

2008 CALIFORNIA ENGLISH WALNUT CROP

CY 2008 Edition 1.

Crop Development Report

Monday, April 21, 2008
Los Molinos, California

TO: All Customers and Friends
Subject: 2008 English Walnut Crop Development

The California English Walnut crop is in the early bloom stage. Ashley, Payne, Serr and Vina varieties are completing pollination and the leaves are nearing full size. Chandler, Howard and Tulare varieties are at about 40% bloom and the Hartley variety is just starting to bloom. The quantity of flowers on the trees looks good so far, with only the rainy weather and frost between us and a crop.

So far March and April have been relatively rain free, which is good to the extent that we do not have much risk from walnut blight damage, a fungus that attacks the young nuts in the early stages of development, but bad for farmers that depend on the rain to fill reservoirs to irrigate crops later in the season. Most irrigated crops this year will have to rely on water pumped from wells, as the reservoirs are low and will not carry enough water for all of the crops. Generally in this case, orchard crops will be saved at the expense of annual crops that will not be planted.

Another result of the lack of rainfall in March and April, is that we do tend to have more risk of frost when the season is dry due to the lower dew points which create more burn at higher temperatures. Yesterday morning for example the Sacramento Valley had night time temperatures to as low as 26 degrees F. The dew points in many areas were in the 18-30 range, which means that we start burning the young foliage at 30-35 degrees F. It will be a couple days before we can see how much crop loss there was as a result and how large of an area was affected. We should be out of frost danger in another week.

We will have another report for you in a couple weeks as we can start to see the size of crop set on the Chandler and Hartley variety which comprise about 60% of the crop. If you have any questions, please feel free to call.

Best Regards,
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