

Australian almonds – Record crops continue healthy forecasts

Increasing orchard plantings, a record crop, growing global demand and an appreciation of the quality of the Australian product indicates a bright future for the almond industry.

Figures released today by the Almond Board of Australia (ABA) on the eve of the 2011 harvest indicates an increase in production of 18.3 percent for this season's almond crop estimated to be 45,400 tonnes.

ABA CEO, Ross Skinner advises that the 2011 crop will be the largest ever produced in Australia, despite poor flowering in the major variety, Nonpareil. This lower than expected yield in the Nonpareil variety did not offset the large increase in production from young trees now maturing or coming into bearing for the first time. This increasing production is repositioning the industry in terms of its importance within the Australian horticultural industry and within the global almond industry.

“Crop levels were around 10,000 tonnes in 2002, and we forecast production will reach 80,000 tonnes by 2015. This prolific growth will see Australia become the world's second largest producer of almonds – behind California” he said.

Strong growth in demand is now coming from the population giants, China and India, where consumers with rapidly increasing incomes represent a large and growing portion of the world's almond market.

“Whilst the domestic market remains an important and rapidly growing market, over 65 percent of the 2011 crop is expected to be exported to 40 countries, including our key markets of India, the Middle East and Europe. With overseas sales expected to top \$100 million for the first time this coming marketing year almonds are now one of the most valuable horticultural products exported” said Skinner.

Increasingly, markets around the world are keenly awaiting the new season Australian almonds which are considered world's best quality.

Almond Board of Australia (ABA) is a non profit, membership based organisation representing the interests of Australian almond growers, processors and marketers.

For media interviews or for further information regarding this year's Australian almond harvest or the Australian almond industry please contact: Ross Skinner, Almond Board of Australia CEO on 0448 049 202 or 08 8582 2055

For information on Australian almonds, recipe ideas, nutritional facts and more, visit www.australianalmonds.com.au.

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