



# Plum Good News

No. 179

August 2011

## 2011/12 CROP YEAR

The Prune Marketing Committee (PMC) unanimously approved a 2011 crop estimate of 122,000 natural condition tons at its June 16, 2011 meeting. This would be 12% below the average production of the past five years and 4% below last year's 126,637 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, 2011 were reported by handlers to be 65,009 tons, a 23% decrease from last year's carryin. The total 2011 California prune supply is projected at 187,009 natural condition tons, which would represent a 20% decrease from last year.

The California prune processor acreage survey totaled 55,318 bearing acres (compared to 58,000 acres reported by NASS) and 3,904 non-bearing acres for a total 2011 prune acreage of 59,222 acres.

The CDPB nursery survey projects 2011 prune tree sales at 137,111, down 56% from 2010's 308,356 trees. Nursery sales of prune trees are projected to increase by 9% in 2012 to 148,870 trees.

## PRUNE MARKETING COMMITTEE

### 2011/12 PMC Assessment Rate

A handler assessment rate of \$.22 per ton (down from \$.27 in 2010/11) on the estimated tonnage of 122,000 tons was recommended by the PMC and approved by USDA. This would generate 2011/12 revenues of \$26,840 and, when combined with a \$19,650 2010/11 carryover, would leave a projected year-end reserve of \$15,721 after budgeted expenses of \$30,776.

Assessments in 2011/12 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

### 2011/12 CDPB Assessment Rate

A total assessment rate of \$40.52 per ton (up from \$22.50 in 2010/11) was approved at the July 16, 2011 CDPB meeting. A grower assessment rate of \$25.26 per ton and a handler assessment rate of \$15.26 per ton were also approved. Total income of \$7,527,205 is projected versus budgeted expenses of \$6,568,792 leaving a \$387,341 reserve for contingencies and a \$571,072 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.

### 2011/12 CDPB Budget

Administration.....	\$413,712
Operating Expenses.....	184,442
Consulting Services.....	132,280
Research Coordinator.....	97,000
Production Research .....	250,000
Crop Forecast .....	7,500
Nutrition Research .....	250,000
Public Relations .....	766,000
In-House Marketing .....	49,000
Sampling .....	60,000
Export Marketing .....	1,752,000
CDFA Charges.....	43,000
Generic MAP funding.....	2,563,858
Credit-Back Reserve .....	571,072
Reserve for Contingencies .....	387,341
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$7,527,205</b>

### Prune Processor Credit-Back Program

The credit-back for market promotion program will continue for 2011/12 with no program changes. Processors must still spend \$2.00 in eligible marketing activities in order to qualify for a \$1.00 credit back.

### Processor Reporting Requirements

The CDPB approved the following required processor reports for 2011/12:

- July 31, 2011 inventory carryover for California prunes by the five sizes shown below\*

- 2011/12 production by the five sizes shown below \*
- 2011/12 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

#### California Dried Plums Peak Performance Plan -



In 2011/12 the CDPB will continue to partner with Olympic swimmer Natalie Coughlin as a spokesperson in a Peak Performance Campaign. Natalie is the most decorated female athlete of the 2004 and 2008 Olympics, has won 11 medals in the Beijing and Athens Olympics and plans to compete at the London Olympics in 2012. She was named “Top Olympian of the Decade” by *Sports Illustrated*.

#### Natalie Coughlin

A California native, she is passionate about cooking and nutrition and is a fan of California Dried Plums. Natalie is very articulate, a natural presenter and a favorite with the media.

Natalie’s recent athletic accomplishments include:

- 2010 Pan Pacific Championships: 3 Gold and 1 Bronze
- 2011 Short Course World Championships: 1 Gold, 2 Silver and 1 Bronze

Media tours and blogger outreach are planned to keep the spotlight on Natalie and the Peak Performance campaign.

The Media outreach includes: setting up interviews for Natalie with top-tier broadcast and lifestyle print media; sponsoring a satellite media tour highlighting Natalie’s delicious champion-building recipes and snacking and fitness tips; and sharing everyday “peak

performance” tips in a radio release distributed on four major networks. Interviews will be pitched to key food and lifestyle bloggers.

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. The CDPB will also host a Twitter party where Natalie interacts with a gathering of bloggers in real-time.

**Influencer Program** - To maintain and build relationships with healthcare professionals and influencers, the CDPB plans to participate in the American Dietetic Association Conference in San Diego (September 24-27).

We will showcase the Peak Performance Campaign during the conference by hosting a symposium featuring Natalie and registered dietitian Leslie Bonci, MPH, CSSD, LDN, author of “Sport Nutrition for Coaches” and team dietitian for the Pittsburgh Steelers. They will discuss nutrition from the health professional and athlete’s point of view and the role of California Dried Plums in a healthy diet. Both Natalie and Leslie will make an appearance at the CDPB booth.

**Performance-related Outreach** - By partnering with Active Marketing Group, a leading sports marketing group, the CDPB will reach active women at sporting venues including training camps, leagues and amateur competitions. Approximately 70 percent of Active’s users are women ages 25-54.

Leveraging the endurance season from October 2011 through July 2012, 200,000 CDPB samples and Natalie’s recipe cards will be distributed at women-focused endurance events such as running, cycling, swimming and triathlons.

**News Bureau** - The CDPB will continue to generate coverage with targeted news angles based on top nutrition and health trends. The superfruit messaging can speak to the following trends:

#### 10 Key Nutrition Trends for 2011

- Digestive health
- Energy
- Feel the benefit
- Fruit: the future of food and health
- Weight management
- Naturally healthy and ultra-convenient
- Packaging and premiumization
- Antioxidants
- Immunity
- Bones and movement

Source: New Nutrition Business 2011

We will also continue to publicize the CDPB's existing research and promote new findings on heart and bone health, satiety and laxation.

**Website** - The CDPB plans to enhance its online presence [www.californiadriedplums.org](http://www.californiadriedplums.org) by redesigning the recipe gallery to make the onsite search easier. Search engine optimization for all recipes and videos will help drive traffic to the site.

The new and improved California Dried Plums site will continue to leverage Natalie's star power by showcasing her healthy eating and coaching tips. The homepage will prominently feature her cooking videos:

Natalie's videos demonstrate how to cook with dried plums to:

- Substitute for unhealthy fats and sugar
- Reduce calories and enhance flavor
- Add moisture to meat entrees and baked entrees
- Improve texture and taste of stuffings, sauces and marinades

**Sweepstakes Promotion** - A number of efforts are planned to create buzz around the Super Snacking Sweepstakes set to kick-off in January.

**Active Marketing** - Dedicated emails will be sent to the CDPB's target audience through active.com. We will also tap Active Marketing's Facebook Network to reach 1 million+ consumers through CDPB-sponsored posts.

**Nourish Network** - This site reaches 100,000 health-minded "foodies." Promotional plans include a targeted sweepstakes effort through Nourish Network's site, Facebook page, Twitter and e-newsletter. The site will also feature a Q & A with Natalie.

**CDPB Facebook Page** - This year the CDPB will launch a Facebook page to help reach the enormous social media audience. The page will include tabs for different promotional efforts (e.g. sweepstakes, recipes and snacks). New recipes will be posted monthly and the Facebook page will be linked to [www.californiadriedplums.org](http://www.californiadriedplums.org) through the Facebook "Like" feature. Visitors will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite CDPB recipes.

### **Nutrition Research**

Increasingly, health professionals are urged to focus on whole foods, rather than individual nutrients in order to design more effective strategies for the prevention of chronic diseases. During the last decade, there was considerable progress in discovering and understanding the

health effects related to the consumption of dried plums. Many health effects are interrelated and the dried plum components may act in synergy.

Dried plums contain unique constituents in characteristic amounts and proportion, which are not found in common foods, even in other dried fruits. Replacing other snacks with dried plums indicate many beneficial health effects besides increasing satiety and reducing desire for sweetened food, very important factors in controlling overeating, obesity, diabetes and related cardiovascular diseases. There have been several investigations of the effects of dried plums on bone turnover, with numerous mechanistic studies on animals and cell cultures. However, it is still unknown which individual compounds, alone or in combination, produce the observed effects.

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.

Objectives of the Nutrition Research Program:

- To discover the presence, bioavailability, quantity and functions of phytonutrients in dried plums and dried plum products
- To discover new or expanded roles for nutrients such as potassium and dietary fiber in various areas of health promotion including digestive health, bone health, heart health, satiety, immune function and reduction of oxidative stress
- 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:

- Set research direction in consultation with Nutrition Advisory Panel
- Prospect for and fund new nutrition research based on identified priorities
- Support international research to secure a digestive health claim 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 relative to dried plum consumption
- Become a National Strategic Partner and support messages of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines/ Choose My Plate to help consumers make half their plate fruits and vegetables
- 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 the CDPB web site
- Monitor manuscript publication of completed research
  - “Oral and dental health benefits of dried plums,” Christine Wu, University of Illinois, Chicago
  - “Literature review: Dried plum composition and health,” Maria Stacewicz-Sapuntzakis, University of Illinois, Chicago (retired)
- Participate in Dried Fruit Coalition and support the Global Based Initiative on satiety research

## EXPORT MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Continued economic challenges in the United States and abroad, as well as aggressive competition from foreign growers and discriminatory international trade policies make our export programs ever more important, albeit challenging.

The CDPB’s international marketing efforts continue to bolster product demand in traditional markets while entering emerging markets to advance new opportunities for California prunes. Thanks to our much-valued

partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agricultural Service Market Access Program (MAP) and Emerging Markets Program (EMP), the CDPB will leverage its 2011/12 approved export budget of \$1,752,000 with an additional \$2,563,858 of MAP/EMP funding for a total export program investment of \$4,315,858, an increase of 9% over the previous marketing year. The CDPB will also continue to administer a \$650,000 Global Based Initiative (GBI) on behalf of multiple MAP cooperators who desire to substantiate health and nutrition claims to support their promotional efforts in European Union countries where standards have been further regulated.



The 2011/12 CDPB/MAP/EMP promotional efforts include campaign activities in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Greece, Israel, Japan, India, China/Hong Kong, Russia and the government of the European Union. Strategies will focus on the consumer, trade and institutional sectors with established benchmarks and performance goals directing the development and guidance of our efforts.

Brand funding in established markets with participating CDPB packers contributing at least 50% of the total cost of advertising and promotion for their brands will again compliment our generic program.

In the heavily competitive European, Asian and Russian markets promotions will focus on why California prunes are the best choice versus our foreign competitors. Quality, product safety, marketing support and customer service will continue to be the cornerstones of this effort to capitalize on the renewed availability of California prunes.

Efforts to reduce or remove the punitive 9.6% trade tariff in the EU remain one of our highest priorities. The CDPB continues to work with our allies in Washington, D.C. and EU officials to explore options while the U.S. government and other World Trade Organization participants struggle to resume negotiations.

*The California Dried Plum Board is a recipient of Market Access Program (MAP) funds from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact Donn Zea at (916) 565-6232.*

## PRODUCTION RESEARCH PROJECTS

Following are objectives of the 2011 CDPB funded production research projects.

### **Dried Plum 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.
3. Cooperate with the FasTrack SCRI research project at USDA, Kearneysville, West Virginia to increase breeding efficiency.

### **Sequencing and Assembly of the *Prunus domestica* cv. Improved French Genome – Chris Dardick/ USDA/ ARS Kearneysville, WV**

1. Perform long-read genome sequencing of Honey Sweet Plum and Improved French Prune to enhance genome assembly.

### **Prune Rootstock Trial – Rick Buchner/Tehama County**

Evaluate promising rootstocks for California prune production. Plant two replicated experiments and one non-replicated observation experiment.

### **Managing Heat at Prune Bloom – Franz Niederholzer /UC Sutter & Yuba Counties**

1. Determine bloom-time temperature thresholds above which crop damage occurs. Where possible, evaluate under-tree orchard cooling with micro-jet sprinklers for improving prune set during hot weather at bloom.
2. Test commercially available spray materials to assess their potential for improving prune fruit set under warm orchard conditions.

### **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, pre-mixtures and bio-controls representing different chemical classes and biological agents in laboratory and 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.

### **Influence of Glyphosate and Propanil Drift on Prune Yield – Brad Hanson/Tom Lanini/UC Davis**

1. Evaluate the effects of sub-lethal propanil and glyphosate on prune yield parameters.
2. Determine the symptoms associated with these herbicides.

### **MRL Database Update – Matt Lanz/Bryant Christie Inc**

Monitor foreign sources for maximum residue levels (MRLs) on fresh and dried plums. Notify interested prune growers and processors via e-mail of any MRL changes.

### **Research Reports Database – Louise Ferguson/UC Fruit & Nut Center**

Maintain the online database of California prune research reports that can be accessed by California prune growers, packers and researchers.

### **Crop Protection Coalition (membership)**

The CPC has successfully defended Methyl Bromide as an essential agricultural tool during the international phase-out of MB. It works to maintain the Quarantine and Pre-shipment exemption and supports USDA commitment to MB alternative research funding.

### **California Specialty Crops Council (membership)**

The CSCC works to foster a positive regulatory environment focusing on pest management and stewardship that supports the success of California's specialty crops.

### **Minor Crop Farmer Alliance (membership)**

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

### **Pesticide Policy Coalition (membership)**

PPC ensures availability of safe, affordable pest management tools.

## CALIFORNIA TO HOLD IPA CONFERENCE

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Prune Association Congress will be held in Davis, CA in June 2012. Attendees will hear industry reports from member countries as well as scientific, health and marketing presentations from research and industry experts. CDPB will be actively involved in planning the event. Further details will be available in the coming months.



## NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPOINTED

The CDPB and PMC have appointed Donn Zea as Executive Director upon the retirement of Rich Peterson. Donn served as President of the California Forest Products Commission and the California Forest Foundation and the Northern California Water Association. Donn's expertise includes strategic marketing communication, issues management and public affairs leadership. Donn began work for the industry on April 1 to ensure a smooth transition of CDPB and PMC leadership.



**Donn Zea**



**Rich Peterson**

Rich Peterson retired after 25 years in the California prune industry, but plans to continue consulting with the industry as Executive Director of the California Dried Fruit Coalition that represents raisins, dried plums, figs and dates to promote their nutritional value and versatility with policy makers who influence purchase decisions for schools and other government feeding programs.

###

*Plum Good News* is published by the California Dried Plum Board (CDPB) and 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: [pconine@cdpb.org](mailto:pconine@cdpb.org)

Website: [www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org](http://www.CaliforniaDriedPlums.org)

Jon Lavy, Chairman, CDPB

Tim Smith, Chairman, PMC

Donn Zea, Executive Director, CDPB & PMC

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am very excited to step into the leadership role served so admirably and competently by Rich Peterson during the past 25 years. Working with Rich and our terrific team for the past four months has fostered an efficient and smooth transition that allows us to move forward quickly in this new marketing year without unnecessary delays and affords me a greater foundation of knowledge to make better decisions.

While I am well aware of the challenges we face, I am no less positive about the opportunities. This is a great industry with a terrific product to sell. Staying focused on planning and executing sound, cost-effective strategies to accomplish our most vital objectives will remain top-of-mind with me and the dedicated CDPB/PMC team as I know it does with you.

A change in leadership always affords the opportunity to build on what is working well and look for ways to improve processes and programs. To that end, the staff and I will be looking to create operational efficiencies where possible. On a program level, I'll be working with each of our contractors to ensure that they continue to receive sound guidance and support to achieve maximum results. By reviewing strategies, metrics and performance, we'll be able to critically assess outcomes together and make adjustments if required. In the meantime, the pieces are moving into place to roll out our 2011/12 domestic and international marketing and promotion efforts and advance our nutrition and technical agendas.

In conclusion, I want to encourage you to pick up the phone and call me or send an e-mail at anytime at [dzea@cdpb.org](mailto:dzea@cdpb.org). I look forward to getting to know as many of you as possible and learning more about your individual operations and priorities as a part of the CDPB/PMC team.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donn Zea". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Donn Zea  
Executive Director