadership training. Our Salida plant's last lost-time accident was 4.5 million work hours ago. That is over four years for 550 employees. How has this been possible?

**MARY ANN:** *Blue Diamond* people are open to new ideas and management supports training. We completed OSHA 10 Hazard Recognition training which links the inter-relationships between work and home; and between departments. It allows us to review deeply ingrained assumptions and generalizations, that influence how we act. It provides the ability to reflect on actions, and clarify personal vision. Our people excel not because they are told to, but because they want to.

**MARK:** That is a powerful insight! What is next?

**MARY ANN:** This year we will be adding five new programs to meet our Blueprint for Success, six key expectations, and our safety culture teams, which all lead to Cal/VPP.

**MARK:** Recently Mary Ann was asked to participate on the curriculum update for the U. S. Department of Labor, OSHA Training Institute. Quite an honor! This year, from the Safe Food Alliance, Salida was awarded Plant of the

Year. Congratulations to Mary Ann, Plant Director Dennis Bettencourt, and the entire Salida team.

On May 13th, at 9:30 p.m., I arrived home from Oakdale after a full day of Grower Liaison meetings. As I walked into my home, my phone started buzzing with text messages. "Fire in Sacramento," "Turn on your TV," "Call me." Never will I forget that night.

Sacramento fire heroes Song Fang, Operations Manager, and Anne Root Becraft, Occupational Health and Safety Manager also joined me for an interview.

**MARK:** Song, for you the fire must have been even more dramatic!

**SONG:** On the night of fire, I was the first manager on the scene. At 9:07 pm, one of the supervisors called me and said "Song, we have a problem with the dryers. I need you immediately." At the time, I was at the other side of our two million square foot Sacramento plant. It took me two minutes to walk briskly to the dryer area. When I arrived I saw billowing smoke. Based on my experience, I told the supervisor and operators to evacuate the entire facility. Our first priority is to make sure that everyone is safe.

**MARK:** In a huge plant, how do we successfully evacuate 150 people in eight minutes?

**SONG:** In emergency evacuation, everyone takes their role as trained by Health & Safety. While some of the supervisors led the team members to the muster point, others confirmed that each of the production areas were cleared. Several times, the entire team had trained on emergency evacuations. As a result, people did not panic and knew what they needed to do. After doing my own sweep of the manufacturing area, I went to the front lobby of the plant and I noticed many fire trucks had already arrived and firefighters were ready to enter the facility.

**MARK:** How did the Sacramento fire department arrive so quickly?

**SONG:** As I issued the evacuation order, Security called saying the fire alarm system was triggered. Should we call the Fire Department? Obviously, I said "Yes!"

**MARK:** Thank you for your decisive leadership! Sacramento is a historic plant and great news that we could not recall a disaster of any magnitude. And we have some long memories! Anne, as Sacramento Safety Manager, why was the plant so well prepared?

**ANNE:** Three and a half years ago, I came to *Blue Diamond* from a plant where we manufactured glass bottles. There were literally tons of molten glass and there were fires there regularly.

**MARK:** So you had perspective on disasters?

**ANNE:** Yes. Our plant in Sacramento has five stories and two million square feet under roof. It's a maze to navigate. I knew an emergency preparedness plan would be one of my first orders of business. We put together a team made up of individuals from all departments who were passionate about safety. First, we mapped out the evacuation routes in the entire plant. Then, posted signs next to every single stairway and exit door. Next, we worked on fire extinguisher training and evacuation practice. We also developed a notification process which used air horns and practiced having designated people in each area make sure everyone else gets out safely.

**MARK:** That night you were the incident commander and seemed to have great rapport with the fire department?

**ANNE:** One of my other priorities was to develop a relationship with local first responders. A few months after I arrived, I invited them to visit. We toured the facility and talked about potential hazards, some of their experiences on the site, and our plans to build Confined Space entry and Emergency Responder teams. Of course, we also sent them away with a few cases of almonds from the gift store!

**MARK:** Well done! How did this relationship-building help on the night of the fire?

**ANNE:** On the night of the fire there were 115 firefighters on C street between 18th and 19th Avenues. Because of multiple visits, we were able to set up incident command a few feet from the fire commander and share information with them that helped them to strategize and keep their team safe, while minimizing the damage to our building.

**MARK:** After confirming that people were safe and the fire was out, my thoughts turned to the 115 firefighters with hoses and axes in our building. Tell us about the recovery.

**ANNE:** During the following weeks, Song and I, as members of the leadership team, had weeks of long days. I had the honor of providing incident command leadership with the plant team. Once we heard the contractors' estimate that it was going to take us six weeks to get back up and running, we knew we had to find a way for our own team members to safely participate. The Sacramento Leadership Team made a plan to quickly get the site operational.

**MARK:** The hard work during clean-up was incredible!

**SONG:** With help of disaster recovery specialists, we supported three shifts of team members who stepped outside their comfort zones to clean and rehabilitate our remaining work areas. They wore heavy personal protective equipment which required around-the-clock training sessions to use properly. They cleaned in hot, steamy conditions, and took apart all our equipment and work areas, and then cleaned and reassembled them.

**MARK:** Thank you. Where do we stand today?

**ANNE:** Shortly before Memorial Day, less than two weeks since the incident, we were able to start our first processes back up. In the last week of May, the plant was fully operational, except for the Dryer floor, where the fire took place. On September 5th, we officially began running good product on the rehabilitated Dryer 5. On November 11th, the rehabilitated Dryer 7 started up.

**MARK:** Congratulations! As we are fully recovered, we have so much appreciation for Anne, Song, then Plant Director Jeff Hatfield, and the entire Sacramento team for their heroic efforts!

Business is run by everyday heroes who do everything required of them plus 10 percent. It becomes second nature so that when an emergency or disaster occurs, they just respond and they do not even know they are heroic. This is the caliber of people that we are so proud of at *Blue Diamond*! All the accomplishments we've celebrated. It all culminates when there is a true disaster that is unplanned, unpredictable, and terrifying. And this is what happened. It is only appropriate that we also recognize the outpouring of support from members, community and even competitors.

On the Friday after the fire, I got a desperate call from our Fire Recovery Director Anthony Melo. He said "Mark, we have crews that must work 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and because it is almost the weekend, the city does not want to issue the needed permit." I said, "Let me call in a few favors." I speed dialed Mayor Steinberg and said, "Wouldn't it be great if we could get 800 people back to work as soon as possible." He said, "Mark, let me get on it." Within 20 minutes, the city manager and then the city engineer called saying "Whatever you need, we will take care of it." The permit was issued that afternoon and as Song and Anne said, we quickly got people back to work.

Doing business in the future requires strong community relationships (as exemplified by both the fire department and the mayor), ambitious young team members who see the opportunity for growth (like Bobby and Rebecca), a strong culture that is passed down from one generation to the next (with great mentors like John Wagaman and Mary Ann), playing to win with a vision for growth (including successful investments in infrastructure, new products, and brands) and also celebrating our heritage and new successes (as we are doing today).

Thank you to the five panelists and everyday heroes for taking the time to sit down with me. They represent our 1,800 everyday heroes, and that is why we can be confident that at *Blue Diamond* the best is yet to come! ♦



Mark Jansen  
President & CEO



Dan Cummings  
Chairman of the Board



## Investing. Innovating. Inspiring.

*Today, I want you to think about what makes you proud. I am incredibly proud to be a husband and father, a farmer, and a member of the Blue Diamond family. I am proud to serve as your Chairman of the Board. But, more importantly, I am proud of all of you! The incredible attendance at this year's annual meeting demonstrated a passion for the industry and dedication to this cooperative.*

*Blue Diamond* is celebrating 109 years of shared success and our legacy is impressive. We have every right to be proud of our accomplishments. As proud *Blue Diamond* growers, we have built a solid reputation for delivering the benefits of almonds to the world. And, we remain resilient when it comes to the ongoing uncertainty of the free trade of our product. I applaud the diligence of our growers for their advocacy and I am proud of our *Blue Diamond* team for cultivating the partnerships that support our cooperative and our industry.

Providing stability and superior returns to our grower families is our number one priority. Your board is ever committed to supporting this effort and achieved goals to this end over the last year. First, we invested in our growers' farms and the cooperative with a sharper focus on sustainability. Second, we sought ways to create further value by innovating to achieve the maximum return to our growers. Lastly, we looked for opportunities to inspire future generations enabling our industry and this cooperative to prosper. We have a strong foundation and working with these goals in mind allows us to realize our number one priority.

*Blue Diamond* growers have always believed in sustainability. Our investments in this area address the new challenges we face about how we grow. By creating a program led by a sustainability expert, we will be able to share our successes with sustainable farming. I am proud of our growers' involvement in *Blue Diamond's* sustainability workshops held this last

year. There is an increasing demand for data and information from buyers and consumers about how *Blue Diamond* produces almonds. The grower sustainability program tells the positive story highlighting our practices in the field. *Blue Diamond* supports the industry by using the Almond Board's California Almond Sustainability Program to capture this essential information.

Our approach to investing must continue to be a strategic one. It is one that requires a balance between the growth of this cooperative and the growth of our industry. Crop yields will continue to increase and that big crop is coming. The board is confident that *Blue Diamond* is making thoughtful investments to ensure we are prepared to handle it.

To succeed we must also put to use the developments of new technology. Our ability to think innovatively plays a central role in giving us the competitive advantage. We are expanding at two of our facilities — Salida and Turlock. And, the investments being made will allow us to achieve maximum returns for our growers in the future.

At the Salida facility, we are building on the success of the Bulk 7 receiving warehouse with a 2nd generation warehouse that will store an additional 50 million pounds of almond meats. These are two spectacular storage buildings. Those of you who had a chance to participate in the morning bus tour to Salida saw first-hand progress of Bulk 8's construction. The state-of-the-



Dan Cummings honors George Goshgarian (left) for his years of Board service and Brum De Visser (right) for his ambassadorship.

art technology will protect the quality of the almonds delivered to the facility and the increased storage capacity will provide for the future. Also at the Salida facility, we installed a second Log5 pasteurization line. This is significant when it comes to protecting and differentiating our brand. I am proud that *Blue Diamond* is committed to these advancements and that we are the only handler using the Log5 pasteurization technology.

At the Turlock facility, we are expanding production with the construction of a 52,000-square-foot building that will house a new automated processing line. This innovative processing line is truly remarkable as it uses a continuous flow for converting our almonds into products that promote *Blue Diamond's* commitment to quality. This expansion will help secure our future in the almond business.

*Blue Diamond* growers are also innovating on their farms. With the introduction of our new quality initiative, our growers received education vital to the production of quality almonds. The adoption of new practices and techniques in the orchards allow us to be proactive in

preventing navel orangeworm damage, waste, and product rejection. This initiative is an important step for our growers in achieving maximum returns.

We carry great pride in being good stewards of our land. This pride is inspiring. As we look towards the future of agriculture and the generations of farmers to come, we must continue supporting their efforts in being positive influences for our industry. *Blue Diamond* is proud of our growing partnership with Future Farmers of America and looks forward to another successful year of their Giving Tuesday jacket drive. Thank you to all our growers who have supported this day in the past. In 2018, our matching funds helped provide over 672 jackets to California FFA members.

We remain committed to our *Blue Diamond Growers* Scholarship Foundation. The twenty aspiring young men and women awarded scholarships this year are building a bright future for agriculture and *Blue Diamond* is proud to give back to our communities by providing opportunities for the next generation of industry leaders. Those of you who participate in the annual fundraisers, like the golf and BBs and Bocce tournaments, make these

scholarships possible. I want to thank Charles Crivelli for his leadership of the foundation committee.

*Blue Diamond* is also inspiring the future leaders of the cooperative through our Young Leader program. This program provides our young growers the opportunity to advocate on behalf of their industry and become more involved with the cooperative. I would like to recognize both the outgoing 22nd class of the Young Leader program and welcome the incoming 23rd class.

I would also like to recognize the regional field managers for their engagement and education to growers. The relationship between you and your regional manager is indispensable. They are a valuable resource inspiring a connection to the cooperative and the industry. I am proud of their commitment to *Blue Diamond's* success and encourage you to continue growing that relationship.

Inspiring our future generations starts with our Board of Directors. The leadership provided by your board is an essential part of *Blue Diamond*. It is my privilege to introduce your Board of Directors: Dale Van Gronigan — Vice Chairman and District 3 Director;

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

George Goshgarian Sr. — District 8; Charles Crivelli — District 6; Dan Mendenhall — District 7; Kent Stenderup — District 9; John Monroe — District 2; Steve Van Duyn — District 5; Kevin Fondse — District 4. And, our at-large directors Joe Huston and Don Yee. We are all proud of the work you do for this cooperative.

Your Board of Directors serves as your voice and representation in the governance of our cooperative. I am proud and honored to recognize one of your board of directors for their years of service. George Goshgarian Senior is retiring as District 8 director. His nine years of service to *Blue Diamond* has been invaluable. George's medical background helped drive almond nutrition research and product development. I also appreciated phone calls with George. His wisdom and sound advice were beneficial to myself and the company.

On behalf of the cooperative, I would like to express our appreciation for his contributions to *Blue Diamond*. Please join me in a round of applause thanking George for his service.

And now, I would like to welcome a new leader to the board. This new director brings with him not only contributions as a grower but a wealth of experience and unique expertise to your board of directors. As a fifth generation farmer, and third generation almond grower, Matt Efird joined *Blue Diamond* soon after planting his first almond orchard in 2007. And, his family participated in the filming of *Blue Diamond's* "Can A Week" advertisement. He is also the current president of Fresno County Farm Bureau. Please welcome to the board Matt Efird.



In 2006, *Blue Diamond* amended its bylaws to include a Director-at-Large. Two years later the cooperative elected its first Director-at-Large, Don Yee. Today, we say goodbye to Don as he is also retiring from the board. His many contributions to *Blue Diamond* include leading the search for our second director-at-large, providing a unique

perspective at board meetings and strategic planning retreats, and he's done a remarkable job as Chairman of the Audit Committee. Thank you, Don, for your eleven years of contributions and setting the highest standard as *Blue Diamond's* first Director-at-Large.

Now, I am inspired to present this year's Chairman Ambassador of the Year Award. This award acknowledges a *Blue Diamond* grower for the inspiring engagement to support the cooperative's success. This member is a role model of our core values, an influence in the community, and a person who makes a positive difference in the industry.

Mel Machado, your director of member relations, acknowledges that, "Brum is a constant brand ambassador. He is supportive, honest, and his pride as a *Blue Diamond* grower has been invaluable to this cooperative and his local community." Brum was instrumental in bringing new growers into *Blue Diamond* by coordinating quarterly lunches in District 5 and continues to provide guidance to growers in his district. Thank you, Brum, for your *Blue Diamond* ambassadorship.

Please join me in congratulating Brum De Visser on this award and for his outstanding contributions to *Blue Diamond*.

Over the last nine years, Mark Jansen has successfully executed strategies resulting in unprecedented growth and competitive returns. His commitment to this cooperative is extraordinary. The strength of his leadership makes a positive impact in the industry and the community. In fact, beginning in January, Mark will be the chairman of the California Chamber of Commerce. He is a person who truly understands what it means to be *Blue Diamond* Proud.

Pride is felt in everything we do. So, I invite you again to think about what makes you proud. The board is proud of all of you for making *Blue Diamond* uniquely successful. Our collective efforts over the last year to invest, innovate, and inspire give us every reason to be *Blue Diamond* Proud. ♦





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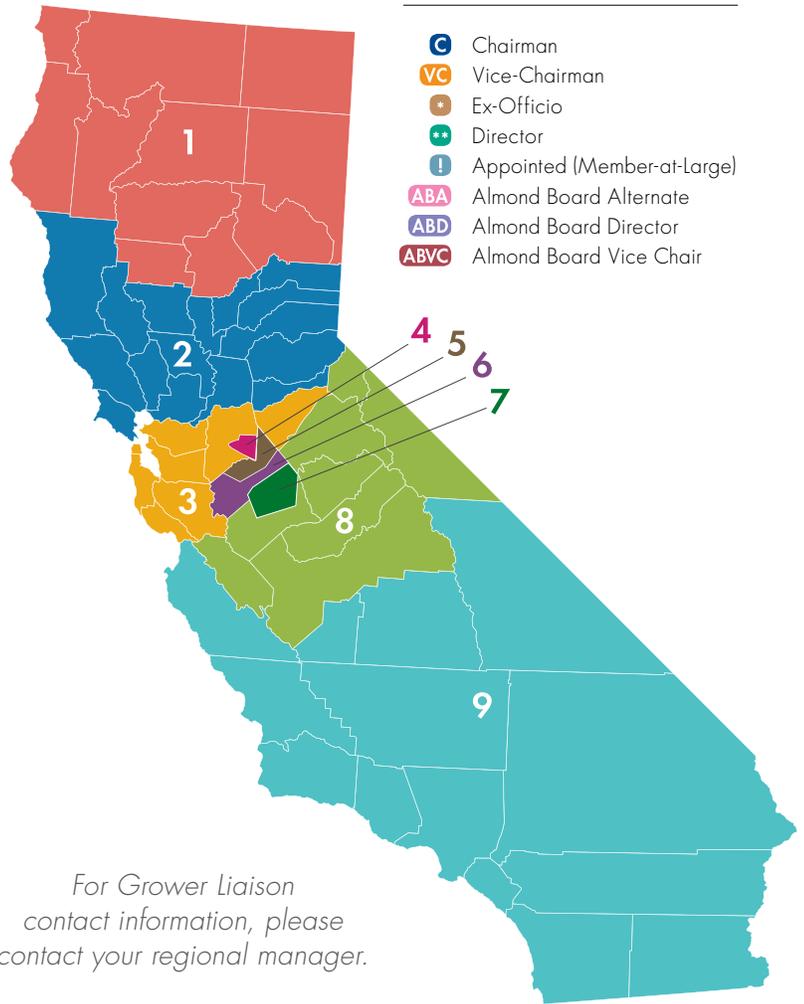
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# 2019 Grower Liaison

## LEGEND

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



### DISTRICT 1

- Gregory Watts
- Lyle Livingston
- Rick Pittenger
- Brian Erickson **!**
- Fred Montgomery **VC**
- Daniel Varner
- Greg Overton
- Kevin Borrer **!**
- Kevin Davis
- John Nock
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- Ronald Timothy
- Analee Lauwerijssen **!**
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- Brook Bachmann **!**
- John Monroe **\*\***
- Elaine Rominger **\***
- Gerald Rominger **\***
- Cathy Marsh

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- Michael Van Groningen
- Stephen Schmiedt
- Garret Mussi **!**
- Kathy Thomsen **C**
- Steve Stanful
- Clayton Bogetti
- Jim Thoming Jr. **!**
- Michael M. Petz **VC**
- Lloyd Van Dyken
- Bruce Oosterkamp
- Mike Bogetti **!**
- Dale Van Groningen **\*\***
- John Thoming **ABA '09**

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- Bob Holmes
- Nick Alta
- Paul Adrian **!**
- Herman Doornenbal **C**
- Tom Christensen
- Karen Javete
- Jason Dole **!**
- Will Drost
- Wesley John Eisenga **VC**
- Robin Giuntoli
- Joe Gasper **!**
- Kevin Fondse **\*\***
- Kenneth Roos **\***
- Greg Kamper

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- Gordon Heinrich
- Jeff Erickson
- Brum DeVisser **!**
- Brandon Riddle
- Mark Giannini
- Dennis Bowers
- Neil Jolliff **! C**
- Jack Hoekstra
- Sonny Johns **VC**
- Sid Miller
- Gary Darpinian **!**
- Stephen Van Duhn **\*\***
- Neil Van Duhn **\***

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- Rick Alvernaz **C**
- Allen Peterson
- Patrick Romero **! VC**
- Dirk Van Konynenburg
- David Richmond
- John Hack
- Scott Long **!**
- Richard Gemperle
- David M Genzoli
- Paul Lara
- Darryl Starn **!**
- Charles Crivelli III **\*\***
- Steve Vilas **\***
- Bill Brush **ABA '02**
- Tim A. Viera

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- Scott Abraham
- Galen K. Miyamoto **C**
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- Daniel L. Clendenin
- John Pereira
- Rodney Voumard **VC**
- David Passadori **!**
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- Victor Yamamoto
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- Kevin Hall **!**
- Dan Mendenhall **\*\***
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- Paramjit Singh
- Joey Biscay
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- Bruce Chapman **VC**
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- Baljit Boparai
- Tom Chandler **! C**
- David Massaro
- Jerry Rai
- Anthony Basila
- Dan Wattenbarger **!**
- George Goshgarian **\*\***
- Aldo Sansoni **\***
- Ranbir Grewal

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- Jason Dhillon
- Ryan Clark **!**
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- John Allen
- Don Davis **C**
- Chris Vandborg **!**
- Kent Stenderup **\*\* ABVC**
- Clinton Shick **\***
- Kyle Balakian

### 2nd Annual Sporting Clays & Bocce Tournament a Smashing Success!

On November 1, nearly seventy people gathered at the Stockton Gun and Bocce Club to enjoy a morning clay target shooting competition and bocce ball tournament. The event's purpose went beyond just having a great time but was to raise funds for the *Blue Diamond Growers Foundation*, which provides scholarships to stellar students earning four-year ag degrees. After the games, a delicious barbecue brisket lunch and raffle were held in the hall. Altogether, a grand total of \$1,128 was raised for the students and young leaders.

The event host and *Blue Diamond* Regional Manager of Merced County, Justin Elam, expressed how pleased he was with the turnout. "Everyone who came out this year had a great time! We hope to see this event continue to grow. And how about that brisket?!" This year's tournament boasted nearly triple the attendance of last year's and is only going to grow from there.



Since 2011, the *Blue Diamond* Foundation has been an important link, helping to join hands between generations of almond growers by providing monetary support to young ag professionals. Ongoing support for the foundation with events like this annual "BBs and Bocce Tournament" is key to the success of grower-owners. Be sure to keep an eye out for next year's tournament date for a fun-filled morning supporting a worthy cause!

#### About *Blue Diamond* Growers Foundation and Leadership Program

The BDG Foundation Scholarship was established for promising young students from California who plan to attend a college, or are attending a college, that offers a 4-year degree in Agriculture. The *Blue Diamond* Leadership Program is designed for potential young growers between the ages of 21 and 40 years of age. This program is designed to prepare the participants for a leadership role in the almond industry. ♦

### Ribbon Cutting for New U.S. Cold Storage in Turlock



*Blue Diamond* cut a ceremonial ribbon on November 14 to celebrate the grand opening of the brand-new United States Cold Storage (USCS) refrigerated warehouse.

The 9.3-million-cubic-foot building was finished in October, has two rooms, and up to 40,500 pallet positions. *Blue Diamond's* broad ingredient line includes a wide range of almonds (whole, sliced, diced, etc.) and also almond ingredients like powders, flours, and oils. The new warehouse will receive, store, and ship *Blue Diamond* ingredients and industrial finished products all around the country and the world.

Rod Noll, UCSC Senior Vice President of the Western Region, expressed his excitement in serving *Blue Diamond's* cold storage

needs, "We pride ourselves in providing 'Best in Cold' solutions and services."

Noll and other officials joined *Blue Diamond* President and CEO Mark Jansen at the ceremony where Jansen said, "Congratulations to all the teams at *Blue Diamond* and U.S. Cold Storage. What a great example of partnership and working together to achieve something great. This has been a terrific project for us. I marvel at what can happen in 18 months, in terms of pulling a facility of this size and complexity together. By finding the right partners and working together—we can become world-class."

This partnership with U.S. Cold Storage provides the platform from which *Blue Diamond* will achieve its objective for a more effective approach to the movement of almonds within the valley. The collective efforts enabled *Blue Diamond* to implement a solution that optimizes storage space and allows the cooperative to manage significantly larger crops in the future. The location is ideal for *Blue Diamond* because of its close proximity to the Turlock production facility and directly benefits the transportation, storage, and environmental sustainability workstreams.

Turlock and Sacramento are two out of the ten USCS sites in California, and the facility will serve as the primary location for industrial customers on domestic and international levels. This addition to *Blue Diamond* is an exciting advancement for the cooperative. ♦

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## Investing in International Growth

*Blue Diamond* recently traveled to Mexico on a three-day agricultural trade mission led by U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and attended by Under Secretary Ted McKinney. This marked an important trip for *Blue Diamond*, where the cooperative gained a better understanding of the U.S.'s second-largest export market and the business landscape in the country.

Mexico is a key market for the cooperative in Latin America and one of the most relevant for the company's growth. Earlier this year, *Blue Diamond* invested in the international growth of the *Almond Breeze*® brand by partnering with Grupo LALA, a Mexican company focused on healthy and nutritious foods.

During the mission, *Blue Diamond* showcased this partnership with Grupo LALA with a local supermarket tour and scheduled several business-to-business



meetings with Mexican companies. *Blue Diamond* team members met with over 25 companies to help secure collaborations and sales leads for both our brand and ingredient divisions. With the unique perspective of the *Blue Diamond* team on global markets and trade, these meetings proved successful. *Blue Diamond* also hosted an evening reception at the home of the U.S. Ambassador that featured food and drink made with *Almond Breeze*®.

*Blue Diamond* is continuing to drive innovative leadership to support key trade agreements like USMCA and develop strong business partnerships for brand growth. ♦

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## Have a question?

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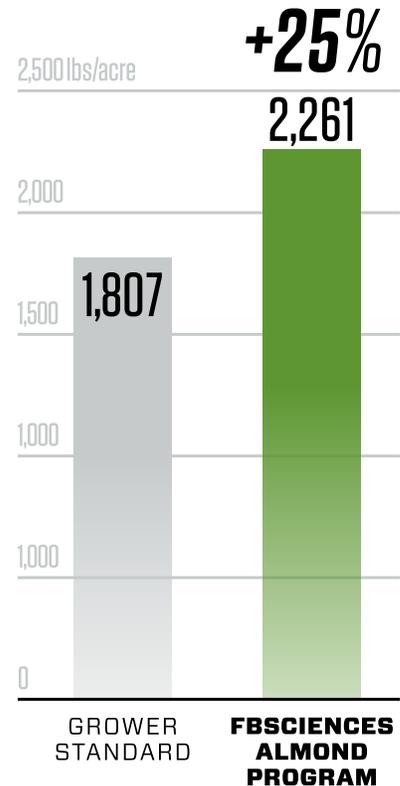
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## Competitors Agree: GHG Action Along Supply Chains Is Good for Business

Still wondering why *Blue Diamond* is asking for your farm practice information? It's important to outline some of our top customer sustainable supply chain initiatives which require data collected from their suppliers. The focus is primarily on greenhouse gas emissions, but water and waste are just as important to these companies.

As a quick primer, it's important to know the definitions of Scope emissions. The GHG Protocol Corporate Standard (a nonprofit standards body [ghgprotocol.com](http://ghgprotocol.com)) classifies a company's GHG emissions into three "scopes:"

- Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources.
- Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy (ie electricity).
- Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

This information is being reprinted with permission by author Julie Nash, Ph.D. and Ceres. Ceres is a sustainability nonprofit organization working with investors and companies to build leadership and drive solutions throughout the economy.

Extreme weather events cost the global economy a record \$320 billion in 2017. Food systems are experiencing more shocks than ever before, yet they also cause about one quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions. Eager to slow climate change and decrease their own carbon footprints, major food companies are expanding sustainability commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their supply chains.

In fact, major brands that compete in the same marketplace are transcending rivalries and increasingly committing to

climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability by reducing their biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions: Scope 3.

Scope 3 emissions, indirect emissions that occur in a company's value chain, are challenging to estimate and manage. In the food and beverage sector, most Scope 3 emissions come from agriculture, so companies often achieve Scope 3 emission reductions through improved agricultural practices and efficient management systems.

Here's how six well-known rivals are committing to reducing supply chain emissions.

### Target and Walmart

Two of the most widely recognized brands in the U.S. retail market, Target and Walmart continue to grow as they compete for customers in stores and online. The breadth and volume of their retail food offerings translate into tremendous potential to influence emission reductions along multiple supply chains.

- Through the Science Based Targets initiative, Walmart aims to reduce direct emissions by 18 percent by 2025 (from 2015 levels), reducing emissions by 4 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year, which is the roughly the same as taking about 900,000 cars off the road annually. But most importantly, Walmart is working with suppliers to reduce emissions by 1 gigaton (1 billion tons!) from the production and use of the products it sells between 2015 and 2030; that's the equivalent of taking 214 million cars off the road for a year. One way Walmart intends to achieve this target is by working with farmers to use fertilizer optimization plans and best management practices on 76 million committed acres of U.S. farmland by 2025.
- Last year, Target committed to developing science-based targets for Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions to align its corporate goals with the Paris Agreement. As a first step, Target set goals to reduce its absolute Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 2015 levels by 2025, and to implement projects in its

owned brand manufacturing facilities that will result in the avoidance of 2 million metric tons of Scope 3 emissions annually by 2022. Within a year, Target will develop an additional Scope 3 goal covering agriculture (raw materials) as one of its five focus areas for achieving the company's commitments.

## General Mills and Kellogg

U.S. consumers face the rivalry of these two giants each time they buy cereal. Wheaties or Special K? Cheerios or Mini Wheats? Lucky Charms or Fruit Loops? As consumers turn their attention to breakfast products that are healthy and environment-friendly, both General Mills and Kellogg have committed to reduce Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions in their supply chains.

- In 2015, General Mills set a science-based goal to reduce absolute GHG emissions by 28 percent by 2025 across its full value chain from farm to landfill, with a longer-term goal to achieve sustainable emission levels in line with scientific consensus by 2050. To meet this commitment, General Mills is partnering directly with farmers to measure and reduce the impact of resource-intensive ingredients such as row crops and dairy, working to advance practical conservation practices and investing in promising long-term solutions such as regenerative agriculture and soil health.
- Kellogg set a third-party approved, science-based target to reduce Scope 3 greenhouse emissions by 50 percent by 2050 from a 2015 baseline, by actively promoting climate-smart agriculture initiatives with its farmers. By 2020, Kellogg aims to enable 500,000 farmers to implement more sustainable farming practices using climate-smart agriculture, support 15,000 smallholder farmers to adopt climate smart agriculture, and develop programs to help women farmers and agricultural supply chain workers.

## Mars and Nestlé

Mars and Nestlé compete in the confectionery market with well-known chocolate choices — M&Ms, Snickers and Dove (Mars); and KitKat, Crunch and Butterfinger (Nestlé). And their long rivalry goes far beyond chocolate; Nestlé acquired the pet food brand Ralston Purina in 2001 and Mars acquired

Royal Canin in 2002. But these food sector rivals are both leaders in reducing Scope 3 emissions.

- Mars has pledged to invest \$1 billion over the next few years to fight climate change. It aims to contribute to the 2-degree goal by focusing on its agricultural supply chain, which accounts for 80 percent of its total emissions. With its Sustainable in a Generation plan and initiatives in agriculture focusing on beef, fertilizer use, palm oil and rice, Mars has committed to freeze emissions until 2020, achieve a 27 percent reduction by 2025, and achieve a 67 percent reduction by 2050.
- Nestlé, the largest food company in the world since 2014, has been transparent about how climate change poses risks to its supply chain, particularly agricultural production. Having established emissions baselines in 2014, Nestlé committed to an interim goal to reduce Scope 3 emissions 8 percent from 2014 levels by 2020, and is currently developing a 2050 goal that will be in line with the Paris Agreement to limit climate change to 2°C.

## What is Changing the Competitive Dynamics?

Climate change will continue to shift the industry landscape, uniting competitors in establishing emission reduction targets and transcending normal jockeying for competitive advantage.

Competing retail and consumer companies recognize that climate change poses significant risks to their supply chains. Because quantifying and mitigating Scope 3 emissions requires careful analysis, detailed projections and a wide range of strategies that can be implemented by large and small farmers and producers around the globe, rivals can benefit from cooperation.

Rivals' commitment to reduce Scope 3 emissions is creating a landscape for sharing, learning and cooperation to develop low-emission technologies. Engage the Chain lays out some of these options for decreasing emissions in commodities including beef, dairy, soybeans, corn and palm oil.

Yes, these food companies are competitors; but they all share a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and an opportunity to benefit from more stable food systems.

*More information can be found at [www.ceres.org](http://www.ceres.org). ◆*



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## Things That Matter

*What do growers need to pay attention to in order to achieve optimum returns? According to Mel Machado, Blue Diamond's Membership Director, there are "things that matter."*

### Varieties Matter

Nonpareil growers producing for kernels and inshell need to hit targets of 2.5 percent or less reject level to achieve the premium for inshell, and two percent rejects for the premium for meats.

"High-quality inshell is not hulled, it's grown," said Machado. "Good quality inshell occurs in the field. You need a reject plan that addresses, Navel orangeworm (NOW), ants, spit bugs — whatever the threat is. There has to be a good control plan." He emphasized close attention to timing and application of treatments to maximize protection. "Make sure your workers are doing their job," he advised. "Watch your orchard, so you know what is going on."

Woods Colony presents a challenge in manufacturing due to its tendency to develop a suture in the kernel in up to 30 percent of the crop, which renders blanching, slicing, and peeling impractical, thereby increasing processing costs and lowering the value of the delivery.

Monterey, while an excellent producer and a fine pollinator for nonpareil, often produces doubles. Doubles result in a high degree of chipped and broken, and a lower return for growers. Nevertheless, plantings of Monterey are increasing making the incidence of doubles in deliveries a growing issue. *Blue Diamond* this year launched a tracking study to determine what kind of problem the cooperative may have in regards to the amount of doubles in grower deliveries.

### Chipped and Broken Nuts Matter

This is not just a huller/sheller issue. As Machado puts it, "Garbage in equals garbage out." When rocks, wood debris, wood spurs, and other foreign material combine



in a delivery the nuts will be damaged. Too much chipped and broken degrades the value of a grower's delivery. Better conditioning in the field equals cleaner deliveries and less damage in the processing.

### Ants Matter

Ants damage almonds on the ground and in the trees, surprisingly. Machado has found ants swarming on nuts in trees, as well as nuts drying on the ground. "I have seen as much as two percent damage per day on a crop on the ground," he said. Young orchards are especially susceptible to ants. Ant activity begins earlier than might be expected. Machado has seen active ant hills in orchards at bloom. Growers must be vigilant, walk their orchards, and apply a good bait as soon as activity appears, and to maintain control through harvest.

### Plant Bugs Matter

Plant bugs have emerged as an increasing threat to almonds, with new species of the pest moving into the state. Leaf-footed plant bugs and stink bugs are "traditional" perpetrators of losses in the orchard. The insect feeds by probing the nut much like a mosquito. Early season damage kills the nut, causing it to drop from the tree. Later season damage after kernel hardening can result in "Brown Spot," which is classified as an inedible reject. Growers must walk their fields every couple of days starting in late March to look for clear gum oozing from green nuts. While the insect can cause damage in all varieties, it appears to prefer Independence, Sonora, Aldrich, Price, and Fritz, and typically attacks these first.

The discovery of Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs in Stanislaus County is particularly alarming. This insect feeds aggressively and causes serious losses. "Be careful with this

one," Machado says, "Get control of it early. If you have a problem, contact your PCA or Blue Diamond's field department for assistance."

### Premiums Matter

Last year, up to 1/3 of the crop failed to make the highest grade. When comparing the return from the highest grade to the next highest, the difference calculates to substantial dollar amounts depending on the size of the delivery. This is more than enough to justify more attention to high-quality production. "Ask us what you can do to increase your high-premium deliveries," Machado said. "Let us help you make more money."

### NOW Matters

A warming climate is one of the contributing factors to the increasing incidence of NOW infestations in California almond orchards. Damage resulting from the invasions of NOW points to cultural problems such as poor coverage with control materials, inadequate sanitation measures, and too many mummies left on trees. There should be no more than one mummy per tree.

To sum up his advice on minimizing NOW damage, he listed some essential DON'TS:

- Don't fail to sanitize thoroughly.
- Don't fail to clean the crotches in your trees — get every nut out.
- Don't fail to mummy shake, sweep, and mow.
- Don't mow too fast — destroy every mummy. If you're not sure, get off the tractor and check how

well the mower is shredding the mummies.

- Don't fail to get good coverage, especially the treetops — 2.0 to 2.5 mph — and remember, tree varieties vary in height. May need to recalibrate your sprayer.
- Don't fail to calibrate.
- Don't be late.
- Don't take too long to cover the orchard — complete the job in five days or less.
- Don't spray every other row — it does not work! Fuming materials are gone. All materials are contact chemicals now. Coverage is key!

Be alert to other sources of crop compromising contamination, including chemical odors that could be picked up by the kernels, such as sulfur, organic matter of any kind, soil amendments that could get into the crop, trailer contamination, wildlife droppings and carcasses, and critically, peanuts — do not allow any peanuts in or near your orchard or delivery. Also, be alert of pieces of metal, glass, bubble gum, and other debris that could be in the orchard or delivery.

Attention to detail goes a long way towards higher grades and more money in your pocket. ♦

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## Weed Control Strategies

Dr. Brad Hanson, UC Cooperative Extension Weed Science Specialist, held a richly informative seminar at the *Blue Diamond Growers Annual Meeting*. Hanson emphasized the common phrase “the right tool for the job” in his seminar when he stated, “Often, when I get a question about poor performance of a weed control program it’s because the grower is using the wrong tool for the job.”

He explained that what typically happens in those situations is that the weed is not properly identified, a good control plan is not in place, and the wrong material is being used. The result is poor control or no control at all.

### Current Practices

A typical almond orchard is strip-sprayed three to four times a year, usually with glyphosate. While glyphosate use has not decreased, for about six years, growers have been using increasing amounts of pre-emergent material, and there has been a troubling increase in resistance to glyphosate and other popular products.

In addition, there is a growing resistance in many weeds, not only to glyphosate, but also to other widely used products. Some of the most troublesome weeds, such as fleabane, horseweed, Palmer amaranth, rye grass, annual bluegrass and jungle rice, are showing resistance to glyphosate.

Fortunately, Hanson mentioned that there are many tools for controlling winter species of weeds. Winter weeds include horseweed, annual bluegrass, fleabane and ryegrass. Summer species of weeds are more of a problem. Most are resistant to glyphosate and paraquat.

To deal with resistance, Hanson suggests spraying the newly emerging weeds with glyphosate when no more than an inch or so across. “That may control them,” he said, “but waiting any longer will not. If you have a sensitive population and let them get six inches across



and starting to bolt, you will not likely be able to control them.” Timing is important. Treat new growth early regardless of the species sensitivity to herbicides.

### Pre-Emergent Programs

Hanson has experimented on how to manage resistant species and what kind of treatment regimen would maximize control. He found that applying a product like Alion in winter followed by Prowl in spring just before weeds emerge, and another application in August could give better control. He and a graduate student ran orchard trials with variations of this approach with good results.

He concluded that a sequential approach to weed control offers better results than a single winter application, at lower cost and with less environmental impact. "When herbicides are applied to soil in January, they begin to degrade immediately and are no longer effective when most needed, so growers have been applying more, but doing so in January when weeds emerge in July is not effective. So why not add more pre-emergent later in the season to control weeds and summer grasses?"

Prowl increased summer weed control and applying it in a sequence with the right timing was more effective than a single application at a higher rate. "Two quarts of Prowl per acre in the spring is better than four quarts in the winter," he explained. "Take your shots at the seedling stage."

In areas where summer weeds are a major issue, shift more Prowl to later applications. It can be useful when winter weeds are a problem.

Hanson was pleased to say that there are more pre-emergent materials available now which helps growers create a mix that works for them, so they have better results with their weed resistance management through herbicide rotation and herbicide combinations.

For more information, visit Dr. Hanson's web page at [hanson.ucdavis.edu](http://hanson.ucdavis.edu), the Hanson Weed Management Lab or email him at [bhanson@ucdavis.edu](mailto:bhanson@ucdavis.edu). ♦



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## Navigating the Turbulence in Washington, D.C.

A roomful of huller/shellers attended *Blue Diamond's* annual breakfast sponsored by Duarte Nursery Wednesday, November 20 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Modesto. As the upcoming Presidential campaign year draws near, Congress remains distracted and divided posing increased challenges to achieving passage of any constructive legislation. Attendees listened to *Blue Diamond's* federal advocate, Julian Heron, describe what may be on the horizon.

Heron has been *Blue Diamond's* point man in Washington, D.C. for decades and always has an ear to the ground on the latest federal news. He sees signs of change with President Trump's successful address of issues of economics, regulation, and foreign trade.

There is major concern in trade regarding the refusal of the House of Representatives led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi to bring the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada) trade bill to the floor for a vote. The bill will replace NAFTA and contains good news for ag, but the majority party in the House has been reluctant to put it forward claiming lingering concerns over labor standards. Heron explained that the USMCA trade agreement is stalled in the House of Representatives, and that the bill contains many labor provisions which could set the tone for future agreements. Labor has successfully prevailed upon the House leadership to stall the bill for now. "The Democrats are letting labor set the agenda," Heron observed. "We need to let our congressmen know we need it," Heron urged. "The industry wants it done."

Another bill to watch is the Farm Ag Workforce Bill (HR5038). Heron mentions, "This is the first time in a long time that we have had a bill to provide a reliable work force for agriculture." More than 300 agricultural groups support the bill which could pass. If it does, the Senate will, likely, consider it.



A trade agreement with Japan is also percolating. Heron noted, "An agreement is working its way through the Diet (Japan's Congress). It's the first of several agreements with Japan with more to come."

The heavily discussed Phase 1 trade deal with China was set to be signed before December 15 when U.S. tariffs on certain Chinese goods are set to increase, but it may be on hold in retaliation for the U.S. Senate passing a bill supporting the Hong Kong protestors. This action angered Chinese leadership which could affect the negotiated Phase 1 agreement.

The European Union is one of the U.S.'s largest markets. Our trade representatives would like to reach an agreement with the EU but their officials will not discuss agriculture. And for the U.S., the position is if no ag then no deal. The U.S.'s recent victory in the World Trade Organization (WTO) concerning Airbus's subsidy practices has resulted in U.S. imposing tariffs on select EU goods (a similar case is pending in WTO against Boeing) along with the United Kingdom's pending withdrawal (BREXIT) from the EU play into the issue of gaining an agreement. The withdrawal could negate previous trade deals with the EU.

Almonds are doing much better in India, which remains a great market. The U.S. Trade Representative mission is there working on details of an agreement. Word from those negotiations is that "almonds are in good shape" and the main issue for the U.S. is to get rid of retaliatory duties on almonds.

The Huller/Sheller Breakfast is a long-running tradition in which major issues affecting the almond industry and almond processing are discussed. ◆

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## Class of 2019 Finishes Proud

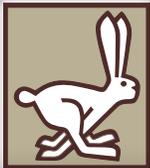
The Young Leader Class of 2019 completed their year of getting to know their cooperative “up close and personal” at a gala Recognition Dinner the evening before the *Blue Diamond Growers* 109th Annual Meeting at the Doubletree Hotel in Modesto. Judging from their comments about the leadership program, the Class of 2019 finished with pride in their achievements and their cooperative.

Angela Ferrarse enthused, “I can’t say enough about the Young Leader Program. I’m very impressed with the executives we met and the work that *Blue Diamond* is doing for its growers.” Ben Migliazzo agreed, “It was an excellent experience seeing what goes into processing and marketing our crops.”

*Blue Diamond’s* leadership in the almond industry also

received accolades. Michael Terra said that he was “inspired seeing how much *Blue Diamond* does to develop the industry. That’s huge for all of us.” Andrew Kamper added, “This co-op is so impressive. I read its history and saw that *Blue Diamond* made this industry happen; it helped the industry grow into what it is today.”

*Blue Diamond’s* years of leadership in working with government agencies that affect almond growers, processors, and marketers also impressed the young growers. Peter DeBoer observed, “It was very interesting to see how involved *Blue Diamond* is in helping us at the regulatory and legislative levels.” Eric Beltran added, “I did not know how much work *Blue Diamond* does in the capitol on our behalf.” Kelli Evans encouraged all *Blue Diamond Growers* to support the Political Action Committee (PAC), “I was selected to go



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to Washington, D.C. to represent our Leadership Class. There I saw how important the PAC is, how we have to give to the PAC to make it strong enough to have an impact on laws and regulations that affect our businesses.”

Each young leader expressed how proud they are to be a member of *Blue Diamond* and how proud they are of the work that the co-op is doing to help them succeed as growers and businesspeople. They were impressed with the new product development, marketing programs, and market development that the co-op has been doing for its members for over 100 years.

### Delivering the Benefits of Almonds to the World

To reinforce the young leaders’ comments on the marketing side of the business, Warren Cohen, *Blue Diamond’s* Vice President of International Sales, Global Ingredients Division, gave a presentation on marketing activities around the world. He described the major differences in sales strategies and techniques required to succeed in widely varying cultures. Some cultures require a slow approach based on developing a personal relationship and nuanced negotiations, while others are ready to bargain and make a deal quickly. Product preferences vary as well. Some prefer only the finest quality while others prefer certain sizes, and still others prefer inshell to shelled.

Cohen explained that to better understand and serve our customers’ unique needs, “We work directly with our customers, face to face, to know them and understand their preferences. They appreciate that. It helps us keep consistent business levels in good times and bad.”

Cohen’s worldwide travels over several decades have equipped him with a vast storehouse of valuable insight into how to further develop *Blue Diamond’s* markets on every continent. He noted that the U.S. government taps into that expertise to help expand markets and improve trade arrangements.

*Blue Diamond* was the first almond marketer to visit many of the countries that the industry now sells into, Cohen expressed. “We sent sales representatives to Europe, Asia, the Middle East and elsewhere right after World War II in search of export opportunities and we are reaping the benefits of that vision today with long-time customers in over 90 countries.”

Cohen was asked by the young leaders, who obviously are concerned about the future of their industry, if the export market can grow enough fast enough to absorb bigger crops. Cohen answered with a firm “Yes!” India, China, Pakistan and many of the Muslim countries with developing economies are eager for almonds. The nut has a role in their historical and religious diets. Cohen concluded by stating, “There is a lot of potential for almonds worldwide.” ♦

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## RECIPES OF THE MONTH

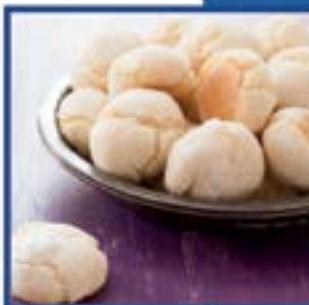
### Amaretti Morbidi (Soft Amaretti Cookies)

Makes approx.  
3 dozen cookies



*Ingredients*

- 2 cups Blue Diamond™ almond flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 large egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 tsp. almond extract
- Confectioner's sugar, as needed



*Instructions*

1. In a large bowl, sift together almond flour, sugar, and flour.
2. In a bowl, whisk egg whites with a pinch of salt until they are foamy and fall into soft mounds (not quite soft peaks). Whisk in almond extract.
3. Add to bowl with dry ingredients and stir until it comes together, kneading with your hands if necessary until it forms a sticky dough.
4. Lightly dust your hands with powdered sugar, scoop out pieces of dough (a small cookie scoop works perfectly) and roll into 1-inch balls.
5. Arrange on parchment or silicon-lined baking sheets, leaving 1 inch of space between cookies
6. Preheat oven to 300 F, letting cookies sit out and dry in the meantime for about 15-20 min.
7. Bake cookies for 20-22 minutes or until tops are cracked and bottoms are just barely golden. Let cool for 2-3 minutes on baking sheets, then transfer to wire racks to cool completely. Cookies will keep, sealed in an airtight container, for up to 5 days.



### One-Pot Butternut Squash Soup

by Jessica in the Kitchen



*Ingredients*

- 1 & 1/2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 pounds butternut squash peeled, seeds removed and cubed
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves
- 1 & 1/2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups Original Almond Breeze®
- 2 tsp. lime juice



*Instructions*

- In a large stock pot, heat the olive oil over medium high heat until shimmering.
- Add in the onion and garlic and stir to coat. Allow to cook for about 3 minutes, until the garlic becomes fragrant.
- Add in the butternut squash, stir to combine, and sauté for about 7 minutes until the butternut squash releases some flavor and the onions become translucent.

1. Add the salt, pepper, thyme, vegetable broth, almondmilk, and stir to combine. Bring to a boil and then to a simmer for another 10 minutes, until the butternut squash becomes fork-tender.
2. Remove from heat. Pour the soup and lime juice into a large blender. If you're not using a large blender (holds at least 6 cups) then do this in increments. Using the soup setting on your blender, or a very powerful blend option, blend until creamy and smooth, OR you can use an immersion blender and puree the soup ingredients until combined and smooth.
3. Add salt and pepper to taste. Top with garnish and serve.



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## Blue Diamond Announces 2020 Scholarship

The *Blue Diamond Growers Foundation*, a scholarship fund established in 2010, is now accepting applications for the 2020-2021 school year.

The scholarship is open to students living in the almond producing regions of California who plan to pursue a four-year degree in plant sciences, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics or subjects with relevance to almond production.

Applications can be downloaded from *Blue Diamond's Grower* website at:

[bluediamondgrowers.com/scholarship-program/](http://bluediamondgrowers.com/scholarship-program/)

## Governor Newsom Delivers on Rural Priorities While Focusing on Environmental Issues

*California agriculture has grown accustomed to major metropolitan areas and coastal communities garnering the vast majority of the political and policy attention from media and elected officials. Historically, given the population and voter base in those areas, government dollars flow that direction in the form of projects for housing, roads, infrastructure, entertainment, and so on.*

In an unusual twist of events, we now have a governor from San Francisco who has visited the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys more during his first year in office than any governor in recent history.

Governor Newsom first visited rural Paradise, California during a joint visit with President Trump and former Governor Brown in the wake of catastrophic fires in 2018. In addition, within his first few days after taking office, the governor surprised his entire cabinet team with a trip to a community in Stanislaus County to highlight local drinking water concerns. He then followed up with visits to Parlier, Fresno, and other areas to speak with agricultural and community leaders to learn about local issues.

Governor Newsom immediately prioritized the need for drinking water solutions in disadvantaged communities to help resolve problems impacting both rural and agricultural populations. Ultimately, he dedicated \$241 million to the effort this budget year alone.

In signaling his philosophy on water, the governor said in February, “We have to get past the old binaries, like

farmers versus environmentalists, or North versus South.” Following that speech, he made new appointments to the State Water Resources Control Board, and we are learning how those changes affect agricultural issues.

Important to many almond growers, the governor supports the creation of “voluntary agreements,” which allow local water districts, farmers and community leaders to create solutions along with state and federal officials to build flexibility in the surface water system. The potential agreements would assist fish populations in various ways, such as improving habitat, as opposed to automatically diverting more water away from farms and communities without regard to science.

On the legislative side, Ag Council commends Governor Newsom for vetoing SB 1. The measure would have enshrined Obama-era environmental standards; thereby, interfering with California’s ability to utilize the latest science in our environmental protection efforts. The governor said he vetoed the bill because California already has the authority it needs to pushback on President Trump’s federal regulatory changes.

The veto is a ‘win’ for agricultural and rural communities, and we thank the governor for recognizing the bill would interfere with California’s ability to use the best available science to protect the environment.

All of this focus on rural communities occurred within his first 10 months in office.

Shifting gears, the governor demonstrated a strong focus on environmental issues, particularly chemical use. California is the first state in the nation to begin the process of cancelling Chlorpyrifos with all sales to farmers ending by February 6, 2020. With looming questions around other chemicals, such as 1, 3-D or Telone, we can expect more of an investigation into chemical use throughout the remainder of the Newsom Administration.

Before legislators adjourned in 2019, the governor signaled support for pending legislation to reduce single-use packaging in our state and increase its recyclability and compostability. From a food perspective, everything from almond and walnut packaging to citrus netting would be impacted. With many

legislators focused on passing a bill in 2020, Ag Council continues to work on this issue on behalf of our members.

To add a layer of complexity to the mix, Governor Newsom's response to the wildfire crisis will be vital to his legacy. He is rightfully prioritizing human health and safety. It is also clear he is frustrated by the utilities, the neglect of energy infrastructure and the uncertain and burdensome use of the Public Safety Power Shutoff system. It is adversely impacting our farms and processing plants, and emissions from wildfires are reversing beneficial environmental improvements achieved through the reduction of greenhouse gases.

The governor made new appointments to the California Public Utilities Commission, the board regulating

the utilities. Certain appointees are discussing the need for "diversity" in the energy supply and other changes. In November, the governor said, "the entire system needs to be reimagined" and appointed cabinet secretary Ana Matosantos as the energy czar to address utility-related issues. By taking steps to head-off future disasters, the right kind of utility reform could benefit all of California, not only agriculture.

In placing a spotlight on issues impacting the overlooked segments of the state, some political insiders are calling Governor Newsom's efforts the "Rural Resiliency" strategy. More skeptical minds wonder if he will use this rural approach to build a future platform to run for president. Either way, issues such as poverty and rural communities appear to be at the top

of his agenda.

Those of us in agriculture will likely support some of his ideas for rural California and oppose others. Regardless, we must maximize our opportunities on all fronts and engage in the conversation or risk being left behind.

*Ag Council welcomes your feedback. Please contact Ag Council with questions or comments at 916.443.4887. ♦*



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## THE BEE BOX

### Bee Informed Partnership's Impact

It's the time of year where we slow down and reflect on what went right and what went wrong, and what didn't go at all! The days are shorter and there is less bee work as temperatures drop to freezing. This introspective time gives us an opportunity to share information about the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) and the operations we support. Last year, we wrote a series of blogs to illustrate our impact and mission.

### Dan Aurell, Midwest (South) Honey Bee Health Specialist

*Our Bee Informed work trucks serve as virtual mobile bee labs and are stocked with everything we need to take a variety of samples. On this particular day, the Pacific Northwest Tech Transfer Team was preparing to take virus samples in addition to the standard Varroa/ Nosema testing, as part of a longitudinal USDA study on bee viruses. Each individual bee will be tested (rather than the typical composite sample) to determine the type, variation and scope of viruses present. Numbered tags are stapled on each colony so they can be found again and longitudinally monitored over many months. The*

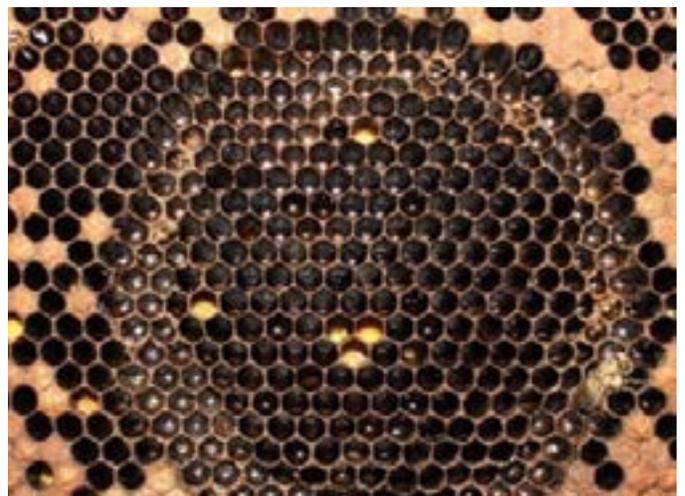
*cardboard box contains a cooler full of dry ice that will be shipped overnight to the lab for virus processing. The 100-bee samples need to be frozen right away to prevent degradation of the virus replicates.*

### Rob Snyder, California Honey Bee Health Specialist

*Over the past seven years working with BIP, I have witnessed, first-hand, improvements on the quality of the hygienic behavior in honeybee stock coming out of the Northern California Queen Breeders. Of all the variety of samples we perform as BIP Tech Teams, hygienic testing is my favorite because it means I get to look at the best performing colonies in each of the operations we work with. Over the years, I have noticed a decrease in the severity of European foulbrood, Chalkbrood and Sacbrood virus due to our collaborative efforts with the beekeepers in the program who select for hygienic behavior traits. I noticed newly participating beekeepers, who have not yet been selecting for the traits, do not have as much uniformity throughout their selected colonies and those do not test as high overall. But after a few years, these beekeepers are able to increase the amount*



Back of our BIP sampling truck as we sample a nearby yard. Photo credit: The Bee Informed Partnership



Elevated score (100%) on the hygienic test. Notice the bees have removed all of the frozen pupae in the course of a 24 hour period. Photo credit: Bee Informed Partnership



Here is a low performing colony score to compare with, where the bees have not removed as many pupae during the same given time period. Photo credit: Bee Informed Partnership



An examination of debris on the bottom board shows a handful of dead Varroa mites after treatment. Photo credit: Bee Informed Partnership

of high performing colonies and have more uniform test results across the board. This leads me to believe that our sampling and testing efforts are paying off, resulting in stronger U.S. stock and I am convinced that more beekeepers would benefit from this valued service.

### Dan Wyns, Eastern Honeybee Health Specialist

One of the most critical aspects of maintaining healthy colonies is the control of Varroa mite levels. Visual inspection after applying a treatment may indicate a high mite drop but this may not be sufficient to determine if Varroa levels have been reduced to a satisfactory degree. One of the ways that BIP Tech Transfer Teams work with beekeepers is to quantify Varroa levels in order to determine the efficacy of a treatment and decide if further intervention is necessary. This level of vigilance can and should be part of every beekeepers' management plan. The Tech Teams perform timely sampling and provide real-time, data-driven, decision power to improve colony health and these data help inform the data we share with the beekeeping community at our research site.

If you have found these blog posts interesting and informative, please visit us at our newly revised website, [www.beeinformed.org](http://www.beeinformed.org).

As a reminder, the Bee Informed Partnership is a nonprofit organization whose sole goal is provide up-to-date honeybee health data to beekeepers so that they may better manage their bees. We also welcome and encourage the distribution of this information to educate others about the challenges facing honeybees and the ways that we can help solve them. We remain an independent and unbiased source of honeybee health data, providing up-to-date and regionally-specific

information to beekeepers, researchers and policymakers nationwide. We also aim to inform concerned citizens and industry leaders so they too may promote the protection of honeybees and other important plant pollinators. ◆



**Karen Rennich,  
Executive Director,  
The Bee Informed  
Partnership, Inc.**

## BIP Fundraising

Funds directly support the major pillars of BIP's research and outreach program: 1) Our Interactive National Colony Loss Map; 2) the Sentinel Apiary Project which provides an early warning system to beekeepers regarding seasonal and regional threats to honey bee health; 3) our National Management and Loss Survey which evaluates annual colony mortality causes; and 4) the APHIS State National Honey Bee Pest and Disease survey that we provide the infrastructure to support and manage.

We house and maintain the largest publicly available honeybee health database in the United States. As such, we need financial help from the community to help fund our efforts and continue to grow.

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visit [www.beeinformed.org/donate](http://www.beeinformed.org/donate)**

## TIME TO CONSIDER

*With orchards moving into dormancy, the busiest time of the season has passed, thankfully. Now is a chance to regroup, rest a little and prepare for the next year. There is plenty to do, but at an easier pace that should allow some relaxing.*

### Pest Management Considerations

Navel orangeworm (NOW) is the key pest in almonds from Red Bluff to Bakersfield. NOW damage hurts growers directly in the form of crop loss and lower returns as well as indirectly through the potential for aflatoxin contamination of almonds, especially certain markets such as in the European Union. Higher levels of aflatoxin in almonds have been found in NOW damaged compared to undamaged nuts. Finally, processors spend more money cleaning up the crop in years of high NOW damage.



*Overwintering navel orangeworm larvae cracked out of a mummy in winter.*

NOW overwinters in mummy nuts — soft and hardshells — where dormant or bloom sprays can't penetrate. They emerge as adults to lay eggs that infest (or re-infest) mummies left in the trees. Multiple worms can infest a single mummy. More mummies in the trees in early winter results in more worm damage to the next crop.

It takes a year-round effort to produce low NOW rejects levels for each orchard. Now, the focus is on removing the remaining 2019 crop nuts, the mummy nuts, from the

trees by February 1 and then sweeping or blowing the downed nuts to the row middles and grinding them up with flail mowers by March 1. The goal is to have two or less mummies per tree in the Sacramento and northern San Joaquin Valleys. It's a tougher target in the central to lower San Joaquin Valley.

In reports from recent studies in Kern County, the researchers recommended 0.2 mummies or less per tree, and four or less mummies on the ground under each tree by the start of the new season. These target thresholds are recommended to keep NOW under two percent in high pest pressure locations. In the *November-December 2018 Time to Consider* column, the target for the southern San Joaquin Valley was listed as 0.7 mummies per tree and nine mummies under each tree. These targets are drawn directly from the Kern County research data. The researchers suggested the lower threshold (<0.2 mummies per tree and <4 mummies under each tree) after further risk analysis of this data. Growers and PCAs should consider past damage, distance to unsanitized neighboring almonds or pistachio and walnut orchards (sources of NOW), and percent mummy infestation when deciding on sanitation targets.

Knocking mummies out of the trees will remove some buds with the mummies, especially once bud swell has begun. But since well managed trees produce thousands of flowers and roughly set nuts on 25 percent of open flowers, losing a few buds should not impact yield. Research done in Kern County in the early 1980s found no impact on yield that year from mummy shaking or polling as late as January 31. However, researchers recommended sanitation cut off dates of January 25 in the southern districts and January 31 in central/northern San Joaquin Valley as well as the Sacramento Valley.

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## IN YOUR ORCHARD

Dormant sprays target insects (scale, peach twig borer and certain mites) and disease (scab). Check spurs for live scale and mite eggs and green shoots for scab lesions in each block to decide if a dormant spray is needed. You can find more details about dormant spray by visiting [ipm.ucanr.edu/agriculture/almond/Dormant-Spur-or-First-Year-Twig-Sampling-and-Treatment-Guidelines/](http://ipm.ucanr.edu/agriculture/almond/Dormant-Spur-or-First-Year-Twig-Sampling-and-Treatment-Guidelines/).

Dormant sprays do not provide any control for NOW or spider mites. The NOW overwinter inside the mummies where spray can't reach them and spider mites hang out in sites under the bark or on the orchard floor during the winter months.

Unless monitoring shows scale or scab control is needed, a dormant spray is usually not applied. Peach twig borer can be controlled with a range of treatment timings: delayed dormant, B.t.'s (Dipel®, etc.) with fungicides at bloom, in spring (May) spray, or at hull split. Using any insecticide other than B.t. at bloom risks harming bees.

### Pollination

If not done already, now is a great time to confirm pollination contracts for the coming bloom. Including hive strength language in the contract is highly recommended. Strong hives (eight-plus frames) will send out more foragers, touch more flowers, and collect more pollen than weaker hives. For example, eight-plus frame hives collected 300 percent more pollen than four to five frame hives in UC research. If your pollination contract doesn't stipulate a certain hive strength, there is no recourse if you don't get the bees activity you want.

The last two years have seen very poor pollination conditions (cold!) and strong hives give growers the best chance to set a crop under those conditions. Don't play musical chairs with beekeepers and neighbors, waiting until close to bloom trying to "get a better deal." You may be the one without a decent chair when the music stops.

### Nutrition

Dry potassium fertilizer, usually potassium sulfate (SOP) or potassium chloride (MOP), can be applied inside the



*Mummy shaking, the foundation of a navel orangeworm control program.*

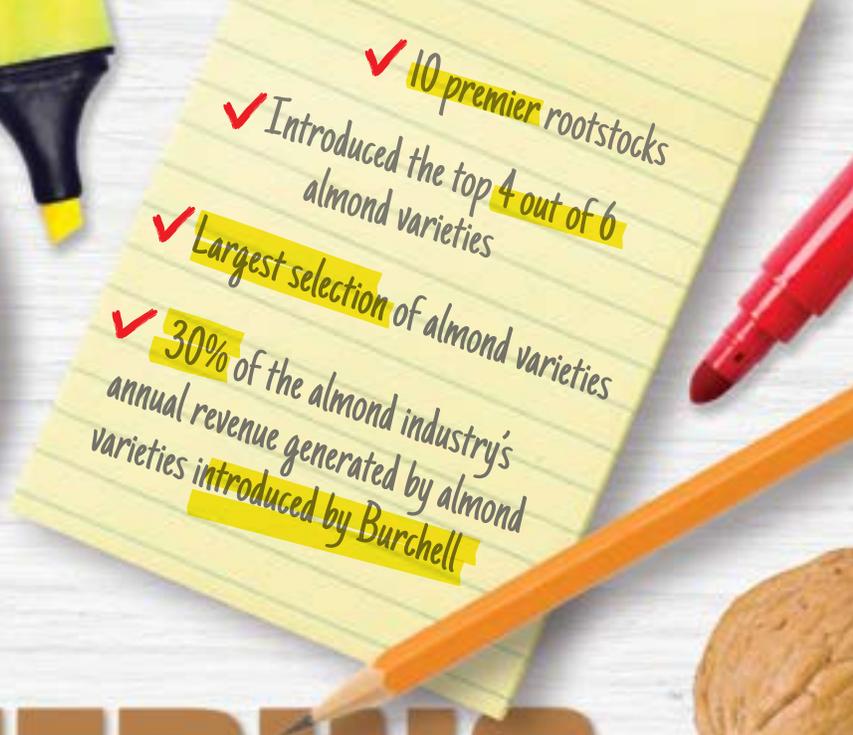
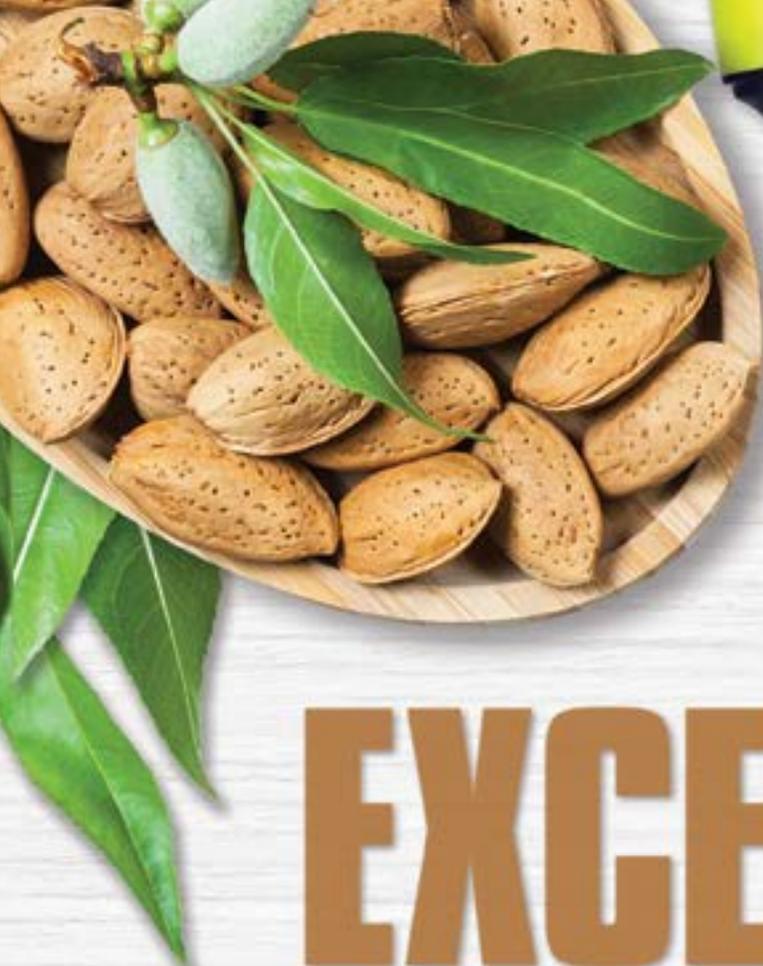
herbicide strips in the dormant season. In orchards with rootstocks more sensitive to high soil chloride levels (Nemaguard, Lovell, Krymsk 86, etc.) use of MOP requires using irrigation water to flush chloride from the rootzone if insufficient rainfall occurs before bloom. Traditional banding or the increasingly popular "targeted broadcast" deliver needed potassium to the tree root zone once the fertilizer is dissolved by rain or irrigation water. If using drip irrigation, make sure dry potassium is banded right on the drip line or as close as possible. This will allow irrigation water to contact the fertilized area next season.

If it's a dry winter, expensive potassium fertilizer in the tree row on the orchard floor can delay the sweeping of sanitized nuts. The sweeper's fan can scatter the carefully targeted potassium fertilizer and limits the amount of plant access to this important nutrient. One solution is to limit dry fertilizer application in dry years to those blocks with sprinkler or flood irrigation. In those blocks, irrigation water over the dry potassium can move the fertilizer into the soil if no rain has fallen and mummies need to be swept and mowed. In a dry winter, drip irrigated blocks can defer application until the season starts and inject potassium fertilizers during the season and so not fall behind on this critical nutrient.

Other than potassium, which is held on the soil's cation exchange sites through the winter, there are no other nutrients that should be applied in late fall/winter ahead of bud break.

### Pruning

Careful scaffold selection in the first dormant season is critical to the future health of the orchard. Thinning out



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*Poor scaffold selection in first leaf equals ruined second leaf tree due to occluded bark. There is no scaffold to trunk contact at the top of the torn union*

vigorous, closely spaced secondary branches in the second leaf may help avoid occluded bark and breakage in later years when heavy crops are set. Vigorous trees with poor branch angles and too many scaffolds close together can mean broken trees. Finally, scaffolds pointed at right angles to the drive row throw the largest “spray shadow” and are hardest to shake clean at harvest.

Full dormant is an excellent time for pruning, as long as rain isn’t in the immediate forecast. Pruning wounds can be infected by fungal pathogens (*Botryosphaeria*, *cytospora*, etc.) that are spread to cut surfaces by wind driven rain. Recent research by Leslie Holland, a Ph.D. student in the lab of Dr. Florent Trouillas, UC Extension Plant Pathology Specialist, revealed that pruning in January produced lower wound infection rates than in September, October, or November. Regardless of the timing, wounds were most vulnerable to infection immediately after pruning. The wound infection susceptibility decreased over time, with only 40 percent infection after two weeks and 25 percent infection rates three weeks after pruning. Treating with a registered fungicide between pruning and rain should provide two weeks of protection. Topsin-M® is very effective in reducing pruning wound infections in UC research and has a 2EE label specifically for treating



*Soil sampling in the field with separate buckets for each soil depth.*

pruning wounds in almonds and stone fruit. Consult with your PCA regarding materials, practices, and rates.

### Equipment Maintenance

Now is a great time to make repairs on key equipment for the coming year. This is especially true for equipment that works from bud break to leaf drop, including tractors, mowers, and sprayers. New bearings and flail knives on the mowers, nozzles (discs and cores where used), check sprayer pressure gauge, pump maintenance, and strainers on airblast and herbicide sprayers are some of the equipment maintenance tasks to consider. Replace old nozzles every winter, or at least check actual sprayer output against calibration records or manufacturer’s specs, to make sure nozzles still meet your expectations.

If it stays dry this winter, your irrigation system may be used sooner than expected. Now is a good time to have the system evaluated and maintained, if you have water available.

### Soil Sampling

Most orchard fertility programs are based largely on leaf analysis results, annual testing of soil pH, and salt levels throughout the profile are important to long-term orchard

productivity. Soil nutrient levels are generally sampled every two to three years. The late fall is a good time to take soil samples. The results give information on soil chemical conditions following an irrigation season and before the start of the new season, a report card for nutrient and salt management.

Two general types of samples should be taken: shallow (the top couple of inches) for infiltration needs and deeper (12-inch increments up to 60-inch depth) to check soil pH, nutrient, and salt levels. The shallow samples are especially important in orchards where irrigation water ponds and runs off. Samples should be taken from areas reached by irrigation water and consistently located the same distance from sprinklers and the tree trunks from year to year. Take samples for nutrient analysis at 12-inch increments to a minimum of 36-inch or up to 60-inch if assessing salts and leaching conditions as well as nutrition.

Sampling should be done in a careful manner from multiple (four to six) locations within an orchard under similarly performing trees. A number of clean plastic buckets can be labeled for each soil depth to be sampled and help in careful mixing of soil from the sampling sites that go into one sample for the lab. Separate samples should be taken from regions of the orchard with different soil infiltration, tree vigor, and performance. The results of soil analysis may influence decisions involving hundreds of dollars per acre so it's important that the process be done carefully, beginning with the sampling. Review the lab results with your PCA/CCA or local UCCE Farm Advisor.

*Best wishes for a successful wind down to 2019 and Happy Holidays to all! ♦*



**Franz Niederholzer,**  
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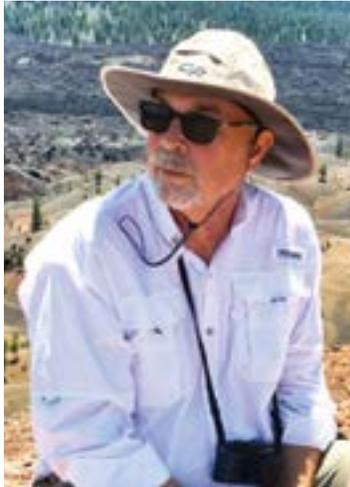
#### Almond Board Hires Devol to Lead Field Outreach and Education

*In his role, Devol will provide growers with boots-on-the-ground support to help them produce California almonds in safer, healthier and more sustainable ways.*

The Almond Board of California (ABC) welcomes Tom Devol as its new Senior Manager of Field Outreach and Education. In his position, Devol will lead a team that engages directly with growers to help them tackle in-orchard challenges and create advancements and efficiencies on their operations. Before arriving at ABC, Devol worked as director of grower services in Field Monitoring and Control for Jain Irrigation, Inc.

“The Almond Board is committed to providing growers with boots-on-the-ground support in our journey toward the Almond Orchard 2025 Goals. We believe walking alongside growers to help them push past barriers to producing a better crop is vital to the future of the California almond industry,” said ABC President and CEO Richard Waycott.

Devol’s resume includes nearly 20 years of experience in irrigation technology. Though he started his career in sales, in 2003 he transitioned to an irrigation design role at Durham Pump & Irrigation. In this position, Devol had



the opportunity to meet with growers to define their irrigation needs, design a system that met those needs and then deliver a final, installed system.

Devol recalls the day a grower pulled him aside and told him that while he was grateful for being sold a valuable irrigation system, he had no way of knowing how it was performing and what he could do to maintain it. That comment struck a cord with Devol, so much so that he switched his career focus to field monitoring and grower

support and remained in those jobs up until joining the Almond Board.

“Growers are some of the best people to work with, and I am honored to have the opportunity to serve them in this capacity,” Devol said.

In his role at the Almond Board, Devol will work with growers to help them solve the issues that keep them up at night — irrigation system efficiency, effective pest management, etc. — while also encouraging them to continue advancing towards the almond orchard of the future. Two major industry efforts will drive Devol and Field Outreach and Education Specialist Ashley Correia, who joined ABC this past year, in their outreach to growers: the California Almond Sustainability Program (CASP) and the Almond Orchard 2025 Goals. Devol and

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**“Knowing how to determine what technology works well in their orchards and then, equally important, knowing how to use, it is a passion area of mine and is key for the industry to understand in order for it to continue advancing towards a more sustainable future.”**

— Tom Devol

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Correia will assist growers in self-assessing their orchards using the nine CASP modules, a process that shows growers the progress they've made and the opportunities for improvement that lie ahead. Each time a grower completes an assessment and initiates improvements on their operation, they support the entire California almond industry in its effort to achieve the 2025 Goals, not only by providing data that helps the industry track progress towards the goals but also by implementing better practices in the areas of water use, pest management, zero waste and dust that will help them farm more efficiently for years to come.

"I feel like my whole career has built me up to this point and I'm excited to share all I've learned in the past decades with growers. There's a real need for grower support in the area of new technology. Knowing how to determine what technology works well in their orchards and then, equally important, knowing how to use, it is a passion area of mine and is key for the industry to understand in order for it to continue advancing towards a more sustainable future," Devol said.

Devol will lead the Field Outreach and Education team from his base in Chico while Correia will continue to focus her efforts in the southern part of the valley from her home near Tulare area. The Almond Board is in the process of hiring a third member of the Field Outreach and Education team to round out the grower expertise and geographic coverage of the team.

"The Almond Board invests heavily in research to improve growing practices, but the return on that investment only pays off if growers have access to the information they need to implement those practices in their orchard," said ABC's Senior Director of Global Communications Daren Williams. "Through our Field Outreach and

Education program, the Almond Board hand-delivers production tips and best practices to the growers we are here to serve."

Those interested to learn more about CASP are invited to arrange an in-orchard visit with Devol, who may be reached at tdevol@almondboard.com and 530.570.5558. ♦

Article contributed by the Almond Board of California

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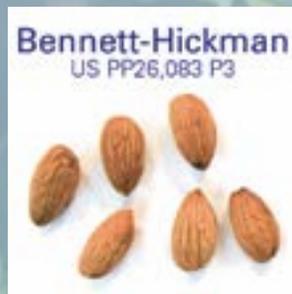
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- KCI bank out cart - \$13,000
- KCI drive over elevator - \$8,500
- KCI dump cart - \$5,000

Contact Ian at (559) 286-5709

## FOR SALE

Beautifully restored to original 1931  
Ford Roadster Pickup, \$18,000 or  
best offer.

Call (925) 872-0980

## FOR SALE

REARS 500 gallon Power Blast  
sprayer with 33" fan. Purchased in  
2016 new. Used 13 times. Maintained  
per manufactures recommendations.  
Asking \$20,000 OBO.

Call (209) 604-7444

## FOR SALE

1 x 4 x 8' DF tree props bundles of  
200. \$50.00 ea.

1 x 4 x 10' bundles of 200. \$60.00 ea.

Barn stored in Merced. Call Dan at  
(209) 777-3292

## FOR SALE

- Tractor trailer, 10'x6'-6". 22.5  
tires. Crank up ramps. \$4,500
- Enviromist Sprayer. 6'-6" spray  
band. Brand new. Never used.  
Cost \$2,500. Sell \$1,250.

Call (209) 537-9491. Ceres.

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95812**

**Or contact Samantha DeMelo at:  
Phone: (916) 446-8353  
Email: [sdemelo@bdgrowers.com](mailto:sdemelo@bdgrowers.com)**

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