GLOBAL UPDATE

California almonds
Almond Board of California

November 2026

USDA Global Trade Excellence Awards



In early October, USDA Secretary Rollins invited ABC to participate in the inaugural Global Friends of American Agriculture Trade Excellence award. The event celebrated strong business partners to the U.S. agriculture from 10 countries. Two of which, Aljameel International (United Arab Emirates) and Dan On Foods (Vietnam) are large supporters of the California almond industry. Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Affairs, Luke Lindberg, was also in attendance.

China CIIE Event

On November 1-7, ABC participated in the 4th Ag Trade Mission to China, organized by the US Soybean Export Council (USSEC). The trip brought together 17 industry groups and state organizations, covering government meetings in Beijing followed by participation in the China International Export Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai.

The delegation met with several key government agencies and associations while in Beijing. In Shanghai, ABC served as a panelist in the US-China High-Level Dialogue on Ag Trade Cooperation, commenting on opportunities for almonds in high-value products in China. The trip was an opportunity for discussions on current trade conditions, ag commodity priorities and relevant technical issues, as well as discussions on the tariff situation, an update on which is anticipated to be part of the announcement of the US-China Board of Trade.

FRUCOM Conference and European Commission Meetings

Almond Board of California (ABC) staff joined a FRUCOM delegation in Brussels on October 15, 2026, for discussions with European Commission officials from Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI), Directorate-General for Trade and Economic Security (DG TRADE) and Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD). The exchanges focused on the tree nut tariff-rate quota under the Turnberry Agreement, customs and origin requirements, and emerging food safety and pesticide-related trade barriers. FRUCOM raised concerns about potential exhaustion of the 500,000-tonne nut quota and inconsistent national treatment of its “critical” status. Commission officials considered the quota adequate and indicated there were no plans to reopen the agreement or increase quota volumes.

The delegation also highlighted uncertainty over proof of U.S. origin and the costs created by differing Member State customs practices. DG TAXUD requested additional evidence and practical examples to inform further analysis and guidance. Discussions with DG TRADE addressed pesticide reforms, maximum residue limits and other regulatory barriers, with officials inviting evidence on affected commodities and priority pesticides. Other topics covered included various aspects of EU trade such as proposed and future contaminant legislations, front of pack labeling, and sustainability in the supply chain. For more information, contact Abhi Kulkarni at akulkarni@almondboard.com or Gabriele at gludwig@almondboard.com

EU MRL changes affecting almonds

The EU has notified that it will be lowering the MRL for **thiophanate-methyl (Topsin)** fungicide to default 0.01 ppm as of January 29, 2027. It has been 0.2 ppm in the EU and is 0.1 ppm in the US. *Based on ABC residue testing, residues greater than 0.01 ppm occur occasionally.*

EU has also notified that it will be lowering the MRL for **difenoconazole (Inspire, Miravis)** fungicide from the current 0.05 ppm to 0.03 ppm as of May 5, 2027. Based on ABC residue testing, that should not cause any issues.

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UK Extends Duty Relief for Almonds

The UK has extended duty relief on qualifying raw almonds, including inshell almonds and raw kernels, until December 31, 2028. The suspension applies to imports from all countries of origin under HS codes 0802.11 and 0802.12, removing duties of 4% on inshell almonds and 2% on raw kernels. The extension forms part of a wider package continuing 269 existing tariff suspensions.

First introduced in April 2024, the almond tariff suspension was expected to save UK importers approximately $3 million annually on raw California almonds, improving competitiveness for UK processors and consumers. The extension provides continued duty relief for qualifying raw products, while duties remain on processed almond products such as roasted almonds, marzipan, almond flour and almond paste. For more information, contact Abhi Kulkarni at akulkarni@almondboard.com

The Almond Conference Updates

The Almond Conference on December 8-10 will feature several panels addressing key trade concerns.

On Tuesday, December 8, ABC team will host a panel with participation from USDA/Foreign Ag Service, Prospero Consulting and almond industry members regarding current trade concerns and opportunities for growth. On Thursday, two panels are scheduled to address global shipping and logistics as well as the latest on EU packaging regulations (PPWR).

Following the Thursday sessions, multiple foreign buyer delegations (Turkey, Korea, North Africa) will be available for 1:1 meetings coordinated by the California Dept. of Food and Ag (CDFA) and the Western US Trade Association (WUSATA). Separate registration is required; contact ABC staff for more information.

Issues with Phytosanitary Fumigations

Gabriele Ludwig attended the MBAO conference in Orlando where both pre-plant and post-harvest fumigations and alternatives are discussed. Two items re almond trade were of interest:

- The South Coast Air Quality District has proposed strict limits on the use of several fumigants including sulfuryl fluoride and phosphine at the port of Long Beach. If implemented, this could become a model for limitations on their use in other parts of the state. The Board is set to discuss the proposed rule at their December Board meeting.
- USDA-APHIS indicated that with loss of staff it would be difficult for them to work on getting new post-harvest phytosanitary treatments accepted in export markets, especially if the current treatments were adequate. Thus, crops dependent on exports need to both define priorities as new approaches are developed, as well as work together to strategize.

Contact Gabriele at gludwig@almondboard.com for more information.

Trade Updates

There have been a number of recent trade developments that ABC is following:

President Trump modified Section 338 tariffs on Canada, removing 50% tariffs on certain products while adding tariffs on others, including products containing cocoa, valves, carpets, and waste products.

USDA announced $8 billion in a new Harvest Fuel Relief Program.

Upcoming Travel and Events

Nov 9-13	USDA Vietnam trade delegation
Nov 16-18	APEC CEO Summit
Nov 12-13	Waren Verein meeting, Hamburg
Nov 18-19	USAEDC, Baltimore
Dec 8-10	Almond Conference, Sacramento

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