



January 9, 2025

GTRA Sessions at the 2024 Almond Conference

During the 2024 Almond Conference, GTRA staff actively participated in four panel sessions on important issues. Links to the presentations are provided:

1. North Africa: New Market Opportunities

This panel session presented initial research in the region, along with industry member comments regarding their “on the ground” experience in the markets. Having dependable in-market partners is essential, to minimize issues related to payments and technical requirements. In 2024, ABC received funding from USDA/FAS to do a market assessment of North Africa; basic trade servicing in Morocco will begin in 2025.

2. New Administration, New Trade Agenda?

This session stressed the fact that the industry *not assume* almond issues are fully understood. There will be a significant need to educate new agency officials and administration staff on almond priorities, particularly contributions to the U.S. and global economy. GTRA is already pulling together factual background information that will be shared with new officials and staff in the near future.

3. Dealing with Rejections and Goods Returned

The speakers walked through the procedures and information needed to help with lot rejections in the EU and Japan, including reprocessing options. They also discussed the Goods Returned Process of bringing product back to the U.S. and meeting FDA requirements.

4. Managing Insects in Harvested Nuts

This session focused on ways to minimize pests, relaying experiences with food processing facilities, research on new methods to monitor for insect pests in stockpiles and bins, and effective fumigation procedures. An update was also provided on learnings to date on post-harvest management of the new pest, *Carpophilus truncatus* beetle.

Potential East/Gulf Coast Port Strike being Closely Followed....

The International Longshoremen’s Assn (ILA) suspended a 3-day strike in October after reaching a tentative agreement with the U.S. Maritime Alliance (USMX) to extend a labor contract until January 15.

Negotiations for a new master contract are set to resume on January 7. This leaves a small window before the current contract extension runs out. The sticking point continues to be port automation. The ILA is against automation technology at ports under its jurisdiction, while the USMX argues that technology boosts port productivity and creates more jobs for longshore workers. A letter from hundreds of associations representing American manufacturers, farmers, restaurants, importers, exporters, and other supply chain stakeholders is being sent to President-elect Trump urging him to work with the ILA and USMX to get a deal done before he takes office on January 20.

About 40% of U.S. containerized ag exports move through East and Gulf Coast ports. While some tree nuts move by rail from California to Norfolk for shipment to the Mediterranean and Europe, the majority leave from West Coast ports. It is unclear what the ripple effect will be on the West coast, particularly on the availability of containers and schedule delays.

China launches “Year of Weight Management”

China’s National Health Commission (HNC) is launching the “Year of Weight Management” to tackle obesity and overweight issues to prevent chronic diseases. This three-year Weight Management Plan is a critical component of China’s broader health initiative and education agenda, emphasizing the adoption of healthy and balanced diets and the cultivation of sustainable lifestyle habits. As part of the broader effort to promote balanced diets, the Almond Board’s collaboration with the Chinese nut industry plays a significant role in enhancing consumer awareness about the health benefits of nuts. This partnership empowers consumers to make informed purchasing decisions and gradually increases nut consumption across the population.

U.S.-China Tit-for-Tat Trade Tensions Resume

December 2024 marked a pivotal moment in U.S.-China trade relations, with both nations enacting significant measures related to deepening economic rivalry. The Biden administration launched a Section 301 investigation into China's semiconductor trade practices, and simultaneously, the U.S. announced steep tariff hikes on Chinese imports, including solar wafers, polysilicon, and tungsten products, with rates set to rise as high as 50% starting January 2025. In response, China tightened export controls on critical minerals such as gallium and germanium, essential for semiconductor and high-tech manufacturing.

Congressional Budget Office Report on Tariffs

On December 18, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office [released a report](#) on the potential outcome of tariff increases proposed by President-elect Trump. The report states that the U.S. budget deficit could be cut by trillions of dollars over the next 10 years, but the proposed tariffs would also boost prices and reduce economic growth and incomes. The report acknowledges that since the U.S. has not pursued tariffs at that rate in more than 50 years, the results of the assessment are "very uncertain." The CBO assessed that a 10 percent tariff on all imports would decrease real GDP in 2034 by 0.3 percent, while 60 percent tariffs on China would decrease GDP by the same amount. The combination of a 50 percent tariff on Chinese imports and a 10 percent universal tariff would cut GDP by 0.6 percent. The report also noted that the proposed tariffs "*would prompt retaliatory tariffs by U.S. trading partners, which would reduce U.S. exports by making them more expensive for foreign purchasers.*"

China Decree 248: New Registrations/Renewals

Please note that most handler's Chinese CIFER registrations are due to expire at the end of 2025. ABC will start working with FDA in late spring to start the renewal process to extend registrations for another five years. If your company is still waiting to register for the first time, please contact Keith (kschneller@almondboard.com) who will help you with this complicated registration process. While FDA has agreed in past months to assist with "new" registrations, GACC (China's Customs Authorities)

has been very slow to review and approve these applications. GACC recently posted a notice requesting comments to revise Decree 248, China's foreign food facility registration law; ABC will be in touch with relevant partners to explore moving tree nuts into a less risky food category that would simplify the registration process.

Happy New Year 2025!

It will be a busy time as 2024 closes and we move into 2025 – new administration, new government contacts, new priorities. Relationships are essential, which depends on the reputation this industry has justifiably earned with key decision makers across the state, federal, and global landscape. We appreciate all your support and considerable commitment as we navigate new challenges and opportunities. As ever, the GTRA team is here to support the almond industry in any way we can! Don't hesitate to reach out to any of us with questions, comments, concerns.....



Upcoming Events

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| Jan 29-Feb 2 | Chinese New Year |
| Feb 10-14 | GMD visit to Morocco |
| Feb 11 | India Conference |
| Feb 17-21 | Gulfood: ABC Booth S3-F59 |
| Feb 19 | ABC 101 Gulfood Workshop |
| Feb 28-Mar 29 | Ramadan |
| Apr 25-27 | Tuksiad Conference in Antalya |

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The Global Update is a publication by the Almond Board of California. For more information, please contact the Almond Board on 209-549-8262 or regulatoryissues@almondboard.com. The information reported in this document is correct to the best of our knowledge. The Almond Board of California welcomes the participation of all industry members and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, religion, age, disability or political beliefs.

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