



February 3, 2020

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
To Consider the Continuation of the
California Prune Board
Hearing Date: March 4, 2020

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has scheduled a public hearing to receive comments from the California prune industry and the general public on whether the Marketing Order for California Prunes (CPB) should be continued. CDFA is required to conduct such a hearing every five years to determine whether the program is fulfilling the purposes of the California Marketing Act, under which the CPB was created. The last public hearing regarding the continuation of this program was conducted in 2015.

The public hearing is scheduled as follows:

Date / Time	Location
Wednesday March 4, 2020 Beginning at 10:00 a.m.	California Department of Food and Agriculture Room 101 2800 Gateway Oaks Drive Sacramento, California 95833

OVERVIEW OF THE CALIFORNIA PRUNE BOARD

The Marketing Order for California Prunes is a State marketing program operating under the oversight of CDFA. The CPB was implemented in 1980 for the purpose of conducting promotion, research, and issue management activities on behalf of California's prune industry.

All costs of the CPB are funded by producers and processors via a mandatory assessment, which is currently set at \$36/ton for producers and \$26/ton for processors. The CPB has a board of directors with seven independent producer representatives, seven cooperative producer representatives, three independent processor representatives, four cooperative processor representatives and one public member.



HEARING PROCEDURE

At the hearing, a CDFA panel will receive testimony and evidence, both oral and documentary, with respect to relevant matters, specifically including the following:

1. The production, economic, and marketing conditions affecting the California prune industry and the effect of the California Prune Board upon such conditions.
2. Whether the Marketing Order for California Prunes:
 - Tends to effectuate the declared purposes and attain the declared objectives for marketing orders as specified in the California Marketing Act (Chapter 1 of Part 2, Division 21 of the Food and Agricultural Code); and
 - Furthers the interests of the residents of the State of California.

All affected producers and processors of California prunes and other interested persons are invited to provide testimony and evidence for this hearing. Testimony may be provided in person at the hearing or may be submitted in writing prior to the hearing. The table below indicates the various ways by which hearing testimony may be submitted.

Ways to Submit Testimony	
Orally	Testify in person at the hearing on March 4, 2020
By Mail	Mail Testimony to: Kacie Fritz CDFA Marketing Branch 1220 N Street Sacramento, CA 95814-5603
By E-mail	E-mail testimony to: kacie.fritz@cdfa.ca.gov

PREPARATION OF HEARING TESTIMONY

Supporters of the Marketing Order for California Prunes should provide testimony that communicates why they believe the CPB should be continued. Supporters should explain how the activities of the CPB aid the industry. Conversely, opponents of the CPB should provide testimony that communicates why they believe the CPB should not be continued. Opponents should explain how the activities of the CPB do not aid the industry.

Following are some relevant questions that hearing witnesses may wish to consider in preparing their testimony.

- Has the California prune industry benefited from the promotion, research, and issues management activities conducted by the Marketing Order for California Prunes? If yes, please explain how. If no, please explain why not.

- What are the most significant accomplishments of the program over the last five years?
- What problems, if any, would the industry face in the absence of a mandatory industry-funded program?
- Does the general public benefit from the activities of the Marketing Order for California Prunes? If yes, please explain how. If no, please explain why not.
- Have assessment monies been spent wisely, efficiently and according to the authority granted to the program?
- Are there ways that the program could be improved? Please explain.

STEPS SUBSEQUENT TO THE HEARING

The hearing transcript, written comments, and submitted exhibits will be combined to form the official hearing record, which will be considered by CDFA in determining whether the Marketing Order for California Prunes will be authorized to continue. If the hearing record generally supports continuation of the CPB, CDFA may authorize the CPB to operate for another five years without the need for an industry referendum. However, if CDFA finds from the hearing record that a substantial question exists as to whether the CPB is fulfilling its declared purposes, it will conduct a vote of prune producers and processors to determine if the CPB should be continued.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have questions regarding this hearing, please contact Kacie Fritz of this office at 916-900-5018. If you have questions about the activities of the CPB, please call Donn Zea, Executive Director of the California Prune Board, at 916-749-3442.

Sincerely,



Joe Monson, Branch Chief
Marketing Branch