

CAC MEETS WITH U.S. APPLE ASSOCIATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



January Legislative Affairs Meeting with the U.S. Apple Association

In January, the U.S. Apple Association held its January Legislative Affairs meeting to discuss issues that are directly impacting the U.S. Apple industry. The U.S. Apple Association will be holding its annual legislative day in March. Each year, the Commission, coupled with the U.S. Apple Association and several other state commissions, work together to discuss issues directly impacting the respective states on the marketing and distribution of apples. For additional information on this meeting, please contact the Commission office.

GOI RESCINDS DGFT IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON APPLES

In a notification released on January 12, 2016, the Government of India acted to amend the import policies on apples through Nava Sheva/Mumbai. This amendment is serving to overrule the previous restriction that was enacted in September 2015 when the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Directorate General for Foreign Trade (DGFT) published a notification stating that all imported apples (falling under HS Code 08081000 of chapter 8) be limited to a single port of entry, namely the Nhava Sheva Port complex in Mumbai. Fortunately, the recent January amendment by the DGFT officially rescinded the September notification, stating that apple imports are eligible through sea and airports in Kolkata, Chennai, Cochin, and Mumbai, as well as the dry port and airport in Delhi. The January 12 amendment also allows for cross-border imports of apples. Since apples are the most heavily consumed fruit in India, this change in events will be highly beneficial to the California apple industry. If you would like more information on this notification, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission office.

U.S. MAY ACCEPT E.U. POME FRUIT EXPORTS

On January 15, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced it will be publishing a proposed rule in the Federal Register that would allow the importation of fresh apple and pear fruit to the U.S. from eight European Union

member countries: Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands. The EU health, trade, and agriculture commissioners are in support of this publication by the USDA, and feel that this is a necessary step for EU growers and other authorities. In a joint statement, they rallied the idea that "opening the market for the 2016 harvest (by September 2016) could be feasible." It is estimated that the projected value of exports to the United States is around 10 million Euro, or \$11million. This 0.5 percent market share is a modest, but "welcome relief to a sector under severe strain." Despite the 50 years of discrimination against U.S. pome fruit exports to Europe, the draft rule, which will be published for public consultation, represents the next step in this process. For more information, please contact the Commission office.

CAC ATTENDS SEMINAR ON FINAL RULE ON FSMA STANDARDS FOR PRODUCE SAFETY

On Wednesday, January 13, 2016, CAC staff attended the CDFA Informational Session on FSMA Final Rule for Produce Safety. It was held at the International AgriCenter in Tulare, CA. An FDA presentation on the FSMA Produce Safety Rule was given by Ritu Nalubola, Senior Policy Advisor from the FDA Office of Policy. A recording of the webinar version of the presentation, along with additional Fact Sheets on the Final Rule on Produce Safety and Water Quality Requirements, can be found on the Commission website. For more information, please contact the Commission office.

CAC ATTENDS PIECE-RATE COMPENSATION WORKSHOP

On February 19, 2016, the CAC attended a seminar hosted by the California Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) and California Citrus Mutual (CCM). Their goal was to provide an industry-wide seminar to review how piece-rate compensation should be handled in accordance with the law. Assembly Bill 1513 created an optional program which permits employers to retroactively compensate piece-rate employees in exchange for a safe harbor from class action lawsuits. The bill also clarifies how piece-rate employees should be compensated as of January 2016. For more information on AB 1513, please visit: <http://legislature.ca.gov>

WESTERN GROWERS ENCOURAGES ACTION AFTER INTRODUCTION OF SENATE WATER BILL

Western Growers President and CEO Tom Nassif released a statement encouraging congressional action following the introduction of the California Long-Term Provisions for Water Supply and Short-Term Provisions for Emergency Drought Relief

Act proposed by Senator Dianne Feinstein in mid-February. In his statement, he urged “both California senators [to] push this legislation to mark up in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.” He agreed with Senator Feinstein that “we need congressional action, and we need it now” as “we have already lost billions of gallons of El Niño water to the ocean, water that could have been safely pumped and stored to help us through the current and future droughts.” Nassif also acknowledged the fact that, despite a strong precipitation year, the drought is far from over, especially when many of our existing policies are allowing water to flow into the ocean. Nassif stated that, “Federal legislation is urgently needed to provide greater certainty that water capture and storage will be maximized, and to allow for more storage in California and throughout the West.” To read Nassif’s full statement, please visit: <https://www.wga.com/press-releases/press-release-western-growers-encourages-action-following-introduction-senate-water>

USDA DESIGNATES 4 ADDITIONAL CALIFORNIA COUNTIES AS PRIMARY NATURAL DISASTER AREAS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated 4 additional counties in California as primary natural disaster areas due to damages and losses caused by the ongoing drought. These counties are: Imperial, Marin, Mendocino, and Trinity. These four additional counties were designated natural disaster areas following the original 12 listed in December. Due to their status, all qualified farm operators in the designated areas are eligible for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA), should they meet eligibility requirements. Farmers and ranchers in La Paz and Yuma counties in Arizona also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. For more information regarding these programs, please visit: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH: NEW RESEARCH YOU WON’T WANT TO MISS!

In a recent debate in the *BMC Medicine Journal*, experts argued that the use of statins as a means to combat heart disease do more

harm than good, especially for those who do not already have heart disease. Rather than resort to statins as a primary method of prevention, experts advise people at low risk of developing heart disease would benefit from eating an apple a day to improve the condition of their hearts and prevent heart attacks, strokes and other vascular diseases. For more information please visit:

<https://bmcmedicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-016-0550-5>

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APPLE BITES

Heart Healthy Edition

Super Protector California Apple Juice

2 cups/115 g chopped broccoli, stems and florets

2 large oranges, peeled and seeded

1 large California apple, cored

Juice the broccoli, oranges, and apple, in that order. Run the pulp through again to extract as much liquid as possible. Serve immediately. *Recipe courtesy of U.S. Apple Association Blog: <http://www.usapple.org>*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **U.S. Apple Capitol Hill Day**
-Date: March 3, 2016
-Location: Washington, D.C.
- **APHIS-USDA Irradiation Meeting**
-Date: March 23-24, 2016
-Location: Anaheim, CA
- **CPMA Convention & Trade Show**
-Date: April 12-14, 2016
-Location: Alberta, Canada



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