

California Almond Sustainability Program (CASP)

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Objectives:

- Document the good stewardship of resources by almond growers and handlers
- Continue development of additional self-assessment modules for CASP
- Continue encouraging almond growers and handlers to participate in the program
- Develop electronic tools for participants

Background:

Since 2001, the Environmental Committee of the Almond Board of California has been communicating with regulators and almond buyers about the good story of the sustainability of the California almond grower community. Today, major almond buyers, large retailers, and food service companies are beginning to ask their suppliers to demonstrate they are “sustainable.” Facilitated by SureHarvest, the Environmental Committee has created a “self-assessment” for documenting that almond growers use practices that are sustainable, economical, environmentally friendly, and present almond growers as good neighbors.

A self-assessment involves growers and handlers coming to a workshop and sharing from a list “best management practices” which of these practices they are using. The first program modules focus on water and nutrient best management practices assembled by a committee of almond growers and other experts. The intended benefit of the module is to quantify the positive agricultural practices already adopted by California almond growers, as well as to serve as a repository for documenting ongoing improvement. All individual grower comments and responses are confidential.

Using the self-assessment process, growers and handlers will be equipped to respond to the increasing focus of major almond buyers and regulators on the issue of sustainability. The Almond Board of California will be able to communicate sustainable almond farming in terms of practices that make practical and economic sense for our crop, geography, and community.

Additional modules covering energy, air quality and pest management are being developed. It is hoped the growers will also find the process valuable for thinking about their resource use and how best practices might help them increase efficiency or reduce their economic risk.

For More Details, Visit

- Poster location 3, Exhibit Hall, Session 3; or on the web (after January 2011) at AlmondBoard.com/AICposters
- Program materials and information can be found at <http://almondboard.com/Growers/Sustainability>