



# california almonds

Since ancient times, almonds have been prized throughout the world for their delicious taste, crunchy texture, and increasingly, for their nutritional value.

California is the world's largest producer of almonds. With its ideal growing conditions, including a mild climate, rich soil, and abundant sunshine, this area produces about 80% of the global almond supply, exporting to nearly 90 countries. To ensure a consistent, high-quality, wholesome product year-round, state-of-the-art equipment and specialized techniques for growing, harvesting, processing, and packaging are used.

The California Almond industry respects the environment and keeps consumer health in mind, with food safety and quality assurance programs in the orchard and in processing and packaging.

California Almonds are highly versatile and available in numerous varieties and forms suitable for diverse product applications. Use this guide to help determine the most suitable variety, size, form, and grade of almond for your needs.

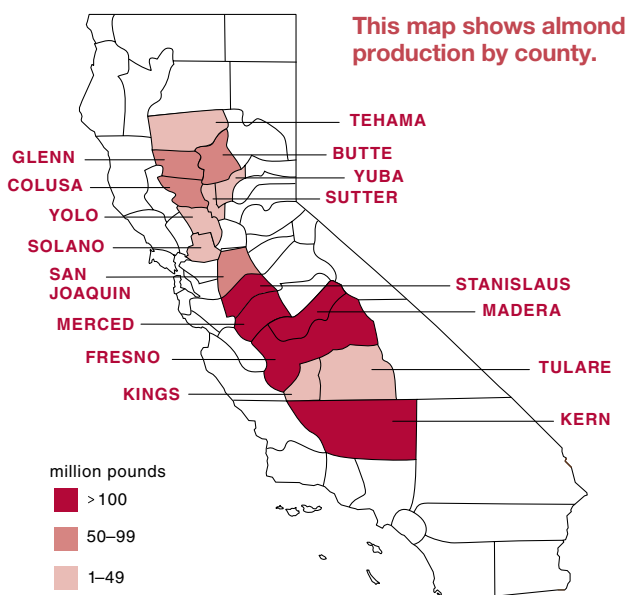
## OVERVIEW OF THE CALIFORNIA ALMOND INDUSTRY

Six thousand growers carefully tend more than 700,000 acres (283,000 hectares) of almond orchards throughout central California, a region noted for its ideal growing climate. Hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters help provide a steady supply of wholesome California Almonds. California is the only place in the United States where almonds are commercially grown.

## THE ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

The Almond Board of California was established in 1950 by the US Congress to administer a grower-enacted Federal Marketing Order under the supervision of the US Department of Agriculture. The Almond Board's mission is to create a rewarding environment for the production, processing, and marketing of California Almonds. Efforts focus on expanding domestic and international distribution, consumption, and usage of almonds by funding a variety of generic activities that benefit the industry as a whole. The Almond Board is funded by an annual assessment on the marketable kernel pound weight of almonds.

Program activities include such critical functions as domestic and international marketing; nutrition, production, and environmental research; food quality and safety initiatives; monitoring trade and market access issues; and analysis and dissemination of industry statistics. The Almond Board of California does not establish commodity prices.



# almond seasons

Like nectarines, peaches, and plums, the almond is categorized botanically as a fruit. Almonds are classified as either sweet (*Amygdalus communis L. var. dulcis*) or bitter (*Amygdalus communis L. Var. amara*), but only sweet are grown in California.

Almonds grow on trees that bloom from mid-February through March. These trees are not self-pollinating, so bees have an important role. For the trees to produce, at least two different almond varieties must be planted in alternating rows.

Almonds develop in a shell that is surrounded by a hull (analogous to the fleshy part of a peach). Over the summer, as the nuts mature, the hull dries and splits open, revealing a shell that encases the nut. The nuts dry naturally in this shell before they are harvested.

Between mid-August and October, almonds are harvested by mechanical tree “shakers,” which knock the almonds, still in their hulls, to the ground. The nuts are then gathered and delivered for processing, where the next stage of cleaning and grading occurs. Finally, they’re sold to thousands of customers like you.



## almond lifecycle

