

June 27, 2012

Weekly Update



Raisin Industry News and the work of the California Raisin Marketing Board, by Gary Schulz, President and General Manager

Raisin Industry Statistics

For Industry Statistics, such as Deliveries to Handlers, Shipments, etc. please go to the RAC website: www.raisins.org

Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, July 3, 9 a.m., CRMB Sustainability Workgroup

Thursday, July 12 and Friday, July 13, Fresno, CRMB Scientific Nutrition Research Panel

Tuesday, July 17, 2:30 p.m., CRMB Market Development Subcommittee

Good News About Sulfur Dioxide and Dried Fruit

As released by the State of California

“Under Proposition 65, a warning for exposure to sulfur dioxide (SO₂) from consumption of dried fruit is not required because SO₂ exposure

will be below the proposed Maximum Allowable Dose Level (MADL) when the reasonably anticipated rate of intake by the average user of the product is considered.”

Editor’s note: the full statement has been provided to all raisin industry packers. To request a copy, please respond by emailing: gary@raisins.org

San Joaquin Valley Raisin Crop Developing Fast

From Western Farm Press, June 28

Raisin grape growers in the San Joaquin Valley are watching their crops develop at a faster pace than last year, when cool, wet weather for much of the season slowed growth.

As of mid-June, berries were developing nicely, says Steve Spate, grower representative for the Raisin Bargaining Association at Fresno, Calif.

“The warm weather has us on a very good growth path. Although the bunch count is down about 19 percent from last year, it’s still pretty good – around 30 bunches per vine in many fields.”

Growers will soon get an idea of crop quality when berries begin softening and start to take on sugar, likely to occur during the first 10 days of July. But, even good sugar levels when grapes are picked in September is no guarantee of good raisin quality. “We won’t know that until the berries dry down,” Spate says.

The more favorable weather this year has also kept powdery mildew pressure down from the high levels of the past few years.

“Powdery mildew has been pleasantly absent,” Spate says. “Growers have been diligent in treating the disease the past several years, so fields were clean at the beginning of the season.

So far, insect numbers have been down as well, which Spate credits to grower control programs — making timely pesticide applications to keep any problems from getting out of hand. Leafhoppers, which can produce three generations a season, appeared early this year in some locations, he says, and he expects mite numbers to start building as the summer heats up.

Like other San Joaquin farmers, raisin growers are dealing with less surface water for irrigating their crop this year.

“Deliveries didn’t start as early as expected and won’t last as long as needed,” Spate says. “So, many growers will probably have to pump water for their last irrigation.” For those who flood irrigate, that would probably be no later than the first part of August, which would allow time for row middles to dry for harvesting and to improve sugar development before grapes are picked.

More disturbing to growers is the possibility of an inadequate supply of labor to harvest the crop, the result of stepped-up efforts to prevent illegal immigration from Mexico.

“Already there have been indications of a shortage of workers for the tree fruit crop this year,” Spate says. “If that carries over to our raisin grape harvest, it could be a real concern for growers.”

Trial in Recess

July dates are re-scheduled to August

Judge Raymond Cadei in Sacramento County Superior Court has begun hearing the cases brought against the CDFA/CRMB by plaintiffs Lion Bros., etc., and Boghosian Raisin Packing Company, Inc. et al; and defendant and cross-complainant Raisin Valley Farms, LLC. The trial began on April 2 and is now in recess, with a resumption date of August 13.

Fresno Area Weather Forecast may be found at:
<http://www.weather.com/weather/tenday/93710>

“Solar Powered Goodness” Television Ads to Promote “Raisins...the Wise Choice!”

Check out this micro-site to view our television ads that began airing May 7th nationally and May 14th locally:

<http://www.calraisins.org/solarpoweredsnacking/#games>

New UC Cooperative Extension Viticulture Advisor?

As supplied by UC Extension Specialist Stephen Vasquez:

Dear Madera, Merced and Mariposa Grape Industry Representatives:

As you know, UC Ag and Natural Resources solicited requests for new UC Cooperative Extension farm advisor and specialist positions. The call and submission process for positions ended on May 18, 2012. It is now time for industry to weigh-in and support the posted positions. The comment period will be open to the industry until **Tuesday, August 7, 2012**.

I am writing you to ask for support for a Viticulture Farm Advisor that will service the Madera, Merced and Mariposa tri-county area. This Farm Advisor will focus on wine, raisin and table grape production. I have attached a PDF of the position description for your review. Additionally, here is the link that will take you to the online comment section: <http://ucanr.org/vit-farmadvisor-madera-merced-mariposa>

Please comment on the value and importance of this position to the industry located in the three counties. **Please note that your comments will be available to the public.** In addition to posting your comments online, I would like to ask you to email your comments to me (sjvasquez@ucanr.edu) on company letterhead. This will assure that your comments get read and considered by the UC ANR Integrated Viticulture workgroup.

Please share this with industry colleagues that can write strong letters of support for this position.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

Stephen Vasquez-Viticulture Farm Advisor & Co-County Director, Fresno County

sjvasquez@ucanr.edu

Maxwell Norton-Director & Viticulture & Horticulture Farm Advisor Merced County

mnorton@ucanr.edu

Mark Battany-Viticulture Farm Advisor, San Luis Obispo & Santa Barbara Counties
and Workgroup Chair

mcbattany@ucdavis.edu

Stephen Vasquez

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University of California Cooperative Extension--Fresno County

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559-600-7285

559-600-7228 Fax

UC Cooperative Extension-Fresno County website:

<http://ucanr.org/sites/viticulture-fresno/>

UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

Clovis Farmers Market, Friday, June 29

featuring California Raisins, co-sponsored by California Raisin Marketing Board and First California Federal Credit Union

5 p.m., Pollasky and Fifth in Old Town Clovis. No admission charge.
Raisin product samples available.

A special drawing for a trip to Napa will be held, open to all raisin growers. See our booth at Fifth and Pollasky in Clovis!

Have a Great Weekend!

Gary Schulz, President and General Manager

California Raisin Marketing Board www.loveyourraisins.com

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