



# Plum Good News

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## 2007/08 CROP YEAR

The Prune Marketing Committee (PMC) unanimously approved a 2007 crop estimate of 95,000 natural condition tons at its June 28, 2007 meeting. This would be 29% below the average production of the past five years and 49% below last year's 187,737 ton crop. This estimate is based on the California Agricultural Statistics Service (CASS) projection, but early harvest experience indicates the crop will be smaller than 95,000 tons. All prune tonnage will be considered salable, since no mandatory undersized regulation will be in effect.

California prune inventories as of July 31, 2007 were reported by handlers to be 86,075 tons, a 289% increase from last year's carryin. The total 2007 California prune supply is projected at 181,075 natural condition tons, which would represent a 14 % decrease from last year.

The CASS 2007 forecast for bearing acreage was unchanged from 2006 at 65,000 acres. Non-bearing acreage for 2006 was 7,500 acres, which was also unchanged.

The CDPB nursery survey projects 2007 prune tree sales at 432,000, up 60% from 2006's 270,000 trees. Nursery sales of prune trees are projected to increase by 3% in 2008 to about 445,000 trees.

## PRUNE MARKETING COMMITTEE

### 2007/08 PMC Assessment Rate

A handler assessment rate of \$.60 per ton (up from \$.40 in 2006/07) on the estimated tonnage of 95,000 tons was recommended by the PMC for approval by USDA. This would generate 2007/08 revenues of \$57,000 and, when combined with a \$45,423 2006/07 carryover, would leave a projected reserve for contingencies of \$36,943 after budgeted expenses of \$65,580.

Assessments in 2007/08 for both the PMC and CDPB will 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

### 2007/08 CDPB Assessment Rate

A total assessment rate of \$40.00 per ton (up from \$34.00 per ton in 2006/07) was approved at the June 28, 2007 CDPB meeting. A grower assessment rate of \$25.00 per ton and a handler assessment rate of \$15.00 per ton were also approved. Total income of \$7,806,346 is projected versus budgeted expenses of \$6,301,755 leaving a \$725,491 reserve for contingencies and a \$779,100 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.

### 2007/08 CDPB Budget

Administration .....	\$526,405
Operating Expenses .....	225,350
Consulting Services.....	125,000
Research Coordinator.....	85,000
Production Research .....	246,000
Acreage Survey/Crop Forecast .....	32,000
Advertising.....	0
Nutrition Research .....	250,000
Public Relations .....	970,000
Industrial Marketing.....	353,000
In-House Marketing .....	47,000
Sampling .....	44,000
Export Marketing.....	1,304,000
CDFA Charges.....	76,000
Generic MAP funding.....	2,018,000
Credit-Back Reserve .....	779,100
Contingency Reserve .....	725,491
TOTAL.....	\$7,806,346

## **Prune Processor Credit-Back Program**

The credit-back for market promotion program successfully launched last year will continue for 2007/08 with no changes in the program parameters.

## **Processor Reporting Requirements**

The CDPB approved the following required processor reports:

- July 31, 2007 inventory carryover for California prunes by IPA sizes \*
- 2007/08 production by IPA sizes \*
- Prune production by county
- Prune acreage by county
- 2007/08 domestic and export shipments by quarter
- Names and addresses for all prune growers.

\* IPA sizes are as follows:

### Count Per Pound

60 and larger

61 to 80

81 to 100

100 and smaller

## **DOMESTIC MARKETING PROGRAM**

### **Consumer Public Relations**

2007/08 marks the fourth year of the California Dried Plum Board's public relations program designed to position California Dried Plums as the #1 fruit for digestive health. The first three years were spent building a foundation of scientific knowledge, health professional endorsement and credibility for California Dried Plums' role in digestive health and communicating this information to consumers. In this fourth year, we will expand consumer messaging to build awareness among consumers that California Dried Plums are the #1 fruit for digestive health, since they are

- A source of sorbitol, fiber, antioxidants and potassium
- The "essential" solution for wellbeing and an active lifestyle

Our communications goals will be to

- Create and build awareness about the importance of digestive health among the target audience:
  - Women 25-54 years old (universe of 63+ million)
  - Media
  - Health Professionals

To achieve these goals, the CDPB will use a panel of expert spokespersons to build credibility, address different wellness issues and position dried plums as the essential solution for good digestive health. These experts include Ms. Leslie Bonci, Director of Sports Nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh



**Dr. Maoshing Ni**

Medical Center; Dr. Leo Treyzon, fellow with the Division of Digestive Diseases and a clinical instructor in the Department of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles; Dr. Maoshing Ni, Doctor of Oriental Medicine and author of Secrets of Longevity; Dave Grotto, Registered Dietitian and author of 101 Foods That Could Save Your Life.

The Digestive Health Organization will continue to raise awareness of digestive health for scientists and health professionals. New research results related to digestive health will be summarized on [www.digestivehealthorg.com](http://www.digestivehealthorg.com).



**Dave Grotto**

News bureau activities will include a New York media event, online outreach, test kitchen product mailings and a national television series program that will generate news stories, usage ideas, nutrition tips and lifestyle features about

California Dried Plums and digestive health.

The CDPB will expand its outreach to health and nutrition professionals through exhibiting and sponsoring symposiums at national conferences like the American Dietetic Association (September 29 – October 2, 2007), the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (June 26 – 30, 2008) and Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives sponsored by the Harvard Medical School and the Culinary Institute of America (October 2007 and April 2008).

The Tummywise website ([www.Tummywise.com](http://www.Tummywise.com)) will be expanded as a resource for consumers interested in learning about digestive health. The CDPB's redesigned website ([www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org](http://www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org))





and targeted health and nutrition websites will be cross linked to drive traffic to Tummywise.com which will again carry Leslie Bonci's digestive health blog and digestive health tips.

The :30 second video featuring Leslie Bonci that ran in July 2007 on United Airlines will run during the heavy travel period in November and December 2007 on American Airlines, US Airways and United Airlines reaching an estimated 8.9 million travelers. Generic dried plum snack packs will be distributed during this period in airline lounges of the participating airlines in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Washington DC.

### **Nutrition Research**

The California Dried Plum Board sponsors 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 programs and marketing efforts.

Nutrition research seeks to discover the presence, bioavailability, quantity and functions of phytonutrients (mainly phenolic compounds) in dried plums and dried plum products, and new or expanded roles for established nutrients such as potassium, carbohydrates, dietary fiber and sorbitol.

Dr. Christine Wu, University of Illinois, Chicago, will soon submit a final report on the "Oral and dental health benefits of dried plums." Dr. Bahram H. Arjmandi, Florida State University, will continue his USDA funded clinical trial "Dried plum reverses bone loss in postmenopausal women" that includes several measurements of oxidative stress funded by the Board. Drs. James Joseph, USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University, will assess the anti-inflammatory activity of fresh plum juice in a mouse cell model through a no-cost extension of his previous work on the role of dried plums on

measurements of cognitive and motor behavior in aging rats.

New projects include "Dried plums for promotion of satiety, weight management practices and a healthful diet" conducted by Mark Kern, PhD, RD, San Diego State University; and "Investigation of dried plums in the treatment of adults with constipation" by Satish Rao, MD, University of Iowa. Nutrition research will also be conducted internationally with the funding of "Short and mid-term effects of prunes on satiety in normal weight individuals," conducted by Antonis Zampelas, PhD, Agricultural University of Athens.

### **Industrial Program**

The 2007/08 Dried Plum Board Industrial Program continues to pursue industrial applications in many different food categories including meat products, baked goods, confections, snack/energy bars and sauces.

As the food industry remains focused on such health and nutritional related issues as the reduction of fat/saturated fat/trans fat, carbohydrates, calories and sugar all tied into weight control, dried plums' features are receiving new consideration as a natural food ingredient. An important differentiating dried plum characteristic is the fruit's ability to address all of these concerns while achieving comparable or improved flavor and texture.

An even larger opportunity, however, is the more practical food processor problem of shelf life and shelf stability. As more foods and snacks are fully or partially prepared in either shelf-stable or perishable forms, maintaining quality over extended periods of time is critical.



As a way to focus the shelf life benefits of dried plums, sandwiches have been selected. The sandwich in a myriad of forms is now the most popular entrée at breakfast, lunch and dinner both at home and away from

home.

Many of the properties of dried plums that contribute nutritional benefits also directly impact on food product shelf life and shelf stability of key sandwich components. The antioxidants in dried plums suppress the normal growth bacteria that

impacts on the shelf life of refrigerated meat products. Similarly, these same antioxidants minimize the effects of warmed-over flavor on pre-cooked meats. Dried plums' fiber and sorbitol help to maintain moisture in meat, bakery and many snack products. Dried plums' organic acids retard mold development in baked goods while also improving the flavor of reduced-fat bakery products.

### **Targets**

The decision-making process concerning food product/menu development takes place at many management levels including R & D, Product Development, Research Chefs, Menu Development (chain restaurants) and Marketing.

### **Positioning**

Focus dried plum benefits on naturally extending product shelf life and shelf stability on primary sandwich components:

- Processed fresh meat and poultry products (protein)
- Baked goods (fresh and frozen)
- Sauces, marinades, rubs and condiments

### **Objectives**

- Increase awareness of dried plums as a food ingredient.
- Demonstrate dried plums' ingredient effectiveness to extend product shelf life and shelf stability.
- Achieve adoption of dried plums in existing and new products.

### **Strategies**

- Communicate functional benefits to the target audience by advertising in trade magazines, exhibiting at trade shows, participating in other industrial/foodservice events and through publicity and the CDPB website.
- Demonstrate specific product applications for dried plums using consulting chefs.
- Use existing and new evidence as proof of dried plums' performance, conducting new research as needed.
- Support dried plum handler industrial sales and marketing activities.

### **Export Market Development**

The USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) Market Access Program (MAP) funding has

been unchanged the past two years at \$200 million. As a result, the CDPB's MAP budget also remained virtually unchanged when the 17-month marketing year and the 18-month marketing year that followed were converted to the typical 12-month marketing year (\$2,678,000 in 2007/08 versus \$2,669,000 in 2006/07).



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 2007/08 program will again include brand funding in established Western European markets with participating packers contributing at least 50% of the total cost of advertising and promotion for their brands.

Generic spot television advertising and publicity will be continued in Japan. POS materials will support retail promotions as we rebuild the retail market for California prunes. Trade communications will provide reasons why buyers should purchase California prunes rather than those from other countries of origin.

Generic promotion will continue in China and India next year with trade communications and trade shows emphasizing the advantages of buying California prunes, and consumer activities keeping our products top-of-mind with consumers through retail promotions, sampling and reminder advertising.

We will work closely with retailers in the United Kingdom to arrange generic promotions tailored to their stores and customers including in-store sampling and promotions in retailer magazines and websites. A national competition emphasizing California prunes' quality and nutritional attributes and a two - city consumer sampling roadshow will be held. We will also explore the opportunities in the high-end foodservice and institutional markets.

Generic activities in Italy will promote California prunes as a healthy and versatile snack through a new leaflet that will also be inserted in popular women's magazines. We will continue the very popular electric car roadshow at major sporting events to generate sampling and publicity opportunities. Retailer promotions will be held in North Italy.

Generic activities in Greece will build awareness of California prunes and their nutritional attributes through activities scheduled with the Association of Gynecologists and Midwives International Day and the Nutri Med Nutritional website. Promotional activities with women's lifestyle and health publications will generate media coverage, brochure inserts and sampling opportunities. Ms. Eleni Petroulaki, gym owner and media celebrity, will serve as our brand ambassador. In-store retail promotions will increase exposure for California prunes.

In all markets, trade communications will focus on why they should "Choose California" over our foreign competitors. Quality, product safety, marketing support and customer service will be the cornerstones of this effort to regain the support lost to other countries of origin when the California supply couldn't satisfy demand.



#### **CDPB RESEARCH PROJECTS**

Following are objectives of the 2007 CDPB funded research projects. Total funding for the CDPB Production Research budget is \$246,448.

##### **Prune Cultivar Evaluation and Development - Ted DeJong/UC Davis**

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. Budget: \$78,358

##### **Plum Pox Virus Resistant "Improved French" Plum - Ralph Scorza / USDA/ARS/ Kearneysville, WV**

1. Determine the level of susceptibility of "Improved French" to PPV
2. Develop prune varieties resistant to PPV  
Budget: \$43,486

##### **Rest Breaking Agents in California Prune for Bloom Risk Management and Harvest Timing - Kitren Glozer / UC Davis**

1. Test the response of 'French' prune to rest-breaking chemicals to obtain reduced risk during bloom, reduced bud death, improved fruit set and fruit maturity advance.
2. Test the Dynamic Model for assessing when to spray rest breaking agents, timing applications of rest-breaking chemicals to a sequence of accumulated chill portions. Budget: \$14,871

##### **CPPU for Harvest Delay, Improved Fruit Firmness and Size and Reduction of Pre-Harvest Drop - Kitren Glozer / UC Davis**

1. Reduce or prevent preharvest drop, improve firmness and allow delayed harvest in French prune with CPPU growth regulator. Budget \$3,605

##### **Prune Pollination and Fruit Set - Vito Polito/ UC Davis**

Determine temperature parameters that affect each of the components of the effective pollination period (EPP) in prune flower. Budget: \$19,912

##### **Affect of Mechanical Pruning on Prune Production Economics - Bill Krueger/ UC Sutter County**

1. Determine the affect of different pruning/hedging combinations on net grower income/acre over 3+ years.
2. Test relationship of stem water potential (pressure bomb measurements) in dormant months versus post harvest topped trees. Budget \$7,400

##### **Preliminary Studies into the Use of Rubidium as a Potassium Tracer in Prunes - Franz Niederholzer UC Sutter County**

1. Test rubidium as a tool to measure relative root system activity under prune trees
2. Evaluate the possibility of using a ratio of potassium to rubidium as a way of labeling tree potassium content. Budget: \$3,250

##### **Development of a Model System for Testing Foliar Fertilizers, Adjuvants and Growth Stimulants - Patrick Brown/UC Davis**

Improve understanding of the use and effectiveness of foliar nutrients and stimulants to improve prune production efficiency and profitability. Budget: None, uses prior year funding.

**Prune Aphids: Overwintering Biology and Biological Control** - Nick Mills/UC Berkeley

1. Expand testing of the impact of a range of potential insecticides, for use in fall or early spring treatments of aphids, on mummies and emerging adults of *Aphidius transcaspicus*.
2. Continue to field release and monitor Spain strain of *Aphidius transcaspicus* in prune orchards and Phragmites beds. Budget: \$6,295

**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

1. Evaluate the efficacy of new fungicides representing different chemical classes in field trials.
2. Epidemiological studies with prune rust. Budget \$20,500

**Environmentally Sound Dried Plum Farming Practices** – Franz Niederholzer/UC Sutter County

1. Evaluate recently registered pesticides for aphid control using fall sprays (October and November).
2. Monitor scale and PTB populations in fall sprayed blocks.
3. Test “new” sprayer designs for improved coverage in dried plum orchards.
4. Improve application efficiency and reduce drift with existing sprayer technology. Budget: \$13,271

**Integrated Prune Farming Practices (IPFP)** - Gary Obenauf

1. Provide support for revision of the “Prune Orchard Management” manual.
2. Explore possibilities of additional grant funding for IPFP activities.
3. Support UC activity to help reduce the impact of lost UC positions. Budget: \$20,000

**Minor Crop Farmer Alliance.** Membership in a national organization to help educate EPA, USDA and others about the special needs of minor crops like prunes. Budget: \$5,000

**Pesticide Policy Coalition.** Membership in a forum consisting of chemical manufacturers,

agricultural organizations and food processors for issues associated with the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). Budget: \$500

**INTERNATIONAL PRUNE CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN CHILE**

The International Prune Association (IPA) announced that its next Conference would be held in Santiago and Santa Cruz, Chile from November 4 through 7, 2007. The IPA Executive Committee will meet on Sunday, November 4 with the conference for all IPA members scheduled for November 5. State of the industry reports will be given by all member countries: Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, Italy, South Africa and the U.S. Tours of prune orchards, dehydrators and packing plants will follow on November 6 and 7.



An optional post-conference tour will be held from November 8 through 11 in San Pedro de Atacama. This popular Chilean tourist destination is a historic village that grew around an oasis in the Atacama Desert. It features a renowned archeological museum, native pre-Columbian ruins, sandboarding and stargazing.

For more information and registration materials, visit [www.ipaprunes.org](http://www.ipaprunes.org) or contact Rich Peterson at the California Dried Plum Board at (916) 565-6232.

<p><i>Plum Good News</i> is published by the California Dried Plum Board (CDPB) &amp; the Prune Marketing Committee (PMC)  3840 Rosin Court, Suite 170  Sacramento, CA 95834  CDPB: (916) 565-6232  PMC: (916) 565-6235  FAX: (916) 565-6237  E-mail: <a href="mailto:pconine@cdpb.org">pconine@cdpb.org</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org">www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org</a></p> <p>Tim Smith, Chairman, CDPB  Jonathan Lavy, Chairman, PMC  Richard Peterson, Executive Director, CDPB &amp; PMC</p>
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