

# 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](http://www.almondboard.com)*

 **california  
almonds**<sup>®</sup>  
Almond Board of California

## **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."



## **Orchard Tour Shows Off Environmental Dedication**

Every year, the Almond Board's Environmental Committee hosts an orchard tour for state and federal 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 Modesto grower Merlyn Garber who hosted the 2011 tour 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, such as research on greenhouse gases and emissions from soil fumigants.



## **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 Coalition for Urban/Rural 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 and its self-assessment tool. 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.



## **Grower Video Testimonials**

What is sustainability? Why should almond growers care about it? Is sustainability important to our customers? California almond growers are filming videos to offer their views on the meaning of sustainability and its importance to the California almond industry. Visit the Almond Board's website [www.almondboard.com/Growers/Sustainability](http://www.almondboard.com/Growers/Sustainability) to learn more about how to get involved in the California Almond Sustainability Program.

