



Bob Beede reports from the recent Paramount Farms grower conference.

Paramount Farms held their annual pistachio meeting this year in Visalia, California March 20-21, with the successful objective of making it easier for growers to attend. The 600 plus individuals participating were treated to an intensive and honest review of our existing markets, and what the industry has to do to sell a billion-pound crop, which is predicted to come sooner than we think.

Year round marketing has positioned pistachios as the eleventh most popular American snack nut, raising domestic sales from an average of 120M pounds from 2003-07, to 190M pounds in 2012. Pistachio consumption is on a rapid rise in China, where it is embraced as the "Happy Nut", but sales in Western Europe are lagging, with 2012 sales down 50M pounds from the 175M average sold between 2003-07.

In 2008, only 55% of the consumers rated pistachios as a healthy snack. Those with a favourable impression rose to 76% in 2012, making it similar to walnuts. Almonds top the healthy nut list with 89% positive impressions. When asked what the future holds, Stewart Resnick honestly answered, "Nobody really knows."

The discussion resulting from this question suggested that growers should be basing their planting decisions on pistachio prices closer to \$1.50 than \$2.45 per pound. Marketing, good yields, and quality nuts will all be key factors in providing growers reasonable return on their investment.

Comment

Stewart Resnick is the President of Paramount Farms which markets about 60% of the Californian pistachio crop and hence about 40% of the world pistachio crop.



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Cooperative Extension



Californian pistachio production will increase from the current 250,000 tonnes to about 385,000 tonnes (perhaps 450,000 tonnes if the billion pound crop estimate is correct) over the next three to four years as the massive plantings of 2002 through 2008 come into production. Fortunately, the GFC slowed plantings from 2009 through 2011 but US investors are back planting again at a high level.

Californian growers regard \$US2.45/lb as a very profitable price (\$A5.20/kg). The Californian price is expressed as net of hulling and grading charges. It is the price for Natural Splits. Closed Shell and Pick Outs receive a much lower price. APPC returns to Australian growers, net of hulling and grading charges, have been well above these levels in 2009, 2010 and 2012. 2011 is best forgotten by us all. APPC returns will again be well above this level in 2013.

The reference by Resnick of a \$US1.50/lb (\$A3.18/kg) grower price is not that farfetched. No doubt, he is trying to restrain some of gung ho planting intentions of investors. Unless the marketing efforts continue in the US domestic market and Chinese consumption continues to roar ahead – there will be supply and price pressures in the next three to four years. This could to reduce the world price to the low levels Resnick nominated.

Provided Australian pistachio growers continue to ensure a united front in the marketing of *the fresh taste of Australian pistachios*, Australian returns are likely to continue to remain well above returns for Californian growers.

Nut consumption worldwide is booming, there are no reasons to think that this will not continue. In the medium term, consumption will expand to absorb, profitably for growers, a 450,000 tonnes Californian crop. However, in the period 2014 through 2018 there well could be some prices not as rewarding as current returns.

Increase to Superannuation Guarantee – First increase 1 July 2013

The first of seven phased increases to the Superannuation Guarantee laws will apply from 1 July 2013, and SAWIA members need to incorporate this into the budgeting process for the next financial year. This is something employers should keep in mind with any upcoming annual pay reviews (including any Award wage increases that will be determined by the Fair Work Commission in June 2013), and assess how each contract of employment within the business incorporates or expresses the superannuation guarantee contributions in the context of an employee's remuneration. Is it expressed as a 'salary plus 9% superannuation', 'salary plus the minimum superannuation guarantee' or 'a total remuneration package' – each situation needs to be assessed and action taken where necessary to comply with the new laws.

Over the next 7 years the current Superannuation Guarantee will increase from 9% to 12% for all eligible employees' ordinary time earnings with the first increase of 0.25 percentage points on 1 July 2013. The following table shows the increases to be applied on 1 July of each year from 2013/14 – 2019/20.

| Year (Increase applicable 1 July of each year) | Rate (%) |
|--|----------|
| 2013-14 | 9.25 |
| 2014-15 | 9.5 |
| 2015-16 | 10 |
| 2016-17 | 10.5 |
| 2017-18 | 11 |
| 2018-19 | 11.5 |
| 2019-20 | 12 |

Just Launched: WHO Platform for food safety professionals - FOSCOLLAB

The WHO Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses is pleased to announce the launch of FOSCOLLAB - a new data and information platform to guide risk assessment and decision-making in food safety.

By integrating multiple sources of reliable data, FOSCOLLAB helps overcome the challenges of accessing these key sources in a timely manner. It allows for better risk assessment and decision-making by food safety professionals and authorities.

The FOSCOLLAB concept and prototype dashboards were demonstrated at the 34th and 35th Codex Alimentarius Commissions.

Codex members are kindly invited to explore the concept of FOSCOLLAB, provide feedback and participate in future developments.

For complete information, please go to <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/foscollab/>

Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses
World Health Organization
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USA: Jeremy Jones ambassador of American Pistachio Growers

American Pistachio Growers is proud to announce that professional snowboarder Jeremy Jones will join the APG athlete ambassador team, claiming American-grown pistachios as his “Official Snack.” Jeremy is the newest addition to an ambassador lineup that includes the U.S.A. Men’s and Women’s Water Polo teams and Miss California.

“We are thrilled to have Jeremy on board,” says Judy Hirigoyen, Director, Global Marketing for APG. “With protein, antioxidants, healthy fats, and much more, pistachios are the ideal fuel for a healthy, balanced and active lifestyle. Jeremy truly represents the Power of Pistachios.”

Jeremy Jones is one of the world’s premier big mountain snowboarders and founder of Jones Snowboards and Protect Our Winters, a non-profit climate change advocacy group. He has been featured in a number of award-winning snow sports films, including Deeper (2010) and Further (2012), which document his efforts to access remote backcountry terrain. He was recently named one of National Geographic Adventure’s 2013 Adventurers of the Year, and one of the 50 Most Influential People in Action Sports by ESPN.

“Without proper nutrition, I would not be able to continue to push the limits of what’s possible,” says Jeremy. “Pistachios are an important part of my diet that allow me to stay fuelled and recover quickly after intense physical exertion. I’m really pleased to support the growers of a food I love so much.”

The APG ambassador team will represent the organization internationally to promote proper nutrition through the organization’s global Power of Pistachios campaign. For additional information about the nutritional benefits of pistachios and the APG ambassador team, including photos, please visit AmericanPistachios.org/media.

Source: *business.transworld.net*

Nuts: From candy to nutritional dynamite... 'Few foods have experienced such a renaissance', says scientist

Nuts are good sources of healthy fats, protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. They also pack a fairly weighty caloric punch. However, epidemiological data consistently shows that high nut consumption is associated with lower incidence of obesity. So what’s going on?

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Science/Nuts-From-candy-to-nutritional-dynamite-Few-foods-have-experienced-such-a-renaissance-says-scientist>

NUFFIELD AUSTRALIA

Nuffield Australia has just opened its application process for 2014 Scholarships on 1st April and a record 24 Scholarships are available to primary producers from across Australia.

The application period runs for three months until 30th June, and successful applicants spend a total of 16 weeks travelling – including six weeks of group travel to countries such as China, India, Brazil, USA, Canada and through Europe. Scholars then travel for a further 10 weeks by themselves drilling down into a research topic of interest and of value to industry.

Please find enclosed below the application brochure and I would be grateful if you could distribute it far-and-wide to potential applicants. Please encourage friends, neighbours and your industry contacts to apply. It is vital that there is high levels of awareness of the program during the application period.

For more information and selection guidelines, please visit the 'Scholarships' section of the Nuffield website: www.nuffield.com.au or email enquiries@nuffield.com.au.

We value your support and effort in encouraging quality applicants this year.

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Document Link:

http://www.nuffieldinternational.org/db/attachments/515a39332fab3_130401Nuffield2014Scholarship-brochureFINAL.pdf



Pistachio growers looking at another big crop

With one eye on the slow pace of the almond bloom this season, and another on their still dormant pistachio trees, growers in the southern San Joaquin Valley are anticipating a bud break in their pistachio orchards.

Usually, the earliest trees start blooming around March 25. This year that may be delayed about a week or so, says pistachio grower and consultant Carl Fanucchi, Fanucchi Diversified Management, Inc., Bakersfield, Calif.

“The almonds were late to get going this year, but once we had some hot weather they really came on fast,” he says. “Temperatures in the second week of March were forecast to reach 80 degrees. Maybe that might help the pistachio buds pop out.” Now, it’s anyone’s guess as to the size of this year’s crop. However, the number of fruit buds on the trees is an early season indicator of what might be coming.

“The younger trees, those seven to nine years old, look good,” Fanucchi says. “Depending on the size of their crop last year, some of the older trees are loaded with fruit buds. But some are pretty light.”

Another clue is the number of new bearing trees coming on line this year. All this is leading many observers to predict a decent size 2013 crop.

“We have a pretty good idea of how many acres of trees are in the ground,” Fanucchi explains. “Also, the crops keep getting better, and growers are doing a better job. So, most are thinking this crop has to be close to last year’s record 555-million pound crop.”

Growers will get a better idea of the crop load by June 1 after nut drop and as the remaining fertilized nuts begin to size and clusters become more evident.

With near-record dry weather this winter, including much-lower-than-normal water content in the mountain snowpack in early March, getting enough water to support their trees and the crop is shaping up as the big issue for growers this year, he notes. It will be even bigger for those on the West Side of the San Joaquin Valley, who get their irrigation water from the San Luis Reservoir south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. This year, due to the amount of water being diverted into San Francisco Bay to sustain Delta smelt, the water level in this critical reservoir stood at 60 percent of capacity in early March.



“Reports indicate growers on that aqueduct system will probably get no more than 25 percent of their allocation, depending on mountain snow accumulation in March and April.” Fanucchi says.

Most West Side water districts hold water bank interests that can trade water, depending on the amount of water they have stored underground. Most have not totally replenished what was used in the last round of cutbacks, he adds.

Still, the lure of strong pistachio prices continues to outweigh any water concerns, as growers keep planting more trees. That is pushing up land prices, Fanucchi notes. He’s heard of good land, with well and surface water, selling for as much as \$14,000 to \$15,000 an acre. “I’ve even heard of some pretty tough ground with lower quality water selling for more than \$5,000 an acre,” he says. “In my lifetime, I’ve never seen anything like it.

“Pistachios, as well as almonds and walnuts, are all in really strong demand. Right now, life in the nut business is pretty darn good.”

US (CA): Growing pistachio yield drives company expansion

Lee Cohen, CEO of Setton International Foods, Inc., said the company has broken ground on a large warehouse with plans to add more processing to the ever-expanding plant in downtown Terra Bella.

“Our growth is at the same rate as the whole industry,” said Cohen of the pistachio industry, adding, “growth is primarily a function of a larger crop.”

Pistachio growth has been phenomenal over the past decade. In Tulare County alone, the number of harvested acres of pistachios has grown from 10,345 acres in 2002 to 29,600 acres in 2011.

The California Pistachio Commission reported the state’s pistachio industry harvested its first commercial crop in 1976. That year, only 1.5 million pounds were produced from 4,350 acres. Almost 30 years later, California has plantings in excess of 150,000 acres with production yielding more than 400 million pounds. The state is the second largest producer of pistachios in the world.

Because it takes five to seven years before trees begin producing a crop, Cohen said there are probably somewhere near 100,000 of planted pistachios in the Golden State that have yet to produce.

Setton is ranked No. 2 to Paramount in terms of processing. The Terra Bella plant processed between 100 and 105 million pounds of pistachios last year. Those pistachios come from the Riverside area up to above Sacramento.

“Pistachios are grown where there are cooler nights and warm days,” said Cohen, explaining like stone fruit, pistachio trees require a good number of chilling hours — temperatures below 45 degrees — to put them into dormancy for the winter.

Cohen said their growth is alternated between storage and processing.

“We’re juggling to keep bottlenecks aligned,” he said of plans to add more processing ability next.

“We have a 20-year plan,” he said.

Source: recorderonline.com

Australian nut industry pleased by new dietary guidelines and latest research

findings

The Australian nut industry has welcomed the NHMRC Australian Dietary Guideline's recommendation that Australians increase their consumption of nuts by 350 per cent. The guidelines suggest that up to 30g of nuts a day – or a small handful – is beneficial to health.

The Australian nut industry body Nuts for Life says the recommendations is supported by further research the Spanish research group PREDIMED showing that a Mediterranean diet including nuts reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke.

“It is satisfying to see that the NHMRC Australia Dietary Guidelines now acknowledge the important role nuts play in the diet by recommending a regular 30g handful of nuts. This latest revision of the dietary guidelines puts the final nail in the coffin of low-fat diets as the preferred option for a healthy diet. At last healthy fat foods are back on the menu,” said Dietitian and Nuts for Life manager, Lisa Yates.

American research

Meanwhile, a study undertaken by Novotny and others, published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition in August 2012 found that the energy content of nuts and how they are digested by the human body had in the past been poorly understood. The study found that the calorie value for almonds had been overestimated by about 20 per cent previously, which might have contributed to concerns about nuts being part of a regular diet.

The study concluded that the way calorie intake is currently measured is problematic because it doesn't assume that nutrients are digested in the same way by the human body, regardless of what food they are found in. The researchers found that almonds have fewer calories than previously thought because the fat in the nuts is not easy for the body to digest and so some fat will be excreted.

European research

Research from Europe has also highlighted other health benefits and promoted the regular consumption. The research by Dr Emilio Ros and others from the Spanish group PREDIMED supported the health protective qualities of nuts over other foods.

“There are the six large observational studies consistently showing heart disease protection with increasing nut intake, and there have been 30 or more short to medium term clinical trials consistently showing that nut diets, including any variety of nut, lower blood cholesterol,” said Dr Ros.

While visiting Australia recently, Dr Ros recommended an increase in nut consumption for various health benefits.

Nuts for Life are pleased with dietary guideline nut recommendations

