



July 10, 2025

Moroccan Team Visits California

During the last week of June, a high-level delegation from Morocco was in California, sponsored by the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. After meetings in Sacramento, ABC hosted the group for a roundtable discussion, handler visit, and Port of Oakland tour. The delegation included a high-level official from Morocco's National Office of Food Safety (ONSSA), several ag importers and industry leaders. During the roundtable at the ABC office, almond shippers were able to raise questions about export documentation and possible solutions, which are now being pursued. Please contact Julie for more info at jadams@almondboard.com.

Pakistan cuts tariffs on almond imports

On June 30, the Government of Pakistan reclassified almonds from a luxury item to an essential item cutting their tariffs and fees in half. Pakistan's 2025/26 budget introduces a "single slab" for kernel and inshell almonds. The regulatory duty was cut from 20% to 10%; and the customs duty was reduced to 10% from 20% on kernels and 16% on inshell. An additional customs duty of 6% and 4%, respectively, was eliminated. These reductions are a direct result of ABC's close collaboration for several years with the FAS office in Islamabad, the Karachi Chamber of Commerce, and several nut importers and processors, building support and providing data on the benefit of lower import fees and facilitating imports to increase domestic consumption of almonds. Please contact Keith for more info: kschneller@almondboard.com.

PEC back to <1%

As a result of higher import rejections in 2023, EU Member States were inspecting more almond consignments which were arriving in Europe under the Pre-Export Check (PEC) program. ABC worked closely with USDA/FAS staff in Brussels to provide the Commission with analyses of U.S. testing and anticipated rejections, leveraging work on sampling which has been generated over the years by Dr. Thomas Whitaker (retired USDA/ARS). During the June Standing Committee meeting in Brussels, Member States agreed with the Commission's

statement that U.S. almond shipments under the PEC program should return to < 1% import inspection, as stated in EU regulation 2015/949. Contact Julie or Abhi for more information.

Outreach to Europe

Two of ABC's key strategies have been to build and expand alliances in key export markets and to educate relevant stakeholders. As part of these efforts, ABC staff were in Europe, to participate in the United Nations Economic Council for Europe (UNECE) meeting in Geneva, where discussions have included almond grade standards as well as preventing food loss and food waste throughout the supply chain. Other meetings with the Dutch Nut Association, NZV, in The Netherlands, and German Trade Federation, Waren Verein, in Germany, focused on strategies to address trade and regulatory issues at Member State level. In addition, staff also met the Dutch Consumer and Product Safety Authority staff to review effectiveness of California almonds' Pre-Export Check (PEC) program and shared information about transit studies highlighting that transit conditions do not contribute to aflatoxin growth in almonds. For any questions, please contact Abhi at akulkarni@almondboard.com

Japan & South Korea MRL trip

Via an Assisting Specialty Crops Exports (ASCE) grant from USDA/FAS, ABC joined a group of specialty crop representatives who met with Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) setting and enforcement officials in Japan and South Korea the week of June 9th. While in general both countries have good programs for setting MRLs/Import MRLs, it was an opportunity to learn more about their processes and concerns, as well as establish key relationships. It was learned during the trip that S. Korea will not work on an import tolerance request until the MRL is set in the exporting country. Also, both countries monitor the notifications of neighboring Asian countries and may increase testing if issues are seen elsewhere (e.g. Korea increasing aflatoxin testing on almonds due to rejections in Japan). The visit included meetings with registrants and importers for their perspectives, where it was learned that Japan has a goal of reducing the toxicity associated with the use of pesticides by 30% by 2050.

As a part of the ASCE grant, the officials will be invited to tour U.S. specialty crop farms and meet with U.S. government officials in the next year. For more information, please contact Gabriele at gludwig@almondboard.com.

China Facility Registration Renewals

The General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) registration portal at cifer.singlewindow.cn is now allowing facilities to “extend” applications due to expire on January 1, 2026. ***As long as the firm’s FDA Export Listing Module (ELM) is up-to-date***, the “extension” only requires the uploading of a one-page enterprise statement found in the portal that includes company name, GACC approval number, signature and company stamp or seal. Please note the system only allows renewals to take place within 6 months of expiration, therefore a few companies who registered after January 1, 2022 will have to keep that in mind. GACC will NOT accept extension requests after the registration expires, so please try to get these done as soon as possible!

FDA’s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) will send out up to three reminder emails to firms before the ELM expires – please watch for these emails and act accordingly! Contact Keith for any questions or assistance.

New Legislation Proposed for Ag Trade losses

Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA) introduced a bill that would financially support farmers impacted by export market losses. The bill proposes a fund, named Tariff Responses and Damages to Exports (TRADE), that would distribute revenue collected from tariffs on foreign agricultural products to qualifying American agricultural producers. ABC is following these discussions; for questions, please contact Brock at bdensel@almondboard.com.

Vote on Continued U.S. WTO Membership

A resolution on the Hill may be called up soon to vote on U.S. withdrawal from the World Trade Organization (WTO). The U.S. State Department is currently reviewing U.S. membership in various international organizations including the WTO which was founded in 1994. The U.S. was a leader

in establishing the WTO’s international trade rules and standards in the past, including the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement (TBT) that are so important to the facilitation of agricultural trade. Withdrawal from the WTO would also take away U.S. access to WTO Members’ Most Favored Nations low tariff status, potentially triggering pre-WTO tariff schedules for U.S. products at much higher rates. The Congressional Research Service report provides information on the importance of the WTO. A recent letter sent by more than two dozen U.S. ag trade associations to USG officials emphasizes the need for continued funding and leadership by the U.S., pointing out that U.S. ag exports have grown from \$52 billion when the WTO was founded to \$176 billion in 2024.

End of Trade Pause: What’s Next?

Reciprocal tariffs announced on April 2 were largely paused for 90 days, leading to a flurry of negotiations between the U.S. and trading partners. As July 9 approaches, ABC is closely following offers that may impact California almond shipments – particularly with India and the EU. Negotiations with China continue on a separate track, with increased duties there on hold until early August.

It is unclear at this point if the Administration will move forward with the reported tariff increases if it feels the offers are insufficient, or if more time will be provided for further negotiations. Also unclear is how/if trading partners will respond with retaliatory measures. Please contact Julie or Keith for more information.

Upcoming Events & GTRA Activities

July 9-11	USAEDC/Attache Conference DC
July 29-30	WPHA regulatory conference, Sacramento
Aug 5-7	CFNA Tree Nuts Conference in Ningbo, China
Sept 8-13	Codex CCPR Meeting in Chile
Nov 1-7	Ag Cooperator Trip to China/CIIIE Show

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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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