



# California Walnut Industry Update

At the time of this writing, we had just received the April 2026 acreage report from LandIQ. This is an early season update built upon the August 31, 2025 standing acreage report and reflects removals as well as new acreage that has come into production (4<sup>th</sup> leaf) since August 2025. It can be viewed in the reports section of walnuts.org or by clicking [here](#). In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has released the bi-annual 2024 & 2025 Nursery Sales [report](#), which as expected, shows that trees sales were very limited over the last two years. Combined, these reports reflect current California walnut acreage. While there will be additional adjustments this year, we are seeing a trend that over the next few years that should bring supply and demand into better alignment, and provide for more stable markets in the mid and long term.

In the short term, we continue to watch daily for updates on tariff and trade developments. News from India continues to point to progress in the negotiations to finalize an interim trade agreement between India and the U.S. Until the overarching agreement is signed, we will not have a definitive answer to what the new tariff and duty structure will be for walnuts entering India. Progress has also been reported in the European Union (EU), where the EU's International Trade Committee approved the trade agreement between the U.S. and the EU. The next step is for the EU Parliament to vote on June 16, 2026, then member states must approve the agreement. The implications for US walnuts would be the elimination of the 4% and 5.1% tariffs on in-shell and kernels, respectively, for a market that represents over 44% of export sales.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me [rverloop@walnuts.org](mailto:rverloop@walnuts.org) or 916-932-7070.

All the Best,

Best,  
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California Walnut Board and Commission

## MAY SHIPMENT REPORT

The following is a snapshot of the May Shipment Report. For the full report that shows shipments to individual markets, please visit the reports section on [walnuts.org](https://walnuts.org).

## Inshell (1000 pounds)

|              | <u>2024/25 Marketing Year</u> |                                  | <u>2025/26 Marketing Year</u> |                                  |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|              | <u>May 2025</u>               | <u>9/1/2024 to<br/>5/31/2025</u> | <u>May 2026</u>               | <u>9/1/2025 to<br/>5/31/2026</u> |
| Domestic     | 329                           | 9,542                            | 364                           | 14,020                           |
| Export       | <u>5,229</u>                  | <u>129,767</u>                   | <u>12,498</u>                 | <u>277,928</u>                   |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>5,558</b>                  | <b>139,309</b>                   | <b>12,862</b>                 | <b>291,948</b>                   |

## Kernel (1000 pounds)

|              | <u>2024/25 Marketing Year</u> |                                  | <u>2025/26 Marketing Year</u> |                                  |
|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|              | <u>May 2025</u>               | <u>9/1/2024 to<br/>5/31/2025</u> | <u>May 2026</u>               | <u>9/1/2025 to<br/>5/31/2026</u> |
| Domestic     | 14,428                        | 144,602                          | 14,753                        | 143,492                          |
| Export       | <u>17,387</u>                 | <u>240,753</u>                   | <u>24,514</u>                 | <u>282,951</u>                   |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>31,815</b>                 | <b>385,355</b>                   | <b>39,267</b>                 | <b>426,444</b>                   |

May 2026 Purchase Commitments

Inshell Conventional: 14,896.794 pounds

Inshell Organic: 0 pounds

Kernel Conventional: 116,675,618 pounds

Kernel Organic: 4,474,846 pounds

Final walnut receipts for 2025/2026 as reported by handlers on the Crop Acquisition Report:

Conventional: 789,913 tons

Organic: 19,532 tons

## ISSUES MANAGEMENT & GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

The California Walnut Commission (CWC) is working hard on behalf of the industry to ensure the California walnut growers and handlers have a voice with elected officials, key agencies and decision makers both in Washington D.C. and Sacramento, California. The following is an update on activities and issues the CWC has been engaged in over recent months.

### Farm Bill

On April 30, 2026, the House of Representatives' recent passage of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026, marked meaningful progress toward renewing federal farm policy that helps specialty crop producers remain resilient and competitive. Supported by more than 500 key stakeholder groups—including the CWC—ahead of its successful passage, this legislation represents an important step toward addressing the distinct production and market challenges our industry faces.

The House bill included several important items of interest to walnut growers, including:

- Removes emissions mandates on farm equipment that drive up expenses.
- Requires the Secretary of Ag to provide more options for enrollment for the disaster assistance programs.
- Revises the Ag R&D program to provide federal support for sustainable agriculture and innovative solutions in a more practical way for farmers to adapt.
- Prohibits USDA from imposing more cost requirements on the Specialty Crop Block Grant.
- Expanding crop insurance access for specialty crops.

While this is an important milestone, there is still more work ahead. We look forward to and support the U.S. Senate's continued progress and collaborative efforts to finalize a comprehensive farm bill.

### Appropriations News and Updates

On April 29, 2026, the Appropriations committee approved the Fiscal Year 2027 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies bill, as amended. The bill provides total discretionary funding of \$26.27 billion, which is \$380 million (1.4%) below the Fiscal Year 2026, reducing budgets for the USDA if enacted. Funding levels for key areas include:

- \$1.795 billion for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), which is \$2.8 million above FY26.
- \$1.642 billion for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), which is \$34.3 million below FY26.
- Level funding for competitive research and capacity programs that support our nation's land-grant universities and reduces or eliminates funding for several low priority research programs.
- \$1.158 billion for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), maintains FY26 level.
- \$201.55 million for the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), which is \$6.8 million below FY26.

- Prohibits the imposition of any cost sharing or matching requirements for any awards or subawards under the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for fiscal year 2027.

The bill will next move to the House of Representatives for debate and floor vote.

### PFAS Containing Pesticides

California Assembly Bill 1603 (AB 1603) is bill that aims to phase out and eventually ban the use of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)—commonly known as "forever chemicals"—in pesticides throughout California. The bill addresses concerns that these persistent chemicals contaminate soil, water, and food supplies, but eliminates critical tools for California agriculture without providing alternatives. If enacted, the bill would implement the following restrictions:

1. Starting in January, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) would be prohibited from registering any pesticide containing intentionally added PFAS, while allowing DPR to continue processing registrations already in hand.
2. By 2028, Pesticides containing PFAS could not be sold or distributed unless they feature a prominent label warning that the product can contaminate produce and the environment. This would apply to products registered for agricultural use only.
3. By 2028, PFAS-containing pesticides would be classified as "restricted materials," requiring public disclosure and county agricultural permits. This would apply to products registered for agricultural use only.

As of June 1, 2026, the bill passed the Assembly and is moving to the Senate. The Issues Management committee is monitoring its status to provide updates for industry.

| List of Pesticides that contain PFAS |             |                 |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| almonds                              | pecans      | pistachios      | walnuts           |
| Bifenthrin                           | Bifenthrin  | Bifenthrin      | Bifenthrin        |
| Flazasulfuron                        | Flonicamid  | Flazasulfuron   | Flazasulfuron     |
| Flonicamid                           | Oxyfluorfen | Flonicamid      | Fluazifop-P butyl |
| Fluazifop-P butyl                    | Penoxsulam  | Indoxacarb      | Fluopyram         |
| Fluopyram                            |             | Metaflumizone   | Norflurazon       |
| Hydramethylnon                       |             | Oxyfluorfen     | Oxathiapiprolin   |
| Indoxacarb                           |             | Penoxsulam      | Oxyfluorfen       |
| Mefentrifluconazole                  |             | Penthiopryad    | Penoxsulam        |
| Metaflumizone                        |             | Trifloxystrobin | Saflufenacil      |
| Norflurazon                          |             |                 | Trifloxystrobin   |
| Oxathiapiprolin                      |             |                 | Trifluralin       |
| Oxyfluorfen                          |             |                 |                   |
| Penoxsulam                           |             |                 |                   |
| Penthiopryad                         |             |                 |                   |
| Picoxystrobin                        |             |                 |                   |
| Saflufenacil                         |             |                 |                   |
| Sulfoxaflor                          |             |                 |                   |
| Trifloxystrobin                      |             |                 |                   |
| Trifluralin                          |             |                 |                   |

## America First Trade Promotion Program

The CWC was successful in securing \$2.6 million in funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) America First Trade Promotion Program (AFTTP). Announced April 16, 2026 by USDA, the funding intends to strengthen market opportunities for U.S. agricultural products in export markets. AFTTP funding will support retail programs in select markets to drive sales and build consumer pull-through. Combined with MAP and RAPP funding programs, the CWC will utilize the AFTTP program to continue to advance strategic, sales-driven initiatives that connect more consumers with California walnuts around the globe.

## Assistance for Specialty Crops Farmers Program

On May 29, 2026, the USDA and Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced the implementation of payment rates and the enrollment period for the Assistance for Specialty Crops Farmers (ASCF) program. In response to elevated input costs and market disruptions that impede specialty crop exports, USDA will issue \$1.625 billion in payments to eligible specialty crop producers. Walnut growers that meet program eligibility requirements can apply to receive \$225/acre, for 2025 crop year acreage submitted to Farm Service Agency (FSA) by April 24, 2026. Growers can apply beginning June 8, 2026, via online or at their local FSA office. The enrollment period closes on Aug. 7, 2026. Application requirements and additional information on the program can be found on the program webpage linked [here](#) or by visiting your local FSA office.

For more information or questions on any of the topics above, please contact Billy Ng at [bng@walnuts.org](mailto:bng@walnuts.org).

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

### National Retail Product Quality Survey

In the USA, the California Walnut Board (CWB) is conducting quality assessment surveys to provide a snapshot of walnut quality in retail stores nationwide. This allows for unbiased quality measurements to be reported in a scorecard and shared across the walnut industry in order to understand the realities of what consumers have available at the point of purchase. This fact-based systems approach will guide us in how and where to make applicable quality improvements throughout the supply chain. Here are some key findings:

- 47% of total samples had peroxide value (PV) over the recommended 2.0 meq/kg.
- 3rd party branded products (not handler or store brands) had a high percentage of color variation with more darker kernels (27%) and a higher percentage of high peroxide value (64%).
- In markets located in the Central & Southern US region, products sold had more dark kernels and high peroxide value.

Next steps:

1. CWB will share scorecards with handlers that product was purchased in stores, to allow them to compare their data to the overall average dataset for their internal quality performance review.
2. Provide results to our Retail Marketing Directors to facilitate conversations with retailers on proper product handling and storage, maximizing product quality on shelf.
3. On a quarterly basis, collect new set of samples to continue efforts on monitor retail product quality.

## Inbound Color Inspection Working Group - Pilot Program

The industry currently does not have uniform and consistent inbound color inspection due to variabilities in inspection conditions and human subjectivity. To help standardize this process, the CWB staff have been working in partnership with DFA to come up with an improved, practical, and efficient inspection standard. During the last several months, CWB and DFA have connected with growers, handlers, and color inspection equipment companies to better understand the standardization challenges and opportunities. In March, the Grades and Standards committee formed a working group to develop a pilot study with a focus on a new kernel color model to use for inspection with digital color equipment. The working group will work closely in the next few months to prepare for the pilot study. The results from this project could be a path forward to standardizing the inbound inspection procedure, providing a fair and consistent inspection on all inbound walnuts.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Sustainability Series Sessions

In 2026, the California Walnut Commission will host a series of Sustainability Sessions in partnership with Measure to Improve and experts from across the industry. These sessions are an important opportunity for stakeholders to discuss sustainability topics, ask questions, and provide feedback on where they would like additional information or support.

The first sustainability session this year was held in collaboration with the CSU Chico Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems at their Annual Field Days. This two-day in-person gathering at the Chico University Farm brings together farmers, educators, researchers, and others interested in regenerative agriculture.

Drew Cheney, an orchard manager at Machado Family Farms, presented on March 19 at this event, sharing how he is leading a thoughtful transition toward holistic, soil-centered management practices designed to strengthen overall walnut and almond orchard performance. By prioritizing soil health as the foundation of the farming system, he focuses on improving biological activity, nutrient cycling, water infiltration, and long-term ecosystem balance. His approach emphasizes resilience to environmental stressors, reduced reliance on synthetic inputs, and continuous improvement through adaptive management. Through this work, Drew aims to build long-term orchard health and productivity while reducing dependence on synthetic inputs.

Two additional sessions will be taking place via Zoom, one focused on Water Management on June 10, 2026 and one on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) on July 15, 2026, at 1:00pm. For more information and to register, visit the event [calendar](#) on walnuts.org. If you have any questions, please contact Billy Ng at [bng@walnuts.org](mailto:bng@walnuts.org).

## LCA Survey

The California walnut industry is conducting a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), which measures the environmental impact and benefits of a product. This LCA uses a survey to collect information from the walnut supply chain to:

- Measure energy, water, fertilizer, carbon impacts, and other potential positive contributions
- Identify opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce costs
- Help the walnut industry speak with one voice using credible data

Please complete the survey for your operation [here](#).

## GROWER RESOURCES & REGULATORY UPDATES

### CA Agriculture Regulatory Update – Water Supply, Nitrate and Salinity (Provided by LandIQ).

California agriculture continues to face regulations on water quality and quantity, and potentially on water rights. Growers, collectively represented by third parties, respond to expanded monitoring, reporting and management requirements. This update focuses on activities between July 2025 and April 2026 related to water supply and quality regulations.

- Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
- Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP)
- Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long-Term Sustainability (CV-SALTS)
- Bay Delta Plan

To read the full report, you can access it at <https://walnuts.org/walnut-industry/technical-and-regulatory-affairs-updates>.

### Paraquat

Effective April 1, 2026, pesticide registrant Syngenta has voluntarily cancelled registration of the pesticide Gramoxone® SL 3.0 in California, a product that contains the active ingredient paraquat-dichloride (paraquat). DPR will continue to move through the process of remaining paraquat products registered in California with the reevaluation scheduled for completion by January 2029. We recommend growers who use paraquat products to check with your PCA for alternatives.

### EU Mancozeb MRL Update

The European Union has not changed any mancozeb MRLs and all current EU limits remain valid until a new regulation is formally adopted and published. Discussions in Brussels have placed this topic on hold indefinitely. For walnuts, growers and exporters can continue operating under existing EU MRLs. Industry advocacy and engagement with EU authorities has helped highlight the impact that lowering MRLs would have for US walnut exports. Regulatory and industry teams will continue to monitor EU developments closely, support science-based policy discussions, and communicate with global authorities. Growers are also encouraged to share their comments to the EU Commission on the importance of maintaining trade-enabling MRLs.

- BY 2030, The use, manufacture, and sale of 23 specific PFAS pesticides—already banned in the European Union—would be prohibited in California. (They are not currently applied to walnut orchards)
- BY 2035, A blanket prohibition would take effect for the manufacture, sale, and use of all pesticides containing any intentionally added PFAS.

As of May 1, 2026, this bill is still in committee. The Issues Management committee is monitoring its status to provide updates for industry.

### Implementation of the EU Directive Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition

Beginning, September 27, 2026, the EU Directive 2024/825 - Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition – will go into effect and require EU companies to provide transparent, verified product information on their products to consumers. This includes items such as sustainability claims, which will need to be verified by approved certification schemes or established by public authorities. To comply with the law, EU customers may require handlers to provide substantiation to support claims being made. More information on the directive can be found at [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eu-rules-empower-consumers-green-transition-enter-force-2024-03-27\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eu-rules-empower-consumers-green-transition-enter-force-2024-03-27_en)

For more information or updates on these topics, please reach out to Billy Ng at [bng@walnuts.org](mailto:bng@walnuts.org).

### 2025-26 PRODUCTION AND POST HARVEST RESEARCH UPDATES

In late February, the CWB Research Committee evaluated proposals to award grants for production research benefiting the California walnut industry. The following new projects were added this year to the program.

#### ORCHARD MANAGEMENT

- **Developing nutrient requirements for young walnut orchards after whole orchard recycling, *Clarissa Reyes, UC ANR*:** Documenting nematode population impacts and tree nutritional needs in WOR replant sites
- **Continued development of walnut-specific install methods for remote stem water potential monitoring, *Ken Shackel, UC Davis*:** Continued efforts to develop an automated, remote, and reliable tree water status sensor for irrigation scheduling in walnuts
- **UAS-based yield estimation strategies, *Joshua Miranda, CSU Chico*:** Drone-based advanced imagery analysis for early-season yield estimation in walnuts

#### PEST & DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- **Field evaluation of attract-and-kill methods utilizing lactone pheromones as attractants, *Robert Van Steenwyk, UC Berkeley*:** Better walnut husk fly control using new pheromone attractant in baited WHF sprays

For more information on our research program, please contact Saarah Kuzay at [skuzay@walnuts.org](mailto:skuzay@walnuts.org) or Joe Grant at [jagrant@ucanr.edu](mailto:jagrant@ucanr.edu).

## GLOBAL MARKETING UPDATES

The California Walnut Commission (CWC) conducts marketing and trade promotion programs in the U.S. and key export markets, with a focus on building consumer demand and driving trade engagement and involvement to expand market development and generate sales. The following are some recent activities the CWC participated in to promote California walnuts.



#### **Food & Hospitality Asia (FHA) April 21-24.**

As part of market development efforts in Singapore and Malaysia, the CWC participated with a booth at FHA, one of Asia's largest and most influential trade shows for the food, beverage, and hospitality industries. The event brings together thousands of international exhibitors and tens of thousands of industry professionals from around the

world to showcase products, trends, services, and technology across the full spectrum of foodservice, hospitality, and F&B sectors and features specialised segments such as fresh produce, halal foods, seafood, speciality coffee & tea, hospitality technology, and more.

**Ho Chi Minh City International Exhibition of Food and Beverages (HCMC Foodex) April 15-18** – The CWC had the opportunity to participate in HCMC Foodex as part of a culinary competition creating plant-based foods. Chef-in-Residence Robert Danhi represented CWC as a judge for the event.

**INC Congress** - From May 12-14 Robert Verloop (CEO), Pamela Gravier (VP of Integrated Marketing), and Billy Ng (VP, Industry and Government Affairs) of the California Walnut Commission, along with multiple walnut handlers, participated in the annual International Nut and Dried Fruit Council (INC) Congress held in Macau, CN.

Throughout the congress, numerous sessions and roundtable discussions were held. Key challenges facing the tree nut industry include volatile weather patterns affecting crop yields, pricing pressures, market uncertainty, and international trade tariffs. Despite these hurdles, consumer demand continues to grow for foods that are healthy, sustainable (emphasizing clean labels, traceability, eco-friendly packaging), and affordable.





**Food is Life, Food is Health Summit May 5-7** - California Walnut Commission was a founding sponsor for the Culinary Institute of Americans and Stanford Medicine inaugural, Food is Life, Food is Health Conference in Napa. This provided an opportunity to highlight the California walnut industry in a leadership position alongside these leading culinary and health/nutrition institution, showcasing how walnuts are a nutrient dense, single source ingredient and how they fit into personal and planetary health. We hosted an event at Trefethen Family Vineyard under an +150 year old Paradox walnut tree

(covering 1 acre) where we demonstrate the science behind the flavor of walnuts, innovative culinary inspirations and the broad range of health benefits of California walnuts with our Chef-in-Residence Robert Danhi and Science Advisor Rachel Blaine.

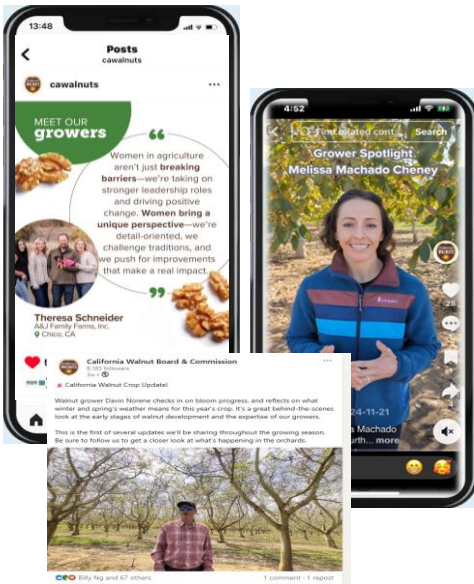
### American Heart Association Releases 2026 Dietary Guidance –

The American Heart Association recently published their updated scientific statement reflecting the latest nutrition guidance aligned with reducing cardiovascular disease risk, and walnuts are positioned well, even appearing in a graphic recommendation to choose healthy proteins and unsaturated fats to promote cardiovascular health. The industry’s investment in heart health research helped fuel this recommendation.

## Dietary Guidance for Cardiovascular Health



## GROWER AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Now more than ever, consumers want to know more about where their food comes from and who is growing it. Help promote the California walnut industry and share your stories by joining the new Grower Ambassador program. We are working to identify the latest generation of growers to be able to share their experiences while highlighting the rich history of multi-generational family farms. We want to showcase the unique and innovative approaches being undertaken within walnut operations while highlighting the passion and commitment that is in every walnut produced. Areas of participation would include social media content, online blog, consumer PR and events.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Christine Lott at [clott@walnuts.org](mailto:clott@walnuts.org) or at 916-932-7070.

## RECEIVE THE LATEST INDUSTRY NEWS DIRECTLY TO YOUR IN-BOX - SIGN UP TODAY!

A new Industry e-Newsletter, The Walnut Wire, is available for growers and handlers to keep you informed and connected to the latest developments shaping the California walnut industry. The monthly digest will feature timely updates on industry news, initiatives, and upcoming events direct to your inbox.

Subscribe today for our monthly e-Newsletter by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://walnuts.org/industry-subscribe/>





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## UPCOMING EVENTS AND KEY DATES

- **Sustainability Webinar Series – Integrated Pest Management** – July 15, 2026, 1:00pm via Zoom
- **CWB/CWC Board of Directors meeting** – August 6, 2026 (tentative), at the Rancho Cordova Marriott Hotel

**SAVE THE DATE!**