

March 27, 2012

**Growers and Packers Approve Implementation Of
The California Cherry Marketing and Research Program**

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has completed industry votes to determine if growers and packers favor the implementation of a state marketing order entitled the "California Cherry Marketing and Research Program". Specifically, there was a separate referendum conducted for growers and a separate referendum conducted for packers of cherries. In the grower vote, 422 growers, or 57 percent of all growers on our list, voted in the referendum. Of those growers voting, 355, or 84 percent voted in favor of the Program, and those voting in favor represented 85 percent of the volume voted. On the packer side, 15, or 83 percent voted, and those voting in favor represented 93 percent of all voters, and those in favor represented approximately 95 percent of the volume voted.

The California Marketing Act, the statute that governs marketing orders, provides that in order for a proposed order to become effective not less than 40 percent of each affected group must vote, and not less than 65 percent by number of those voting must be in favor, and those voting in favor must represent not less than 51 percent of the volume voted. The voting results in the recent cherry referenda exceed the approval requirements specified in the Act. Therefore, CDFA has implemented this new Program.

This marketing order will assess and provide programs for all California cherries sold in fresh form. This is contrasted with the current Cherry Marketing Program which assesses only Bings, Vans, Lamberts and Rainiers. With the effectiveness of the new Program, it is the intention of the proponents that the four-variety marketing order would be suspended on March 31. The proposed Program will conduct research on cherries, will support limited domestic promotion activities, and will provide the base for a branded export promotion program. Just as under the current order, the funds for administering the proposed Marketing Program will be generated by industry assessments.

Now that the Program has been made effective, it will be administered by an industry advisory board comprised of six packers and six growers who will be appointed by CDFA. The Department will appoint the Board members and alternates from nominations received at the public hearing for that purpose.

If you have any questions regarding the referendum votes or the new California Cherry Marketing and Research Program, you may call Glenn Yost at this office.

Sincerely,



Robert Maxie, Chief
CDFA Marketing Branch

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