

# Almonds: Growers keep building on their success

By **JULIA HOLLISTER**  
For the Capital Press

Almond growers throughout California should be popping corks and toasting their success with the news the 2020 crop is estimated to be the largest on record.

According to the 2020 almond report by the USDA, the value of production was well over the 2019 figure of \$6 billion. There is more good news: the 2020 crop will be 3 billion pounds, up 18% from 2019.

"This year's crop is proof that California is the perfect place to grow almonds," said Holly A. King, Kern County almond grower and chair of the Almond Board of California board of directors. "Per-

fect weather during bloom, coupled with the steps almond growers have taken to ensure our orchards provide a healthy environment for honey bees and other pollinators, resulted in the abundant crop we are seeing on the trees up and down the Central Valley."

Third generation Merced County, Calif., grower Steven Kashiwase said family history is the reason he farms his 65 acres of organic almonds and fruit trees.

His grandfather, Frank, started a 20-acre vineyard in the Central Valley in the



**Holly King**



Almond Board of California

**Almost 1.3 million bearing acres of almond trees produced a crop worth \$6 billion last year in California, according to USDA.**

1920s after moving from San Francisco to Yamato Colony, a Japanese farming community about 2 miles outside Livingston.

He came with a group of Japanese Americans who

wanted to farm together. The community later became the Livingston Farmers Association.

Residents of the colony focused on agriculture in an attempt to avoid anti-Japanese

hostilities.

"My father purchased most of the current acreage of Kashiwase Farms in 1948," Kashiwase said. "After studying pomology and entomology at University of California-Davis, I began farming in the 1970s and converted to organic in the 1990s."

Almond bloom is usually in late February and harvest is in September. Valley Nut in Hughson does the processing.

The yearly almond yield is affected by many factors: the supply of water and management of the pests. There are several major pests of almonds: Peach Twig Borer, Navel Orange Worm and ants that invade and devour the nut. Manually operated impact sprinklers irrigate the almond

orchards.

Weather-related problems occur mostly during bloom. Rain can keep the bees from pollinating the almonds, except for the newer self-pollinating varieties. Frost during or after bloom will kill the flower or small nuts.

The average yield for organic almonds is 1,200 to 2,500 pounds of kernels per acre.

In response to the threat of competition from foreign countries, Kashiwase has a two-word response: "No problem."

California is the No. 1 almond producer, growing 81% of the world's almonds and 100% of the U.S. commercial supply. The almonds are shipped to over 100 countries.

## INVESTING IN OUR LOCAL AG COMMUNITIES FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS

### Banking with a Local Focus:

- A knowledgeable and helpful banking team offers access to the convenience of modern banking technology with added personalized care you expect from a small local business.
- On-site Loan Officers who are empowered to make local loan decisions that invest your deposits back into the community.

**CITIZENS BANK**  
Good Business. Good Friends.

[www.citizensEbank.com](http://www.citizensEbank.com)

15 Branches across 13 communities in the Willamette Valley



Member  
**FDIC**

S224156-1



## LEE'S DIESEL & MOBILE REPAIR

Rickreall, OR • 541-936-9146 • [www.leesdiesel.com](http://www.leesdiesel.com)

### Pivot & Linear Irrigation Systems

Parts & Service - TL, Pierce, Valley, Reinke & Zimmatic Linear, Corners, and Pivots



### Guidance Systems

Submersible & Line-Shaft  
Turbine Pumps, VFD's

### Sukup

Grain Bins, Dryers, Fans & Heaters  
Grain Handling Equipment

TL Sales, Parts & Service call  
Brian 503-983-6251 Cell/Text

S234032-1



## MICRONA™ Lime and Gypsum

- Lime - pH Adjustment, Calcium Nutrition
- Gypsum - Calcium and Sulfur, Salt Remediation
- Micronized - Prilled - Proven Results

[MICRONAag.com](http://MICRONAag.com)

**MICRONA™ Agriculture**

(360) 225-6505

S236100-1