

SIERRA News

News, notes and tips from your friends at Sierra Pacific Farms

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Lemon Market

We have now wound down the 2008-2009 lemon season, while not being exactly what we would have liked it to be, we ended with strong sales and are looking forward to next season.

Next season arrives already better than expected with District #2 coming in 30% less in their fruit and on top of that International sales are doing quite well at this time with the help of the weak dollar. Most packing houses are down for two to three weeks for maintenance



and following that, harvesting will start up again approximately late November or first part of December. The crop in our area looks to be about the same as last season's with the

exception of an increase in sizes that we are seeing in our trees. Cultural care is mainly devoted to getting ready for the winter, making sure that the snails will not be a problem and seeing to it that the trees are responding to their last fertilization application well.

Avocado Update



As of the date of this newsletter we experienced our first very good (well it wasn't good) wind event and we are happy to report that it seems to have only affected the top of the ridge lines, with some fruit down but not enough to make a difference in the overall estimate. Winds were at the 30-40 mph range mostly in Temecula and Irvine. Larry Weaver will contact you if there was any real damage on the grove, so if you don't hear from Larry, you have fared well.

The avocado market itself is showing, once again, strengths that we can't even describe. Normally, during this period of time the industry markets anywhere from 15 to 16 million pounds of fruit. These are known as the "doldrums" and even with the poor quality Chilean fruit in the market, shipments are well above 20 million pounds a week. We feel that that bodes very well for the future market. On top of that, at a meeting with Jan DeLyser, VP of Marketing for the California Avocado Commission, she was ecstatic about how retailers are feeling about next season - they can't wait to stop buying Chilean and Mexican fruit and get into the California crop. At almost all of her visits in the last three to four weeks, she notes that people want to know when they can get started with California. On the cultural side, we finished installing 2x4's and staking. We are looking forward to our first rain storm and fruit is sizing very well for this time of year.



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Sierra Pacific News Cont...

Water News



On the water front - In Southern California the mandatory water conservation plan put into place by MWD has done its job and more. Almost every city in San Diego County not only met their mandatory conservation requirements of 8%, some cities actually had up to a 17% savings. Agriculture is once again, beating their conservation requirements - the caveat to that is that a lot of nurseries in San Diego County are going out of business due to the economic environment and citrus is also struggling. In Riverside and Ventura counties, it was the same - so overall, reservoirs in Southern California are at higher levels than as anticipated. On top of that, MWD was allowed to purchase some 250,000 acre feet to put into the reservoirs from Imperial County and Coachella Valley Water District. So, we are going to start off better than anticipated. As a result, only our normal rainfall (not even an El Nino) is needed to pull our conservation allocations off for next year. For those growers in the Ventura area, the rain fall was absolutely a blessing, anywhere from

1.5 to 2 inches fell in most of our areas, saturating the soil and beginning to leach out the salts. We are going into the Santa Ana conditions and the experts are telling us that with an El Nino cycle, we may (keep your fingers crossed) have less Santa Ana winds developing. Let's all get out there and do a rain dance for 2010!

UNTIL NEXT TIME...



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