

To: All Handlers
From: Sabrina Poth, Specialist, Marketing Order Services
cc: Peter Sommers, USDA/AMS
Date: June 15, 2023
Subject: Crop Readiness Operations Packet (CROP)

As we approach the start of the 2023 harvest and the 2023/24 crop year, this Crop Readiness Operations Packet (CROP) aims to inform handlers and industry members of pertinent information regarding the incoming inspection process.

Included in this CROP memo is a 2023 Pre-Harvest Checklist, information regarding moisture meter calibrations, a copy of the Almond Sampling Verification Program (ASVP) Manual and the 2023/24 ASVP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Also included is a memo highlighting the online proctor approach for ASVP training. Handler/huller personnel who completed ASVP proctor training last year still need to complete the online proctor training this year if they wish to be an ASVP proctor for the 2023/24 crop year. The moisture measurement memo explains the USDA requirement for all moisture measurement devices to be calibrated to manufacturer specifications prior to the start of harvest. The enclosed Moisture Analysis Calibration Guide provides information on how to get moisture measurement devices calibrated and an explanation of the process to be undertaken.

Additionally, there is an update on Shipping Point Inspection Fees and Charges. Lastly, there is an updated Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) Office Directory for your records.

If you should have any questions about the enclosed information or any aspect of the incoming inspection process for the 2023/24 crop year, feel free to contact me at spoth@almondboard.com or (209) 343-3232.

Sincerely,



Sabrina Poth
Specialist, Marketing Order Services

2023 PRE-HARVEST CHECKLIST

| MOISTURE CALIBRATION | COMPLETED? | COMMENTS |
|---|------------|----------|
| Identify which moisture measurement device(s) are used for incoming inspection purposes | | |
| Reference Moisture Analysis Calibration Guide to identify calibration provider | | |
| Call calibration provider and schedule the calibration | | |
| Ship unit(s) to calibration provider (if applicable) | | |
| Wait 1-4 weeks (varies) | | |
| Receive unit(s) back with calibration certificate(s) | | |
| Copy calibration certificate(s) and send to local SPI district office | | |
| COMPLETED CALIBRATION PRE-HARVEST REQUIREMENTS | | |
| ALMOND SAMPLING VERIFICATION PROGRAM (ASVP) <small>Only applies to incoming samples drawn when SPI not present</small> | COMPLETED? | COMMENTS |
| Print Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)* <small>Optional - Pick up from SPI district office personnel</small> | | |
| Sign MOU and send original to local SPI district office | | |
| Complete ASVP Proctor Online Training** <small>ASVP Proctors trained in 2022/2023 must still attend training for 2023/2024</small> | | |
| ASVP Proctor provides training for personnel to become ASVP Designees | | |
| Keep a list of all ASVP Designees (trained employees) posted | | |
| Send ASVP Designee list to local SPI district office | | |
| COMPLETED ASVP PRE-HARVEST REQUIREMENTS | | |

* 2023/24 ASVP MOU is enclosed within this CROP memo (pages 15-19).

**If a handler or huller/sheller is drawing incoming samples when USDA/Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) personnel is not on-site, ASVP applies and handler must have a signed MOU on file with SPI and employees involved in the incoming inspection process must be trained ASVP Designees by either attending a training from a certified ASVP Proctor or being trained by SPI directly. For more details, please reference the ASVP Proctor Training memo (page 4-6) enclosed within this CROP packet or contact your local Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) district office. SPI Office Directory is located at the end of this packet (page 24). Online proctor trainings are available on demand anytime.

To: All Handlers

From: Sabrina Poth, Specialist, Marketing Order Services

cc: Peter Sommers (USDA/AMS)

Date: June 15, 2023

Subject: Moisture Measurement Calibrations for 2023/24 Crop Year

The requirement to have each moisture measurement unit calibrated to manufacturer's specifications continues for the 2023/24 crop year. Handlers and huller/shellers using a moisture measurement device for incoming inspection purposes can reference the Moisture Analysis Calibration Guide, which describes the appropriate steps to get you unit(s) calibrated. Once a unit is calibrated and a certificate of calibration referencing the serial number of the unit is obtained, a copy is to be made available to the local Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) district office. These steps must be taken **no sooner than 60 days prior to the unit's first use for incoming inspection purposes during the 2023 harvest.**

If you should have any questions about moisture measurement device calibrations, please feel free to reach me at spoth@almondboard.com or (209) 343-3232.

Sincerely,



Sabrina Poth

Specialist, Marketing Order Services

MOISTURE ANALYSIS CALIBRATION GUIDE

ARIZONA INSTRUMENTS

3375 N. DELAWARE ST.

CHANDLER, AZ 85225

1-800-528-7411

[HTTP://WWW.AZIC.COM/](http://www.azic.com/)

Models: Computrac 1000, Computrac Max 4000XL, Computrac Max 5000XL

Units are to be sent directly to Arizona Instruments at the address listed above. A Return Material Authorization is to be completed before shipping the unit. Detailed instructions are listed at the following link: <http://www.azic.com/support/calibration-and-repair/>. A loaner unit can be arraigned for during the calibration period if needed and a NIST traceable calibration certificate will be provided.

AQUALAB

2365 NE HOPKINS CT.

PULLMAN, WA 99163

1-509-332-5601

[HTTP://WWW.AQUALAB.COM/](http://www.aqualab.com/)

Models: 4TE (benchtop) and Pawkit (handheld) Water Activity Meters

Units can be either sent directly to AquaLab at the address listed above or a service technician can be arranged to do an on-site calibration at your request. Give them a call in their service department at the number listed above to schedule the calibration. Typically calibrations take 10-14 days and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

FINNA GROUP (AQUA MEASURE)

9567 ARROW ROUTE

SUITE #E

RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91730

1-909-941-7776

<http://www.finnagroup.com/>

Model: AM-MCPC-RS

Units are to be sent directly to Finna Group at the address listed above. Contact them prior to shipping in order to schedule a calibration, in addition, include contact information attached to model upon delivery for quote purposes. Typically calibrations take 1-2 weeks and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

BURROWS

SERVICED BY AGPOINT PRECISION

24121 WEST THEODORE ST.

SUITE #4D

PLAINFIELD, IL 60586
1-866-668-4855
[HTTP://AGPOINTPRECISION.COM/](http://agpointprecision.com/)

Models: DMC-750, DMC-550

AgPoint Precision is the service/calibration entity for Burrows. Give AgPoint Precision a call at the number listed above to schedule a calibration. Units will be shipped directly to AgPoint Precision at the address listed above. Typically calibrations take 2-3 weeks and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

SARTORIUS (DENVER INSTRUMENTS)

545 Johnson Ave.
BOHEMIA, NY 11716
1-800-321-1135
[HTTP://www.LPS.Service.NA@Sartorius.com/](http://www.LPS.Service.NA@Sartorius.com/)

Model: IR 60

Units are to be sent to Sartorius directly at the address listed above. A return number must be obtained before shipping the unit. Call and speak to a customer service representative at the phone number listed above to secure the return number. After a couple of weeks a calibration certificate will be issued the unit will be shipped back.

DICKEY JOHN

SERVICED BY CALIBRATION PLUS

34 W. HACIENDA LANE
WOODLAND, CA 95695
1-530-662-7752
[HTTP://WWW.CALIBRATIONPLUS.COM/](http://www.CALIBRATIONPLUS.COM/)

Model: GAC2100, GAC2500

The west coast is served by Calibration Plus as the regional service/calibration entity for Dickey John. Give Calibration Plus a call at the number listed above to schedule a calibration to new GAC2100 calibrations. Units will be shipped directly to Calibration Plus at the address listed above. Typically it takes about a week and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

METTLER-TOLEDO

1900 POLARIS PARKWAY
COLUMBUS, OH 43240
1-800-638-8537
[HTTP://ServiceRequests@MT.com](http://ServiceRequests@MT.com)

Models: HB43-S, HE73, HE53

You must have an account setup with Mettler-Toledo. Call 1-800-METTLER and speak with a service representative to schedule a technician to come out and conduct an on-site calibration of the moisture analysis unit. The time period can vary depending on the technician's schedule, but a calibration certificate will be provided at the completion of the technician's visit.

OHAUS (SERVICED BY RICE LAKE WEIGHING SYSTEMS)

1400 WILLOW PASS CT.

CONCORD, CA 94520

1-925-798-8900

[HTTP://WWW.RICELAKE.COM/](http://www.ricelake.com/)

Models: MB23, MB 25, MB35, MB45

The mid west coast region is serviced by Rice Lake as the regional service provider for Ohaus. Give Rice Lake a call to schedule either a NIST-traceable calibration or an ISO 17025 accredited calibration for your unit. Units are to be mailed to the address exactly as listed above to prevent shipping problems. Typically calibrations take about 2 weeks and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

SHORE

105 N. PERRY ST.

ATTICA, IN 47918

1-800-837-0863

[HTTP://WWW.SHOPMOISTURETESTERS.COM/](http://www.shopmoisturetesters.com/)

Models: 920, 930 or 935

Units are to be sent directly to Shore Measuring Systems at the address listed above. Give them a call in their service department at the number listed above to schedule the calibration. Typically calibrations take 1-2 weeks and a calibration certificate will be provided upon completion.

STEINLITE

1015 MAIN ST.

ATCHISON, KS 66002

1-800-462-1835

[HTTP://WWW.STEINLITE.COM/](http://www.steinlite.com/)

Model: SB900, SL95 (shelled/whole almonds)

Units are to be sent directly to Steinlite at the address listed above. Give them a call to schedule a calibration. You can send shelled almonds with the unit for calibration purposes. Typically calibrations take 3-4 days; calibration repair 2 weeks. A calibration certificate will be provided upon request.

To: All ASVP Participants

From: Sabrina Poth, Specialist, Marketing Order Services

cc:

Date: June 15, 2023

Subject: Almond Sampling Verification Program (ASVP) Proctor Training

The Almond Sampling Verification Program (ASVP) applies to incoming samples that are drawn while no member of USDA/Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) is on-site. For any handler and/or huller/sheller locations where this type of sampling takes place, it is a requirement that all personnel involved in the incoming sampling process be trained as ASVP designers.

The proctor approach continues for ASVP and like in previous years all ASVP proctor training will be offered online. All personnel interested in becoming an ASVP proctor should login and complete the proctor training online at their own convenience. Online training will be available anytime and can be accessed with user credentials administered by USDA/Shipping Point Inspection (SPI). Employees who successfully complete online ASVP proctor training are then authorized to administer USDA/SPI training materials to other handler/huller staff, thereby certifying the trained individuals as ASVP designees upon successful completion of the DVD-based training and short exam. **Handler personnel trained as an ASVP proctor for the 2022/2023 crop year must still complete online ASVP proctor training again if they wish to be an ASVP proctor for the 2023/24 crop year.**

It is recommended that only 1-2 people per company complete an online ASVP proctor training at no cost to the handler/huller. Those electing to have personalized SPI-conducted trainings for all their incoming staff at their place of operation will incur the travel and hourly cost of SPI staff and will need to coordinate directly with their local Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) district office.

Each handler/huller participating in the Almond Sampling Verification Program (ASVP) must submit a signed 2023/24 ASVP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to their local SPI district office prior to receiving online credentials for access to the ASVP proctor training course. The 2023/24 ASVP MOU is enclosed in this Crop Readiness Operations Packet (CROP).

If you have any questions regarding ASVP online proctor training, you can reach me at spoth@almondboard.com or (209) 343-3232.

Almond Sampling Verification Program

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has identified a need to strengthen the California almond inspection sampling procedures. In cooperation with AMS, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Inspection Services Division, Inspection and Compliance Branch, Shipping Point Inspection Program (SPI) has created the following Almond Sampling Verification Program (ASVP). The program will be managed by CDFA under the Branch Internal Quality Management System (BIQMS) outlined in the cooperative agreement between AMS and CDFA.

The purpose of the Almond Sampling Verification Program is to ensure continued compliance of the Almond inspection procedures set forth in Federal Marketing Order 981. The importance of the sampling process as it relates to inspection procedures must not be overlooked. Maintaining integrity of the program from the field to the final inspection not only protects consumers but ensures fairness and equity among growers. Therefore, CDFA and AMS have created the following requirements regarding the Almond Sampling Verification Program.

The ASVP is intended to address handlers who utilize hand sampling or manually operated mechanical sampling equipment in their incoming almond program. This program also addresses those handlers who may not utilize CDFA/AMS on site and on an ongoing day to day basis. Those handlers utilizing the automatic sampling process will follow the approval and use of automatic sampling devices guidelines set forth by USDA, AMS, SCI Division policy "Approval and Use of Automatic Sampling Devices, Feb. 2014".

Qualifications

The CDFA in cooperation with USDA AMS will ensure all qualifications described herein remain in effect at all times for compliance of the Almond Verification Sampling Program. The minimum qualifications for participants are as follows:

SPI

All SPI personnel assigned to work in the Almond Sampling Verification Program will be licensed USDA inspectors and will be proficient in all almond sampling methods. Each licensee will be required to attend an ASVP training class, within their geographical area. This requirement will include any subsequent continuing education training.

Handlers

Almond handlers may assign some of their employees as persons trained to sample incoming almonds. All personnel who have been assigned as an Almond Sampling Designee must be an employee, in good standing, of each said handler or 3rd party designee. Each designee must be a minimum age of 18 years, must be able to verbally communicate in English and must have attended an ASVP training and any subsequent continuing education training provided by CDFA/USDA. Upon completion of the classroom training, all Almond Sampling Designees will be required to take a sampling protocol proficiency examination. A minimum passing score of 80% is required. An Almond Sampling Designee may be approved to oversee (proctor) delivery of CDFA/USDA ASVP training after attending classroom training presented by CDFA and attaining a minimum score of 90% on a proficiency examination. All exams must be dated and include the printed name of the Designee/Trainer and their signature. Exams must be kept on file for a period of one year and available upon request of CDFA.

Training

Adequate training is a requirement for all persons who draw samples of incoming almonds. All training programs will be prepared by CDFA/USDA personnel. CDFA SPI will provide internal training of personnel who are assigned as "Almond Sampling Verification Licensees". SPI will provide training to all almond industry members who are assigned as "Almond Sampling Verification Designees". Training may be presented in person by licensed SPI personnel or via a recorded video presentation overseen or proctored by persons who meet the proctoring qualifications (in classroom training and a 90% score) Training will be documented by SPI and/or ASVP proctors and reviewed by AMS. Original training records will be retained by handlers. Copies of training records will be provided to CDFA. CDFA/USDA will provide three training options to handlers:

1. Utilize a proctoring methodology. Where CDFA will provide initial classroom or web based training to designated lead handler personnel. Upon successful completion of the assigned training, handler personnel will be certified as an ASVP proctor. A proctor will have authority to oversee the delivery of CDFA prepared training materials. To ensure training uniformity, CDFA will provide a training module to each ASVP certified trained proctor in the form of a DVD or web based training module. To ensure compliance within the program, CDFA reserves the right to attend training classes. Handlers are required to notify SPI district offices of training classes.
2. CDFA will provide all training to handler personnel. A training request must be submitted to CDFA at least three weeks prior to the handlers almond season. Handler agrees to incur cost involved in CDFA training.

3. **No Training Option.** If a handler chooses this option, they will not be allowed to participate in the Almond Sampling Verification Program. All sampling will be conducted by a licensed SPI Federal-State inspector. Handler agrees to incur all costs involved in the continuous Fed-State sampling process.

Training will consist of the following components:

Integrity – Maintaining integrity within a program is essential for success. All persons involved in the Almond Sampling Verification Program will be expected to maintain a high level of integrity. SPI's training program will emphasize the importance of integrity, perceived consistency of actions, the value and principles of integrity, expectations and consequences for failure to maintain integrity within the program. Ethics, bribery and misconduct procedures will be included in all training.

Proper Use of Sampling Equipment - In order for samples to be correctly drawn, it is imperative that all sampling equipment, including hand operated mechanical sampling equipment, be properly used and maintained. SPI will ensure all Almond Sampling Designees are proficient in the use of sampling equipment, representative sampling of a lot, potential indicators of non-compliance and where to obtain contact information for each handler.

Records and Traceability – Accuracy of sampling logs and lot information is of vital importance to the Almond Sampling Verification Program. SPI may utilize an approved Almond Sampling Verification Checklist and an approved Almond Sampling Log for recordkeeping as well as traceability. SPI will also emphasize the importance of neatness, legibility and accuracy for an effective traceability program.

Identifying Areas of Non-Conformities – Training of AMS SPI licensees will include identifying observations, the difference between observations and non-conformities, and the varying degrees of non-conformities and the assessment of non-conformities according to the severity of deviation from the program requirements. Training will also include proper documentation techniques and identifying repetitive non-conformities that would warrant a documented consultation with program managers.

Sample Security and Storage

Security and storage of a sample is of the utmost importance for maintaining sample integrity. Handler and SPI responsibilities in regards to sample security and storage are as follows:

Handler

Each handler is required to provide a locked storage, accessible only by authorized ASVP personnel. Individual samples may be bagged and secured utilizing the official approved clasps. The storage must be large enough to accommodate the daily sample volume of each facility. In choosing the type of storage, handlers must account for days/weeks in which volume of samples is high. Any sample taken without a licensee on site or stored overnight may be left unclasp provided the samples are secured and accessible only to authorized ASVP designees.

Sample containers that will be moved offsite for inspection must be clasped and identifiable with the grower and handler information or codes that enable trace-back. An approved sample log may be used for this purpose.

Sample container should be capable of sustaining the integrity of the moisture content.

Handlers will document all daily samples collected. It is the responsibility of the handler to maintain the accuracy of the daily sample log (if used) with relationship to the matching lot identification and number of samples collected and control of the clasps.

SPI

SPI will provide handlers the approved clasps and an official Sampling Log. Sampling logs which are internally used by handlers may also be used pending approval of SPI. It is the responsibility of SPI to verify the accuracy of the daily sample log with relationship to the matching lot identification, number of samples collected and clasps issued. SPI reserves the right to identify sample(s) as unofficial submitted samples if security of samples has been compromised. A Noncompliance Report for samples that are not in compliance with the ASVP will be issued and directed to the Almond Board of California.

Oversight Frequency

Verification is accomplished through compliance checks. The frequency is contingent upon the number of samples each handler generates on a weekly basis. SPI will review facility compliance of the ASVP and record the findings on an Almond Sampling Verification checklist. Compliance checks may consist of reviewing the training records, sampling procedure, application of the sample security and sample documentation. Based on the number of samples procured each week, when there is no Fed-State licensee on site, SPI will use the following sampling frequency chart to establish a

minimum number of compliance visits. All handlers, including those with multiple shifts, are subject to additional checks, if needed, to ensure compliance within the program.

| Number of Samples Per Week | Compliance Checks Per Week |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 25 or Less | 2 |
| 26 – 55 | 3 |
| 56 - 99 | 4 |
| 100+ | Everyday |

Handlers, who offer **less than 20 samples PER SEASON** for inspection, may be exempt from the above chart. **Provided** the handler contacts CDFA to conduct compliance checks on a minimum of 10% of the samples offered for inspection. It is SPI's responsibility to ensure that compliance checks are performed, while sampling is occurring. Any facility that has a Fed-State licensed SPI inspector on-site will be subjected to compliance checks randomly throughout the day.

Supervisory Reviews

Supervisory reviews are made to ensure the integrity of the sampling process. SPI supervisors should make every effort to conduct supervisory reviews at each site bi-weekly, but no less than monthly. The objective of a Supervisory review is to review the entire sampling process which includes: SPI licensee compliance, almond sampling designee compliance, if samples are representative and the accuracy of record keeping and sample security. All discrepancies shall be reported. If a major discrepancy is identified, non-conformity(s) will be issued and non-conformity protocols will be administered.

Periodic reviews of the Almond Sampling Verification Program will be made by Federal Program Managers under the BIQMS program.

Agreement Conditions

Handler Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the handler to continually adhere to the agreement set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding of the Almond Sampling Verification Program. In addition, all facilities will designate an initial contact person, as well as a secondary contact person, for all sample related concerns. This contact information will be provided to SPI. ASVP trained proctors will provide CDFA with a copy of the Master Facility Employee List. Facilities must post their original copy of the master facility employee list, at all sampling stations of persons who have

qualified as an “Almond Sampling Designee”. It is the responsibility of the handler to provide SPI safe access to all areas where sampling is conducted. It is also the responsibility of the handler to maintain, in proper operating order, all mechanical sampling equipment. Fees will be collected from handler based upon a prorated hourly charge. Persons approved as trained proctors are required to attend any CDFA continuing education classes. Almond Sampling Verification Designee(s) who fail to participate in assigned training classes will be removed from the program.

SPI Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of SPI to continually adhere to the agreement set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding of the Almond Sampling Verification Program. For Option 1, a trained proctor will oversee delivery of training modules and testing. For Option 2 and Option 3 training will be conducted by an SPI employee designated as a USDA licensed Supervisor. SPI will maintain copies of Facility Employee Lists, and originals of sampling logs and verification checklists. SPI will provide handlers with a copy of the completed, signed verification checklists. SPI will ensure accuracy and completeness of records through supervisory verification. Substantiated falsification of records is a critical non-conformity and will result in removal from the program. SPI will procure contact information of each individual handler's sampling contact person, ASVP proctors, as well as mechanical maintenance personnel. SPI will conduct all sampling verifications in a professional manner and protect the handlers' verification results with proprietary discretion. All fees associated with ASVP will be identified on an approved inspection certificate. An Almond Sampling Verification licensee who fails to maintain a satisfactory or higher rating of integrity on an employee performance evaluation will constitute removal from the program. All ASVP forms will be filed at the District SPI office.

Non – Compliance Criteria

Handlers

Minor deviations of the ASVP requirements will be considered an observation; however, observations must be acknowledged by handlers and if necessary, may warrant a corrective action. Non-conformities must be corrected in a timely manner. Some critical non-conformities may result in the loss of ASVP privileges. Receiving more than two (2) non-conformities in any specific area will result in a documented consultation between SPI program management and handler management at the handler's expense. More than three (3) documented consultations between SPI program management and handler management in a crop year will result in suspension from the program for the remainder of the

season. During which time all samples must be drawn by an SPI licensee. The handler agrees to incur the additional cost for continuous SPI sampling. After the season, the handler may re-enter the program after corrective actions are taken and handler's staff is re-trained. An Almond Sampling Designee(s) failure to participate in required training classes overseen by an ASVP proctor or CDFA/USDA will be grounds for removal from the program. An approved proctor's failure to participate in required training classes provided by CDFA/USDA will be grounds for removal from the program.

SPI

Compliance within the ASVP will be verified by a trained Almond Sampling Verification Licensee. All observations and non-conformities will be brought to the attention of the handler during verification visits. All observations, non-conformities and corrective actions taken will be documented by SPI. A standard non-conformity report (see attached) may be used for documentation. Levels of non-conformities are as follows:

Major Non-Conformity – A major non-conformity is a major deviation from program requirements, which may result in suspension from the program.

Critical Non-Conformity – A critical non-conformity is a critical deviation from program requirements, which has resulted in sampling methods not meeting compliance within the program.

**NATHANIEL
TICKNER**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
BETWEEN THE
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
INSPECTION SERVICES DIVISION (IS)
INSPECTION AND COMPLIANCE BRANCH
SHIPPING POINT INSPECTION PROGRAM (SPI),
ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA (ABC)
AND
ALMOND HANDLERS OR SIMILAR ENTITIES
OPERATING UNDER THE
ALMOND SAMPLING VERIFICATION PROGRAM (ASVP)

ARTICLE 1 – PURPOSE

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding, (MOU) is to provide cooperation between the Inspection Services Division (IS) and the Almond Industry, as mutually agreed, to verify signatory compliance and best practices for sampling of almonds under the direction of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/CDFA and the ABC.

ARTICLE 2 – BACKGROUND

The almond industry has seen tremendous growth over the last 25 years. This has caused a shift in industry's handling of the product. No longer are all almonds harvested, inspected and processed the same day. Handlers may receive and sample product twenty-four hours per day but for efficiencies, only request inspection for part the day. There are also handlers whose geographical location and size of their operation make it cost-prohibitive to have an inspector onsite, fulltime, just for the purpose of obtaining samples. The ASVP will enhance the policy created by USDA regarding automatic samplers to ensure sampling protocols are being followed at all locations to protect the integrity of the inspection process.

ARTICLE 3 – AUTHORITY

The CDFA has authority to provide such services, charge appropriate fees and enter into this MOU under the California Food and Agricultural Code (Section 40531).

ARTICLE 4 – ROLES

The applicant agrees to:

- A. Comply with all applicable regulations governing the services to be conducted under 11 Code of Federal Regulation 981.42 (a) (Incoming Quality Requirements) the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (AMAA), as amended, the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended; and any State Agricultural or Administrative Codes which are applicable to the products intended for shipment.

- B. Comply with the policies procedures and specification set out in the Almond Sampling Verification program (ASVP) (See attached), and all sampling guidelines, memos or forms.
- C. Provide CDFA personnel with timely access to all equipment and records for the purposes of inspection and/or verification of the applicants compliance;
- D. Provide adequate staff to support the program, including individuals specifically trained for sampling processes;
- E. For those handlers who choose Option 1; provide adequate staff to support the training of the program;
- F. Secure original proficiency examinations of all sampling staff for a period not to exceed one year from date of exam and provide copies of completed exams upon request of CDFA;
- G. For those handlers who choose Option 2; requests for training must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the training and the handler must provide training facilities sufficient to accommodate those staff who will be trained by CDFA;
- H. Option 2 Training costs will be charged to the handler at a rate of \$150 per class, mileage at \$0.625 per mile plus \$46 per hour travel time.
- I. Provide adequate storage space for proper control, care and maintenance of samples;
- J. Accept non-conformities as assessed, including taking corrective actions and the potential loss of the privilege to continue participation.

SPI agrees to:

- A. Review with the applicant responsibilities and duties under ASVP;
- B. Provide initial and ongoing training of ASVP Trainer certification of staff to applicants who choose Option 1 under the Training Section of the ASVP;
- C. Provide oversight to applicant staff regarding training, application of sampling procedures and record keeping;
- D. Provide initial and ongoing training to applicant staff under Option 2 of the Training Section of the ASVP at a rate of \$150 per class, \$0.625 per mile and \$46 per hour travel time;
- E. Provide form(s) for applicant use;
- F. Notify the applicant immediately of all non-conformities including necessary corrective actions;
- G. Advise the applicant, in writing, when ASVP services are suspended and/or terminated due to major non-conformities.

ABC agrees to:

- A. Assist in disseminating information related to the ASVP;
- B. Cooperate with SPI in identifying program improvements;
- C. Share with SPI information on new handlers as appropriate.

ARTICLE 5 – MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Meet and work cooperatively to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives.
- 2. Communicate effectively to identify areas of concern, identify solutions, and take corrective actions.

ARTICLE 6 – CDFA RESPONSIBILITIES

The IS agrees to:

1. Designate the Program Supervisor of the Shipping Point inspection Branch as its authorized representative who shall be responsible for collaboratively administering the activities conducted under this MOU.
2. Provide the necessary personnel and support services to carry out the verification services as stated I this MOU.
3. Provide training and supervision to inspection staff, necessary to ensure the uniform application of the ASVP and verification checklist.
4. Issue an audit report to the respective handler should non-conformity(s) require termination of agreement.

ARTICLE 7 – AMENDMENTS

This MOU may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing.

ARTICLE 8 – EFFECTIVE DATE, DURATION AND TERMINATION

This MOU will be in effect upon the date of signature, and shall remain in effect; it may be modified or renewed upon joint review and mutual agreement of the parties in writing, and may be terminated at the request of either party. Requests for any major modification or terminations shall be submitted, in writing, to the other party for consideration not less than 60 days in advance of the desired effective date.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

SPI DATE

Almond Board of California DATE

Handler (or other entity) Name and Title

Signature DATE

Handler Address (where samples are collected)

Revised 6/13/2022

Almond Certification System Data

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Handler/Huller Sheller Name | |
| Primary Address | |
| Phone Number | |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Primary Contact Name | |
| Phone Number | |
| E-Mail Address | |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Secondary Contact Name | |
| Phone Number | |
| E-Mail Address | |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| ACS E-Mail Address | |
|--------------------|--|

This address will be set as primary communication with Handler/Huller in the ACS.



1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 1536-S, STOP 0240
Washington, DC 20250-0240

2023/2024 Rates for Specialty Crops Inspection Grading and Audit Services

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced the [2023/2024 rates](#) it will charge for voluntary grading, inspection, certification, auditing, and laboratory services for a variety of agricultural commodities including meat and poultry, fruits and vegetables, eggs, dairy products, rice, cotton, and tobacco. The 2023/2024 regular, overtime, holiday, and laboratory services rates will be applied at the beginning of the crop year, fiscal year, or as required by law depending on the commodity.

The [Federal Register notice](#) that published on May 22, 2023, establishes the rates for user-funded programs based on costs incurred by AMS, including for the services provided by the Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. This year, cost-based analyses indicated the need to increase user fee rates for SCI's grading and audit services. While cost-saving measures have and will continue to be implemented, user fee rate increases are necessary to offset rising operational costs. In cases where current rates are sufficient to cover the costs of providing the service, user fee rates remain unchanged.

Specialty Crops Fees

| 7 CFR Part 51—Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Other Products (Inspection, Certification, and Standards) | | | | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|--------------|
| Subpart A—Requirements; §§ 51.37–51.44 Schedule of Fees and Charges at Destination Markets; § 51.45 Schedule of Fees and Charges at Shipping Point Areas | | | | | |
| Quality and Condition Inspections for Whole Lots | \$242.00 per lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Quality and Condition Half Lot or Condition-Only Inspections for Whole Lots. | \$200.00 per lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Condition—Half Lot | \$185.00 per lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Quality and Condition or Condition-Only Inspections for Additional Lots of the Same Product. | \$110.00 per lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Dockside Inspections—Each package weighing <30 lbs | \$0.044 per pkg |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Dockside Inspections—Each package weighing >30 lbs | \$0.068/pkg |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Charge per Individual Product for Dockside Inspection | \$240.00/lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Charge per Each Additional Lot of the Same Product | \$110.00/lot |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Inspections for All Hourly Work | \$116.00 | \$153.00 | \$190.00 ..... | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Audit Services—Federal | \$155.00 |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Audit Services—State | \$155.00 |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| GFSI Certification Fee ² | \$250.00/audit |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| 7 CFR Part 52—Processed Fruits and Vegetables, Processed Products Thereof, and Other Processed Food Products | | | | | |
| Subpart A—Requirements Governing Inspection and Certification; §§ 52.41–52.51 Fees and Charges | | | | | |
| Lot Inspections | \$90.00 | \$116.00 | \$142.00 ..... | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| In-plant Inspections Under Annual Contract (year-round) | \$95.00 | \$117.00 | \$139.00 ..... | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Additional Graders (in-plant) or Less Than Year-Round | \$95.00 | \$121.00 | \$148.00 ..... | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Audit Services—Federal | \$155.00 |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| Audit Services—State | \$155.00 |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |
| GFSI Certification Fee ² | \$250.00/audit |  |  | ..... | Oct 1, 2023. |

For more information, please contact [your local Specialty Crops Inspection Division office](#).

Shipping Point Inspection

Inspection Fees and Charges

| COMMODITY | CONTAINER SIZES | FEE | IN-LINE FIELD FEE |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Shipping Point Inspection Hourly Fee | | \$50.00 | |
| Overtime Fee | | \$9.50 | |
| Minimum Fee | | \$35.00 | |
| Processed Pears CA Fee | | \$58.00 | |
| Almond PEC | | \$16.00 | |
| Almond Disposition | (CWT) | \$45.50 Per Hr. + 0.85 Per Ton | |
| Almond Disposition: Minimum Fee | \$63.00 | | |
| Almond Pasteurization Reviews | \$80.00 Per Hr. | | |
| Almonds | (CWT) | \$0.230 | |
| Almonds Incoming | (CWT) | \$44.50 Per Hour + 0.63 Per Ton | |
| Almonds Incoming (Inshell) | (CWT) | \$44.50 Per Hr. + \$1.29 Per Ton | |
| Almonds Incoming (Inshell): Minimum Fee | \$63.00 | | |
| Almonds Incoming: Minimum Fee | \$63.00 | | |
| Apples | Carton | \$0.062 | |
| Apricots | Lug/Carton | \$0.051 | |
| Asparagus | Full Pyramid | \$0.072 | |
| Asparagus | 1/2 Pyramid | \$0.043 | |
| Broccoli | Carton | \$0.062 | |
| Broccoli | 25 LB Carton | \$0.072 | |
| Broccoli | 10 LB Carton | \$0.060 | |
| Brussel Sprouts | 25 lb. Carton | \$0.072 | |
| Brussel Sprouts | 10 lb. Carton | \$0.060 | |
| Brussel Sprouts | 12/12 oz. Cups | \$0.060 | |
| Bulk Grapes | (CWT) | \$0.118 | |
| Cabbage | Carton | \$0.072 | |
| Cantaloupes | Carton | \$0.051 | |
| Cantaloupes | 1/2 Carton | \$0.023 | |
| Carrots | (CWT) | \$0.096 | |
| Carrots | M/C Film Bags | \$0.072 | |
| Carrots | 50 lb. Container | \$0.063 | |
| | | | |
| Carrots | 25 lb. or Less Container | \$0.035 | |
| Cauliflower | Carton | \$0.048 | |
| Celery | Carton/Crate | \$0.090 | |

Shipping Point Inspection

Inspection Fees and Charges

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|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------------|
| Celery | 28 lb. M/C Film Bag | \$0.053 | |
| Celery | Full Size W/Slvs | \$0.105 | |
| Cherries | Lug/Carton | \$0.056 | |
| Corn | Carton/Crate | \$0.057 | \$0.041 |
| Cucumbers | Lug/Crate/CTN | \$0.060 | |
| Cucumbers | 16 lb. Flat | \$0.035 | |
| Fresh Strawberries | Flat | \$0.033 | |
| Garlic | (CWT) | \$0.142 | |
| Garlic | Carton | \$0.068 | |
| Grapefruit | CTN/CTN Equiv. | \$0.048 | \$0.041 |
| Green Onions | Carton | \$0.039 | |
| Honeydews or other Melons | Carton | \$0.046 | |
| Juice Grapes | Lug | \$0.056 | |
| Kiwifruit | 1 layer | \$0.046 | 54.00 Per Hr. |
| Kiwifruit | V/F, C/F, 3 Layer Tray and Bags | \$0.064 | |
| Kiwifruit | Bulk Bins (per lb.) | \$0.008 | |
| Lemons | Carton | \$0.056 | \$0.048 |
| Lettuce | Carton | \$0.072 | \$0.051 |
| Lettuce | 32-38 head CTN | \$0.081 | \$0.061 |
| Lettuce | Bulk bins | \$1.419 | |
| Mandarins, Tangerines or Tangelos | 4/5 Carton | \$0.048 | \$0.042 |
| Mandarins, Tangerines or Tangelos | 30 lb. M/C | \$0.039 | |
| Mandarins, Tangerines or Tangelos | 48 lb. M/C | \$0.043 | |
| Mandarins, Tangerines or Tangelos | 25 lb. Carton | \$0.035 | |
| Mangos | Flat | \$0.017 | |
| Nectarines | 2 Layer Lug/CTN | \$0.060 | |
| Nectarines | 1 Layer Lug/CTN | \$0.046 | |
| Nectarines | M/C or V/F cont. | \$0.069 | |
| Olives | Per Hour. | \$52.15 | |
| Onions | 50 lb. Sack/CTN Less than 50 lbs. | \$0.063 | |
| Onions | Sack/Carton | \$0.055 | |
| Onions | (CWT) | \$0.118 | |
| Oranges | Carton | \$0.051 | \$0.048 |
| Peaches | 2 Layer Lug/CTN | \$0.060 | |
| Peaches | 1 Layer Lug/CTN | \$0.046 | |
| Peaches | M/C or V/F cont. | \$0.069 | |
| Pears | Std. 4/5 Bu. Box | \$0.051 | |
| Pears | 36 lb. Carton | \$0.043 | |

Shipping Point Inspection

Inspection Fees and Charges

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|--------------|---|---------|--|
| Pears | ½ or LA Lug | \$0.037 | |
| Peppers | Carton | \$0.060 | |
| Pistachios | (CWT) | \$0.262 | |
| Plums | 2 Layer Carton | \$0.056 | |
| Plums | 1 Layer Flat | \$0.056 | |
| Plums | V/F Lug/CTN | \$0.056 | |
| Potatoes | (CWT) 50 lb. | \$0.111 | |
| Potatoes | CTN/M/C | \$0.056 | |
| Table Grapes | 20 lb. Lug/CTN | \$0.039 | |
| Table Grapes | 21 lb. Lug/CTN | \$0.051 | |
| Table Grapes | 15 lb. Lug/CTN or More w/Bags or WRPS | \$0.051 | |
| Table Grapes | 14 lb. or Less/CTN | \$0.030 | |
| Tomatoes | 3 Layer/40 lb. CTN | \$0.041 | |
| Tomatoes | 2 Layer Lug | \$0.035 | |
| Tomatoes | 25 lb. Carton | \$0.036 | |
| Tomatoes | 18-20 lb. Carton | \$0.028 | |
| Walnuts | (CWT) | \$0.262 | |
| Watermelons | (CWT) | \$0.151 | |

SHIPPING POINT INSPECTION PROGRAM

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p><u>SPI COMMODITY PROGRAM SUPERVISOR</u> (Almonds, Avocados, Table Grapes, Tomatoes) Mitch Randhawa mitch.randhawa@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (209) 405-1043 ADDRESS: 3070 Commerce Way Turlock, CA 95380</p> | <p><u>SPI COMMODITY PROGRAM SUPERVISOR</u> (Cherries, Kiwifruit, and Onions) Theresa Stewart theresa.stewart@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (916) 204-3939 ADDRESS:1812 W Kettleman Ln #7 Lodi, CA 95242</p> | <p><u>SPI COMMODITY PROGRAM SUPERVISOR</u> (Olive Oil Sampling, Processed Pears, Cling Peach, Processed Olives) Laurel Rudolph laurel.rudolph@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (916) 710-0362 ADDRESS: 2399 Gateway Oaks Dr. Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95833</p> |
| <p><u>SPI PROGRAM SUPERVISOR</u> (NCIP Liaison) Omar Solorio omar.solorio@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (916) 205-9782 ADDRESS: 3070 Commerce Way Turlock, CA 95380</p> | <p><u>SPI PROGRAM SUPERVISOR</u> (District Cost Analysis) Roxann Bramlage roxann.bramlage@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (831) 484-3313 ADDRESS: 2399 Gateway Oaks Dr Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95833</p> | <p><u>BAKERSFIELD DISTRICT – 760</u> Abelino Quiroz, Supervisor Eliseo Ochoa, Supervisor bakersfiledspi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (661) 391-4735 ADDRESS: 3651 Pegasus Drive Suite 106, Bakersfield, CA 93308 SUPPORT: Martha Loya Martha.loya@cdfa.ca.gov Valeria Herrera</p> |
| <p><u>CHICO DISTRICT - 752</u> Stephania Delgado, Supervisor chicospi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (530) 898-8427 FAX: (530) 898-9034 ADDRESS: 40 Philadelphia Dr #104, Chico, CA 95973 SUPPORT: Alexas Garcia</p> | <p><u>COACHELLA DISTRICT – 795</u> (Seasonal Office) Greg Dake, Supervisor dake.g@agsupport.org CELL: (661) 331-3280 ADDRESS: Vacant SUPPORT: Aleta Walker walker.a@agsupport.org</p> | <p><u>DINUBA DISTRICT - 765</u> <u>FOOD SAFETY - 756</u> Enrique Cobarrubias, Supervisor dinubaspi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (559) 595-8000 FAX: (559) 595-8008 ADDRESS: 220 South L Street Suite E, Dinuba, CA 93618 SUPPORT: Vonya Feters AUDITS: Sonya Sanchez sanchez.s@agsupport.org</p> |
| <p><u>EL CENTRO DISTRICT - 796</u> (Seasonal Office) Armando Loya, Supervisor loya.a@agsupport.org CELL: (209) 226-8897 ADDRESS: Vacant</p> | <p><u>KERMAN DISTRICT - 764</u> Jose Zavala, Supervisor kermanspi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (559) 846-7323 FAX: (559) 846-7336 ADDRESS: 990 South 4th St. Kerman, CA 93630 SUPPORT: Lupe Zamora, Marco Garcia</p> | <p><u>LODI DISTRICT - 758</u> <u>UKIAH DISTRICT - 751</u> Daniel Grether, Supervisor Raquel Arrayga, Supervisor lodispi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (209) 333-5300 FAX: (209) 333-5305 ADDRESS: 1812 W Kettleman Ln #7 Lodi, CA 95242 SUPPORT: Jennifer Melo</p> |
| <p><u>RIVERSIDE DISTRICT - 791</u> Heather Wick, Supervisor riversidespi@cdfa.ca.gov CELL: (831) 262-0821 ADDRESS: 1451 Research Park Dr. Suite 200, Riverside, CA 92517</p> | <p><u>SAN DIEGO DISTRICT – 794</u> Nazar Esshaki, Supervisor sdspi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (619) 661-6355 FAX: (619) 661-6963 ADDRESS: 2320 Paseo de Las Americas Suite 104 San Diego, CA 92154 SUPPORT: Linda Ramsey, John Galvan</p> | <p><u>TURLOCK DISTRICT – 754</u> Jaime Cobarrubias, Supervisor Lidia Cervantes, Supervisor turlockspi@cdfa.ca.gov OFFICE: (209) 632-7304 FAX: (209) 632-8927 ADDRESS: 3070 Commerce Way Turlock, CA 95380 SUPPORT: Melissa Maddock</p> |