



June 11, 2024

ABC Participation at INC Congress

The almond industry was well represented, as usual, during the INC Congress last month. The global meeting provides a unique opportunity to hear perspectives on key issues across the nut and dried fruit sector, with more than 1,200 participants attending this year's meeting in Vancouver. During the various round tables, expert panels gave updates on the latest crop forecasts, industry challenges and marketing trends. According to the data presented, world tree nut production for 2024/25 was forecasted at 6.2 million metric tons, up by 8% from 2023/24. This year, INC also relaunched several working groups addressing issues of concern to our sector. ABC is well represented, with Gabriele sitting on the Sustainability WG and Julie chairing the International Government and Regulatory Affairs WG.

Highlights from AgTC Annual Conference

Keith Schneller represented ABC at the annual AgTC Conference in May in Tacoma. Participation in this conference continues to grow each year and covered many topics from implementation of the [FMC's final rule on Detention and Demurrage Billing practices](#) that went into effect on May 28 to increased rail theft happening on rail lines to and from ports across the United States. Shippers and carriers also discussed recent spikes in shipping rates from Asia to the United State which has happened for various reasons including equipment shortages at major ports in Asia and strong demand again from U.S. importers. One of the most interesting presentations came from a former Google employee who is now with the [Digital Container Shipping Association](#) that is working with the world's 9 largest ocean carriers to develop standards for traceability, vessel schedules and 100% implementation of electronic Bill of lading (eBLs) by 2030. DCSA is a member of the [FIT Alliance](#) (Future of International Trade) that is leading the charge on implementing a standards based, universal eBL.

For more information, please contact Keith at kschneller@almondboard.com

CODEX Committee on Pesticide Residue (CCPR)

Dr. Gabrielle Ludwig just returned from the latest CCPR meeting that took place in Chengdu, China. In addition to deciding which new Maximum Residue Levels to recommend for adoption by the CODEX Alimentarius Commission at their annual meeting in November, CCPR discussed ways to deal with the growing back log of new active ingredients as well as new uses, and the even longer list of compounds that need to re-reviewed by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting of the Pesticide Residues experts (JMPR), which is CCPR's risk assessment group. There was a discussion of ways to improve JMPR's efficiencies, improve data quality for older compounds still being used, and to identify which compounds are of low risk so may not need a full re-assessment, etc.

Why does this matter to us? Having globally harmonized, science-based MRLs is essential to smooth trade flows. Some countries do not have the data needed for modern risk assessments and may not even be aware of the CODEX process. The EU in particular is getting impatient that MRLs remain on the CODEX list for which no new data has been promised or forthcoming, and have not been reviewed in more than 25 years. While fewer countries outright rely on CODEX MRLs, many adopt them after review by their regulators. CODEX MRLs are also very important for setting uniform import tolerances and are the basis for addressing inconsistencies.

Contact Gabriele at gludwig@almondboard.com for more information.

ABC Delegation Visits European Trade

In May, an ABC delegation led by CEO Clarice Turner visited key European markets of UK, Germany, Spain and Italy. Among the objectives of the trade visits was to introduce CEO Clarice Turner to key partner trade associations and buyers in the European market, which is the second largest export market for California almonds behind the Asia-Pacific region. The trip also provided the opportunity to inform the trade of the various ABC activities for boosting demand as well as to discuss the technical/regulatory issues in various markets and how best ABC can support the trade working

together. Each meeting was attended by major buyers/processors of California almonds in those respective markets.

The ABC delegation visited processing plants in Germany and Italy to see first-hand the variety of ways California almonds are being used. Also included were visits to supermarkets and grocery stores to see how almond products are being positioned in front of the consumers.

For more information, contact Abhi at akulkarni@almondboard.com.

USDA confirms FDA is processing new CIFER applications for facilities exporting to China

A [recent USDA/FAS report](#) from Beijing confirmed that FDA is processing new applications submitted in the CIFER portal since January 2022 for food processing facilities that wish to export products to China. Most almond handlers have already finalized their registrations and a few “new” applications are in the process of being reviewed by GACC. The report outlines the steps for new applicants that first starts with addition of an Export Listing Module application for China in the firm’s FDA account. Then the company can proceed in registering on China’s CIFER portal using their FDA Establishment Identifier (FEI) number. Upon successful review of the application in CIFER, FDA will forward the application to GACC that will eventually issue an approval number for the facility. This GACC number is required for products to clear customs upon arrival in China. [Another FAS report warns firms about using fake websites that charge fees to assist companies register with GACC.](#)

Establishments can only be registered with GACC through the official CIFER establishment registration portal which does not charge any fees: <https://cifer.singlewindow.cn>.

Keith continues to work closely with industry members and FDA to facilitate registration, as well as to address any of the issues or inconsistencies that are being identified.

Please reach out to Keith for more info at kschneller@almondboard.com

Researchers evaluate potential impact on California Ag Exports if there is a renewed trade war with China

With [recent increased U.S. Section 301 tariffs](#) on \$18 billion of Chinese electric vehicles, solar cells, semiconductors, and aluminum and steel products, it appears the U.S. and China could be heading toward another trade war. Researchers from UC Davis and North Dakota recently [published a paper](#) on potential outcomes if the U.S. revokes China’s Permanent Normal Trade Relations status. They expect that China would increase retaliatory tariffs on U.S. ag imports by at least another 10%. This would be in addition to the existing 25% Section 301 retaliatory tariff and 15% Section 232 retaliatory tariff on U.S. origin almonds. It is difficult to know how China will react – another move could be to revoke the exemption process on some of the existing retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products.

The researchers estimate that California’s ag export values would drop by up to 35%, adding to a loss of up to \$1 billion. They point out, “*This scenario underscores the need for informed trade policies that consider the complexities of international market dynamics and the essential role of trade relations in sustaining the vitality of California’s agricultural economy.*”

Upcoming Events:

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| June 11 | 10am - ABC Webinar on Export Finance/Risk Management Tools |
| June 24-28 | ABC delegation to DC |
| July 10-11 | USAEDC/Attache Conference, Tysons Corner, VA |

Your GTRA Team	Julie	jadams@almondboard.com
	Gabriele	gludwig@almondboard.com
	Keith	kschneller@almondboard.com
	Abhijeet	akulkarni@almondboard.com
	Brock	bdensel@almondboard.com

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