



Plum Good News

No. 173

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2010/11 CROP YEAR

The Prune Marketing Committee (PMC) unanimously approved a 2010 crop estimate of 150,000 natural condition tons at its June 24, 2010 meeting. This would be 14% above the average production of the past five years but 10% below last year's 166,114 ton crop. This estimate is based upon the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) projection. All prune tonnage will be considered salable, since no mandatory undersized regulation will be in effect.

California prune inventories as of July 31, 2010 were reported by handlers to be 84,856 tons, a 62% increase from last year's carryin. The total 2010 California prune supply is projected at 234,856 natural condition tons, which would represent a 7% increase from last year.

The California prune processor acreage survey totaled 60,988 bearing acres (compared to 64,000 acres reported by NASS) and 4,554 non-bearing acres for a total 2009 prune acreage of 65,532 acres.

The CDPB nursery survey projects 2010 prune tree sales at 308,356, down 5% from 2009's 323,979 trees. Nursery sales of prune trees are projected to decline an additional 8% in 2011 to 285,000 trees.

PRUNE MARKETING COMMITTEE

2010/11 PMC Assessment Rate

A handler assessment rate of \$.27 per ton (up from \$.16 in 2009/10) on the estimated tonnage of 150,000 tons was recommended by the PMC for approval by USDA. This would generate 2010/11 revenues of \$40,500 and, when combined with a \$17,847 2009/10 carryover, would leave a projected year-end reserve of \$15,842 after budgeted expenses of \$42,511.

Assessments in 2010/11 for both the PMC and CDPB will again be based on the following guidelines:

- Assessments must be paid on all prune tonnage received by processors, including undersized

prunes, even if producers are not being paid for such undersized fruit

- Assessments do not apply to trash such as dirt, twigs, leaves, and brown rot
- For any lot inspected by the DFA of California, the assessable tonnage will be total pounds certified less the trash removed. For lots not inspected by the DFA of California, assessments must be paid on the total tonnage of prunes received unless the processor can provide written verification of trash removed.

CALIFORNIA DRIED PLUM BOARD

2010/11 CDPB Assessment Rate

A total assessment rate of \$22.50 per ton (down from \$27.00 in 2009/10) was approved at the July 23, 2010 CDPB meeting. A grower assessment rate of \$15.00 per ton and a handler assessment rate of \$7.50 per ton were also approved. Total income of \$6,831,019 is projected versus budgeted expenses of \$5,748,636 leaving a \$565,383 reserve for contingencies and a \$517,000 credit-back reserve. The assessment rates will be applied to the total tonnage delivered by growers to processors, since the entire crop will be salable next year.

2010/11 CDPB Budget

Administration	\$500,616
Operating Expenses	176,460
Consulting Services	112,560
Research Coordinator	97,000
Production Research	132,000
Crop Forecast	5,000
Nutrition Research	122,000
Public Relations	535,000
Industrial Marketing	15,000
In-House Marketing	45,000
Sampling	15,000
Export Marketing	1,656,000
CDFA Charges	41,000
Generic MAP funding	2,296,000
Credit-Back Reserve	517,000
Reserve for Contingencies	<u>565,383</u>
TOTAL	\$6,831,019

Prune Processor Credit-Back Program

The credit-back for market promotion program will continue for 2010/11 with the only program change being the elimination of the \$20,000 limit on “Electronic Media/Internet” in the eligible activities.

Processor Reporting Requirements

The CDPB approved the following required processor reports for 2010/11:

- July 31, 2010 inventory carryover for California prunes by the five sizes shown below*
- 2010/11 production by the five sizes shown below *
- 2010/11 domestic and export shipments by quarter
- Prune production by county
- Bearing and non-bearing prune acreage by county
- Names and addresses for all prune growers and property owners.




















* Required prune sizes are as follows:

Count Per Pound
60 and larger
61 to 80
81 to 91
92 to 100
101 and smaller

DOMESTIC MARKETING PROGRAM

Consumer Public Relations

Building on the success of the Digestive Health campaign from 2004 to 2007, the California Dried Plum Board (CDPB) bridged to the Superfruit campaign in 2008 to promote the following dried plum health benefits.

	Blood Sugar Control	Heart Health	Bone Health	Digestive Health	Cancer Protection	Antioxidant Power
Dietary Fiber						
Sorbitol						
Potassium						
Copper						
Vitamin K						
Boron						
Phenolics						

Source: M. Stacewicz-Sapuntzakis :Chemical composition and potential health effect of prunes: a functional food? ”

These phytochemicals translate to unique health benefits. In the first year of the Superfruit campaign, California Dried Plums successfully leveraged this advantage and key scientific data to

create a genuine point of difference, achieving more than 128 million media impressions. A consumer survey confirmed that 40 percent of women considered dried plums to be a superfruit. (**Opinion Research, November 2008**)

In 2009, the California Dried Plum Board signed Olympic swimming champion Natalie Coughlin as a spokesperson to contemporize the image of California Dried Plums, provide a newsworthy media hook and reach younger women with credible health and wellness messages.

The media spotlight on the Superfruit campaign continued, generating more than 137 million media impressions with key placements in *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle*, *Real Simple*, *Shape*, *Runner’s World* and other top-tier publications.

An updated consumer survey indicated that 53% of women now consider dried plums to be a superfruit – an increase of 13 points! (**Opinion Research, March 2010**)

2010/11 Target Audience: Women 25 – 54:

- Motivated by wellness, convenience, affordability
- Active lifestyles
- Make 80% of food choices
- Socially and digitally connected
- Cooking at home more often

Source: FMI, and MRI data 2009

2010/11 Objectives:

- Continue to drive awareness of California Dried Plums as a sensational superfruit:
 - #1 fruit for good digestive health
 - Source of many important compounds that regulate, support and protect optimum health
 - Current and emerging data
 - Familiar and a “good value”
- Maximize media attention and stimulate demand

To build on the momentum of the Superfruit campaign, the CDPB will continue to use Olympic swimmer Natalie Coughlin as its spokesperson. Natalie is the most decorated female athlete of the 2004 and 2008 Olympics and plans to compete at the London Olympics in 2012. A California native, she is passionate about cooking, nutrition and is a fan of California Dried Plums.



Natalie Coughlin

Media outreach planned for Natalie includes a satellite media tour highlighting her healthy lifestyle and cooking tips and a radio release to be distributed through four major networks. Natalie will continue to promote the benefits of snacking on and cooking with California Dried plums to her thousands of fans on Twitter and Facebook. Interviews with Natalie will be pitched to key food and lifestyle bloggers.

The CDPB will continue to generate coverage with targeted news angles based on top nutrition and health trends and new research findings about California Dried Plums.

The CDPB plans to streamline its online resources by merging the www.tummywise.com into www.californiadriedplums.org. The new and improved California Dried Plums site will continue to leverage Natalie's star power. In January, the CDPB will run its Super Snacking Sweepstakes to drive consumers to the site. Updates will include short video segments of Natalie preparing California Dried Plum recipes and offering health and wellness tips.

The CDPB will partner with Conde Nast Digital on the following websites to reach active women who care about the foods they buy, prepare and eat:

- **Self.com** - promotes healthy lifestyle; visitors seek out health/fitness info
- **Epicurious.com** - audience loves to cook and entertain; search for recipes and food trends
- **Nutritiondata.com** educates users with strategies to make smart food choices

Banner ads and dedicated e-mails highlighting the CDPB superfruit messages and Natalie's healthy eating and training tips will drive visitors to www.californiadriedplums.org where they can enter a CDPB sweepstakes and view videos.

The CDPB will distribute snack packs at Iron Girl events, targeting women, ages 25+ as part of the popular Ironman race series. California Dried Plums will be distributed at 12 events across the U.S.

Nutrition Research

The California Dried Plum Board supports nutrition research to discover, characterize and/or quantify nutrient and non-nutrient components and health promoting functions of dried plums/products. The Nutrition Research Program works directly with scientists at major research institutions to develop the objective research database to support credible consumer public relations, health professional communications programs and marketing efforts. The Nutrition Advisory Panel helps maintain the scientific integrity and credibility of the Nutrition Research Program, evaluates current research activities, develops the research agenda, reviews proposals, assists in dissemination of research results, and helps identify key contacts to leverage research.

Program Objectives:

- To discover the presence, bioavailability, quantity and functions of phytonutrients in dried plums and dried plum products
- To discover new or expanded roles for dried plums/prunes in digestive health and bone loss due to aging.
- To support consumer public relations efforts targeted to healthy women motivated by wellness
- To build awareness about dried plums' role in health promotion among health professionals, media and other health/nutrition influencers.

Activities to support objectives:

- Consult with Nutrition Advisory Panel
- Support international research to secure digestive health and satiety/weight management claims for prunes
- Leverage opportunities in research funded by other institutions/organizations
- Maintain effective communications with the nutrition research community
- Monitor regulatory changes in Federal food programs and recommendations of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines relative to dried plum consumption
- Support conferences, seminars, roundtables, alliances and memberships in organizations as appropriate
- Provide research-based information to nutrition educators, health/fitness and medical

- practitioners, industry members and consumers through CDPB web site
- Monitor manuscript publication of completed research
 - “Oral and dental health benefits of dried plums,” Dr. Christine Wu, University of Illinois, Chicago
 - “Dried plum reverses bone loss in postmenopausal women,” Dr. Bahram H. Arjmandi, Florida State University
 - “Investigation of dried plums in the treatment of adults with constipation,” Satish Rao, MD, University of Iowa
 - “Beneficial effects of dried plum and age-related osteoporosis,” Bernard Halloran and Department of Medicine, University of California and Veterans affairs Medical Center, San Francisco, CA, Brenda Smith, Department of Nutritional Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
 - “Literature review: Dried plum composition and health,” Maria Stacewicz-Sapuntzakis, University of Illinois, Chicago (retired).
- Participate in California Dried Fruit Coalition

Industrial Program

The objectives of the Industrial Marketing Program in recent years have been to:

- Increase awareness among meat processors and foodservice chain restaurants that dried plums are:
 - A natural, innovative way to raise the value of lesser quality/grade of meat cuts with higher profit margins for both meat processors and chain restaurants
- Demonstrate dried plum ingredient effectiveness in meat products and other applications
- Achieve adoption in existing and new products

The strategies to accomplish these objectives have been to:

- Communicate functional benefits to the primary target audience emphasizing meat processors and foodservice chain operators

- Focus on beef but also include other animal proteins when applicable, e.g. poultry and pork
- Use existing and new evidence as proof of dried plum performance and economic payoff
- Support processor industrial sales and marketing activities

The positioning for dried plums has been as the “Sensational Superfruit” just as it has been for the consumer public relations campaign. This positioning is supported by the following California Dried Plum product benefits:

- Offer more than just antioxidants
- Retain moisture
- Enhance food flavors
- Are all natural
- Replace/reduce multiple artificial and/or undesirable ingredients
- Provide cleaner labels

A research project at the University of Arkansas to evaluate the effectiveness of various dried plum ingredients to replace alkaline phosphates in chicken is nearing completion. Top-line date has been very encouraging:



- Sensory analysis: the panelists detected no differences between the standard phosphate marinade and the 100% replacement with four plum products (powder, fiber, prune concentrate, plum concentrate).
- On a 3-point “just about right” scale there was no statistical difference between any of the marinades, including the standard phosphate, for chicken flavor, tenderness, juiciness or saltiness.
- Thaw loss was less for prune fiber, plum concentrate and plum fiber/prune concentrate.
- Cooking loss was less for all plum treatments as compared to phosphate.

Once the final report is released, a CDPB technical bulletin will be e-mailed to the CDPB database and placed on www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org in the

Industrial section with previous bulletins. The University of Arkansas plans to publish the results of this study in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Unfortunately, with the dramatic reduction in the 2010/11 CDPB budget, the decision has been made to phase-out the generic industrial marketing program. The industry owes a debt of gratitude to Jim Degen for his many years of leadership for the CDPB's industrial marketing program.

California prune processors can still capitalize on Jim's expertise by contracting directly with J. M. Degen & Company, Inc. Jim can be reached at degenco@mac.com or (520) 760-0601.

EXPORT MARKET DEVELOPMENT

The CDPB's Market Access Program (MAP) funding and Emerging Markets Program (EMP) funding for Russia in 2010/11 will total \$3,934,000. The CDPB will also administer a \$650,000 Global-Based Initiative (GBI) on behalf of multiple MAP cooperators who desire to substantiate health and nutrition claims so they can be used in advertising, publicity, packaging and websites in European Union countries where standards are being significantly tightened.

We extend our appreciation to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) for their financial and trade policy support. The USDA and the CDPB prohibit discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status.

The 2010/11 program will again include brand funding in established markets with participating packers contributing at least 50% of the total cost of advertising and promotion for their brands.

In the heavily competitive European and Russian markets, trade communications will focus on why California prunes are "The Gold Standard" versus our foreign competitors. Quality, product safety, marketing support and customer service will be the



cornerstones of this effort to capitalize on the increased availability of California prunes.

CDPB RESEARCH PROJECTS

Following are objectives of the 2010 CDPB funded production research projects. Total funding for the CDPB Production Research budget is **\$261,855**.

Dried Plum Cultivar Evaluation and Development – Ted DeJong /UC Davis/\$81,743

1. Develop new dried plum varieties through traditional horticultural breeding methods with desirable characteristics.
2. Test and evaluate advanced selections resulting from the current breeding program at UC and grower locations in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys.

Plum Pox Virus Resistant Improved French Plum – Ralph Scorza/USDA/ARS Kearneysville, WV/\$51,291

1. Develop improved French Prune that is resistant to Plum Pox Virus.
2. Evaluate the Plum Pox Virus susceptibility and symptomology of current French Prune variety.

Prune Rootstock Trial – Rick Buchner/Tehama County/Covered by last year's budget

Evaluate the current industry standard rootstocks and newly available rootstocks for their ability to improve tree vigor, tree size, crop yield, fruit size, annual cropping, lower sucking, anchorage, nutritional uptake, disease tolerance and nematode tolerance.

Managing Prune Bloom Timing – Franz Niederholzer/UC Sutter & Yuba Counties/\$8,405

1. Test a range of rest-breaking chemicals and surfactants to advance bloom timing and improve fruit set when temperatures are above 75°F.
2. Fine-tune the Prune Chilling Prediction Model launched in "test mode" in Fall, 2009.

Managing Heat at Prune Bloom – Franz Niederholzer/UC Sutter & Yuba Counties/\$16,070

1. Track bloom timing, orchard temperatures at bloom and fruit set.

2. Evaluate under - tree orchard cooling with microjet sprinklers for improving prune set during hot weather at bloom.
3. Test plant growth regulators and/or nutrient sprays applied during bloom to improve fruit set.

Research Reports Database – Louise Ferguson/
UC Fruit & Nut Center/\$5,357

1. Develop and maintain a database of California prune research reports that can be accessed by California prune growers, packers and researchers.

Epidemiology and Management of Brown Rot and Rust of Prune – Development of an Integrated Program with New Fungicides and Optimal Timing – Jim Adaskaveg/UC Riverside/
\$19,500

1. Evaluate the efficacy of new fungicides and pre-mixtures representing different chemical classes in field trials.
2. Conduct epidemiological studies with prune rust.
3. Monitor *Monilinia* spp populations obtained from decaying fruit for their in vitro sensitivities against fungicides.
4. Conduct molecular identification of *Aspergillus* species on dried plums using rDNA sequence data.

Registration of Pesticides – Gary Obenauf/\$10,000
Reserved for registration of new materials or re-registration of existing materials needed by the California prune industry.

Influence of Glyphosate and Propanil Drift on Prune Yield – Brad Hanson/Tom Lanini/UC Davis
/\$11,978

1. Evaluate the effects of propanil and glyphosate on prune production.
2. Determine the symptoms associated with these herbicides.

Farm Advisor Start-Up Research Fund – Franz Niederholzer/UC Sutter & Yuba Counties/\$10,000

1. Fund small-scale research projects.

2. Encourage experiment station personnel to work under this umbrella to obtain “seed money” for projects.
3. Provide modest support for statewide coordination and educational activities.

Minor Crop Farmer Alliance (membership) /
\$5,000

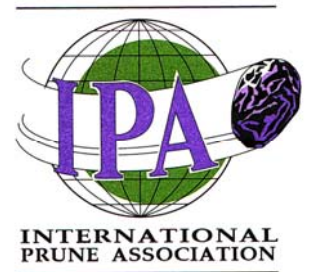
MCFA addresses legislative and administrative policies to ensure continued availability of crop protection tools for minor use crops.

Pesticide Policy Coalition (membership) /\$500

PPC ensures availability of safe, affordable pest management tools.

SOUTH AFRICA TO HOLD PRUNE CONFERENCE

The International Prune Association (IPA) will hold its next World Conference in Capetown, South Africa from October 24 to 26, 2010. State of the industry reports will be given by the seven member countries as well as scientific, health and marketing reports. A technical tour of prune orchards, processing plants and research sites is planned for October 27 to 29.



Details on the Conference, tours and day trips are available online at www.ipaprunes.org. Contact Rich Peterson if you have questions.

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