

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OUTREACH PROGRAM

Since 2004, the Almond Board of California has funded the Environmental Stewardship program in an ongoing effort to inform growers, handlers, government regulatory officials, elected officials and the media about the industry's environmental issues and how industry-funded research is addressing those issues.

The outreach efforts feature articles on the various environmentally-friendly practices almond growers use to address issues such as surface water quality, ground water quality, air quality, global warming, endangered species act, pesticide risk assessment and sustainability.

Articles can be found in the Board's newsletter "California Almonds" which appears inside editions of the Pacific Nut Producer, as well as on the Board's website located at www.almondboard.com

Almond Industry Explores Sustainability

The Almond Board of California worked with groups of almond farmers and other stakeholders to develop the following definition of sustainability:
"Sustainable almond farming utilizes production practices that are economically viable and are based upon scientific research, common sense and a respect for the environment, neighbors and employees. The result is a plentiful, healthy and safe food product."



Almond Industry Recognized for Environmental Leadership

The Almond Board has been recognized for its environmental leadership by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with a Champion for Pesticide Environmental Stewardship award for exhibiting "an extraordinary level of commitment to protecting human health and the environment." The Board has also been honored twice with an IPM Innovator award by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation.



Orchard Tour Shows Off Environmental Dedication

Every year, the Almond Board's Environmental committee hosts an orchard tour for regulatory officials and the media to highlight the many on-farm environmentally friendly practices in which growers engage. The tours provide an opportunity to highlight the many environmental research efforts funded by the almond industry. Family farmers such as Arbuckle grower Don Peart are effective spokespersons for California's almond growers as they relate their personal experiences in addressing environmental concerns.



Dust Control Strategies at Harvest

During fall harvest time, there are ongoing efforts to educate growers and the public about the simple actions almond growers or their custom harvesters can implement to reduce dust from harvest activities. The tips are based on findings from Almond Board-funded research and input from equipment manufacturers.



Air Quality Funding Promoted

Air quality in the Central Valley of California is a prime focus of the almond industry especially for growers in the San Joaquin Valley. State and federal cost-share programs that assist growers with replacing older engines with more efficient models are promoted throughout the year by the Environmental Stewardship outreach program. The Environmental Stewardship outreach efforts throughout the year provide updates on relevant air quality research conducted by the Almond Board.



Ground Water Quality Protection

Ground water protection in the Central Valley is a key concern for almond growers and regulatory officials. The Stewardship Program throughout the year keeps growers updated on the latest ground water regulations and works in partnership with the Coalitions for Rural Urban Environmental Stewardship to educate growers about proper production practices that will address concerns over ground water quality. Micro irrigation research is exploring methods for using water wisely and preventing excess runoff.



Self-Assessment Helps Growers Improve Efficiency

California almond growers are participating in a number of workshops throughout the Central Valley to learn about the California Almond Sustainability Program self-assessment program. The Environmental Stewardship outreach effort is helping inform growers about this useful tool for setting benchmarks for their production practices on the spectrum of sustainability practices. Regular articles in the Almond Board's newsletter provide the industry with updates about the evolving sustainability program.

