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Walnut Bargaining Association Recommends Minimum Grower Price

Lincoln, CA -- In an effort to keep walnut prices from tumbling further downward, the Walnut Bargaining Association (WBA) is recommending a minimum price recommendation that will return at least 65 cents per pound back to growers. This price is based on in-shell *Chandlers*, Jumbo/Large, average quality.

“Our organization is concerned that walnut prices will continue to fall without some minimum price being suggested,” said Jonathan Field, Executive Director of the Walnut Bargaining Association (WBA), a grower cooperative that exists to ensure walnut farmers receive fair prices. “The WBA realizes there is ample carryover from 2021 which needs to be moved out prior to marketing new crop, but this should not be done at the expense of the current crop and production. We believe buyers are willing to pay more for walnuts and we’re urging handlers to move prices up from current levels.”

According to Field, current prices being offered by handlers will result in only 45 or 50 cents per pound going back to growers, which is substantially below break-even. The 65 cents per pound minimum grower return recommended by the WBA, means handler trade prices need to immediately increase from current levels to cover handling costs and margins.

Historically, handlers have published a minimum price for walnut exports in August. This didn’t happen in 2022 due to several unknowns surrounding the new crop and global supplies. The WBA will publish its official price recommendation for the 2022 crop after more is known about crop size and quality, worldwide production and the effect of the economy worldwide on prices, movement and utilization.

“The WBA Board feels strongly the current California crop will come in lighter than expected,” said Todd Ramos, a walnut grower from Winters who is chairman of the WBA. “As walnut harvest continues throughout the state, growers are reporting less volume and more damage from the excessive heat than what was expected before the announcement of the 2022 crop estimate. These factors will reduce overall tonnage.”

“California walnut farmers are struggling with record inflation of production costs and severely depressed prices which make it impossible to be profitable,” continued Ramos. “The industry needs every handler to adhere to the minimum price point recommended by the WBA.”

The WBA is urging growers and handlers to work together to stabilize the market as much as possible. They suggest that payment schedules, advances, timing of payments and all mutually beneficial discussions take place as soon as possible.

The WBA recently launched a campaign to raise awareness about the benefits it provides to walnut growers by sharing information on prices walnut farmers receive from their handlers.

“The WBA collects only verifiable information on grower price,” said Field, “That’s why the pricing information collected by the WBA is considered the most accurate data available. It’s definitely more reliable than what growers hear at the coffee shop.”

The WBA hopes to gain new members so that they can collect even more accurate data.

“When additional walnut growers join the WBA, our grower pricing data becomes increasingly comprehensive and the better the WBA can help us get the highest price for our walnuts,” said Ramos. “The WBA understands by uniting together cooperatively with our handlers and marketers, we all stand the best chance for success.”

More information about the WBA can be found on their [website](#). Growers interested in receiving sample reports and information from the WBA can sign up [here](#).

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