



CALIFORNIA CANNING PEACH ASSOCIATION

# CLING PEACH REVIEW

Fall/Winter 2011





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**ON THE COVER:**  
Photography: Ron Boone

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# After the Storm

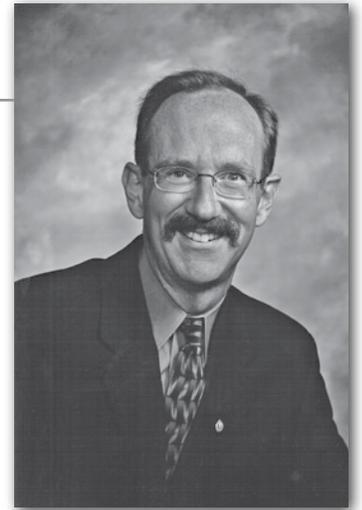
**A**s this article is being written in late November, we have just concluded our District grower meetings where we review the results of the latest peach harvest and offer a look ahead at the marketing and contracting outlook for the coming year. This year's meeting tone was more optimistic than 2010 as it appears that the industry has "weathered the storm" of back-to-back near record yields in 2009 and 2010 with canned peach inventories in canner warehouses now looking very manageable going into 2012. Obviously, maintaining a balanced supply/demand in the industry is the key to improved profitability for both growers and processors in the coming years.



Although the latest storm has now passed and we can see the sun peeking out from behind the clouds, we can't forget that there are other storm systems lurking beyond our horizon.

One of the biggest threats we face today is the lack of any real progress in Washington, D.C. on the immigration reform issue. The failure to agree on any credible agricultural guest worker program coupled with increased enforcement activity only serves to increase the risk for growers who will soon be faced with decisions regarding the need to replant or replace older peach orchards. In fact, the common theme running through many of my conversations with growers at every District meeting this year was that they were most interested in planting more walnuts which require much less labor and can be mechanically harvested. Recognizing that it takes three years for a new peach planting to be considered bearing acreage, we must acknowledge that the current industry standard of offering growers a 10-year contract for a new cling peach orchard may not be sufficient to attract the necessary replacement acreage. Given our recent experience involving processors walking away from contracts on orchards with trees only halfway through their normal 20-year lifespan, it is easy to understand why growers (and their bankers) would need greater assurances that they could recover their capital costs invested in planting a new peach orchard.

As strange as it may seem after dealing with surplus inventory and depressed selling prices the past two years, we should be thinking today about how our industry will begin to replace the nearly 3,000 contracted acres of trees 16 years and older while maintaining a balanced supply/demand position. We look forward to the opportunity to continue this dialogue with our processor customers during the coming year. 



Rich Hudgins

**One of the biggest threats we face today is the lack of any real progress in Washington, D.C. on the immigration reform issue.**

## Grower Profile



*Walt Jones checks the quality of this year's peaches.*

### A "Man of Fruit"

## Kingsburg Farmer Continues to Grow Family Business

By Ann Schmidt-Fogarty

**I**f dirt could talk, the land the Jones family owns would tell long stories of hard work, tenacity, a love for nature's bounty and unshakable family ties.

Walt Jones, 72, is the patriarch of the Kingsburg-area farming family. Known to be charismatic, shrewd and caring to family members, friends and staff, he likes nothing more than talking about all the help and support he receives from those around him. And he says he relishes his good fortune.

The family's amazing business story began with a remark from Walt's father's friend, an Arizona car dealer, in the early 1940's. "He told my grandfather that there was an area north of Bakersfield that had good soil and available water," Walt's son Brad explained.

"Shortly after, my grandfather and uncle bought a few acres and headed west."

Walt remembers seeing the first 20 acres his father purchased. He was five years old and driving with his parents from Flagstaff Arizona where the family owned a small gas station. "We came here in 1943," he said. "We had a flatbed Dodge truck. We loaded our stuff on the back of it and moved to California." Finding better land, once they arrived, the family packed up one year later after selling. "We had an old car and an old milk cow by that time. We tied the cow to the car and put her calf in the trunk. I remember that as plain as yesterday."

Jones' father had a lingering memory of the Depression and wanted the basics in life: to take care of his land and family. His son had bigger dreams—Technicolor-sized. Those dreams were fulfilled in a bittersweet way when Walt's father became ill and his young son had to step into a lead role in the family operation. "I was willing to take a lot more risks than my father was," he said. "He told me many times that he was proud of me, and that I made the business stronger than he would have."

"Everything he touches just turns to gold," said David Botkin, who manages food safety for the company and who has known Walt for 25 years. "He does his homework, works hard and is extremely intelligent. He is definitely on the short list of leading farmers in our area."

"We were chicken growers until the 70s," said Brad. "But Dad decided we could do better in the fresh fruit business. Today our main business is comprised of peaches, plums and nectarines that grow on about 4,000 acres."

The Jones family packs their fruit at their facility, Sun Valley Packing, which they call "The Monster." "We always say we have to feed the monster," explained Walt's grandson



*Casey Jones, Brad Jones, Walt Jones, Delbert Jones holding Tanner Jones, Brian Jones and Travis Jones.*

Casey, who is following in Walt's formidable footsteps by running the operation. Casey, 30, is now general manager of Sun Valley after having been carefully groomed by Walt himself. "I may be 30, but you've got to understand that I've been at this for 25 years," Casey joked, suggesting that the love of farming and business was introduced to Jones children through their baby bottles. Casey, his brother Travis and uncle Brad all play key roles in the company.

This year, Sun Valley packed more than 45,000 tons of fresh fruit that was shipped all over the world. The company has a staff that, at peak times, numbers about 1,400. Customers include Costco, Wal-Mart, Safeway as well as other global food distributors. Additionally, the family is diversifying with almonds and, two years ago, grafted 70 acres of clings. "We see growing clings as another way to enhance and diversify our company because we think the canning peach market has not been fully expanded—and we believe that there will be many options for sliced peaches that are packaged differently. We are convinced that our long-term future will include clings."

The future is also certain to hold innovations. "My grandfather has taught me to be a forward thinker. He has been completely on board with our efforts to improve efficiencies with solar and to implement full-traceability throughout our packing house that is unique to our industry," said Casey.

In the past few years, Walt has begun thinking of the future. Losing his son, Brian, 49 this summer after complications from heart valve surgery was a blow. But seeing Brian's son Casey thrive has given him a great deal of optimism about the future. "I saw Casey's potential awhile ago, he said, proudly. "He'll probably do a lot better at running the operation than I did."

Casey claims he could not receive a better compliment from a better person, who he says is still on the job and ahead of the game. "This man is a man of fruit. He eats fruit every morning for breakfast every afternoon for lunch and every evening for dinner. Year round, it doesn't matter whether it's bananas, peaches, plums, nectarines or pineapples. He



*Jax, Delbert, Tanner and Brady enjoying fruit with Grandpa.*

has test block orchards around his house where he monitors many of the new varieties we're looking at every year. He and my grandmother take notes and he picks every variety we put into the ground. If he likes it, we plant it."

While watching all the members of his family embrace and grow strongly into their roles in the family business, Walt describes the satisfaction he feels. Still living in Kingsburg with wife Irene, near the original 20 acres his father decided to take a gamble on almost 70 years ago, he describes himself as lazy. Instead of rising at dawn, he is now more likely to arrive at the packing house or field by 9 and end his day whenever he feels like it. "I am very happy and contented in my life, although I lost my son and I'll never get over that. Aside from that loss, I could not have scripted my life any better. We have a house on the coast, a log cabin in Montana and wonderful grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I never had a plan when I started and I never had a clue life could get this good." ☺

**"We are convinced that our long-term future will include clings."**



*Avon Shakespeare with Del Monte's Kingsburg Plant Manager Brian Okland.*

**He's just beginning to think that it might be time to retire. That won't be easy.**

# With a Name Like That, He Has to be Good

## Popular Del Monte Field Representative Contemplates Retirement after 54 Years

By Ann Schmidt-Fogarty

**H**ow many people in the world could leave a phone message for someone saying "It's Avon calling" and be telling the absolute truth?

Avon Shakespeare has been calling for 54 years. The soft-spoken field representative for Del Monte Foods has made it a point to call regularly on each and every Del Monte peach grower in the Kingsburg area. Now 80, he still enjoys talking over soil conditions, climate changes, pruning techniques and troublesome brown rot.

But things are changing for Avon. He's just beginning to think that it might be time to retire. That won't be easy. He's developed close relationships with his growers, and it's hard for him and many of them to get used to the idea that he won't be a part of the growing season and, on a personal basis, the off seasons. Avon has worked with most of them as long as they have been farmers—and he's also served many of their fathers as well.

Avon's career with Del Monte started when he was 26 years old and needed extra money. "I was a music teacher," said the shy, smiling man, who obviously dislikes talking about himself. "But when I started to work with peach growers, something about the job clicked with me-- I liked it right away. Actually, I liked helping peach growers more than I liked teaching music."

Maybe it was Avon's upbringing that made him gear more toward agriculture. Born in

Iowa, he learned a great deal about farming from his father who grew corn, oats and hay on land near Cedar Rapids. By the way, Avon's father was also named Avon Shakespeare. "I never asked my dad why we were given such an unusual name," he said. "It had to be that someone in the family tree loved Shakespeare or Stratford on Avon or both. All I know is that it helped me pass English in college. Who could flunk Shakespeare?"

Avon's low-key, helpful nature and his love of people have resulted in deep and lasting relationships. He also became fascinated about Kingsburg's unusual soils and interesting growing seasons and he developed decades' worth of knowledge about peaches and those who grow them.

"Avon can tell me the exact day I should pick my peaches—not just the week or not in a short range of days," said Stan Palm, a prominent peach grower in Kingsburg. "He is simply the best there is. There will never be another person like him again—and all of us who've been fortunate enough to work with him realize that."

"We call him 'The Pope,'" claimed David Peters who started working with Avon 12 years ago when he decided to grow peaches as well as grapes. "When he says you are ready to harvest, we call that a blessing from him. I am not ashamed to say that I love the guy and will really miss him."

Del Monte also realizes the value of Avon's remarkable career. "He is one of the best field representatives in the state," said Brian Okland, area manager for Del Monte in

Kingsburg. “He cares about growers as well as the quality of the fruit that he brings into this plant. And he knows his growers. He just doesn’t do a cursory visit. He’s interested in hearing what their problems are because he knows them on a personal basis. It’s just not fruit. It starts in the field and it starts with the growers and it starts with Avon and it ends with an amazing array of products. It’s a family from the harvesting all the way to the product on our customers’ tables.”

Walking through Del Monte’s plant with Avon is like accompanying a legendary figure, which many argue, he is. While his eyes rarely move away from the golden/blush fruit as it transforms from the fresh version in bins to the cleaned, cooked and canned product rolling out to be packaged, managers and workers at the canning stations look up and grin. “I never get tired of being in here,” he said, softly.

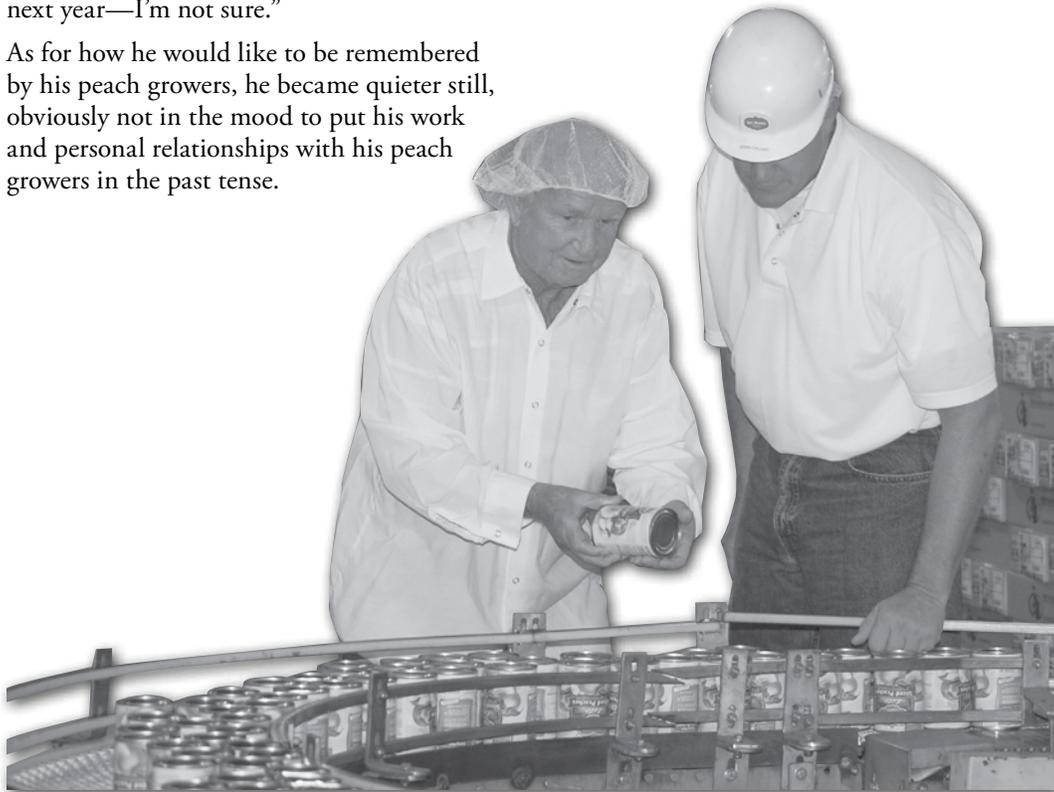
When asked about his eventual departure from Del Monte, Avon grew even quieter, ready to close the interview and get back to work. “I don’t know when my exact retirement will be,” he said. “Maybe I’ll leave next year—I’m not sure.”

As for how he would like to be remembered by his peach growers, he became quieter still, obviously not in the mood to put his work and personal relationships with his peach growers in the past tense.

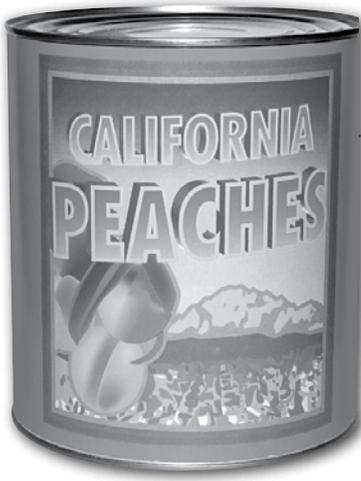


*Janet Sanchez, Bill Bennett, Avon, Juanita Longshore, Brian Okland.*

“I guess I would like them to remember me as honest, friendly and helpful,” said the modest man with the distinctively immodest name. “But how they will remember me is for them to decide.”



**Walking through Del Monte’s plant with Avon is like accompanying a legendary figure, which many argue, he is.**



## California Cling Peach Board 2011-2012 Domestic Promotions Snapshot

By Ginny Hair, Echo Communications

**W**hile the peach harvest was in full swing, the California Cling Peach Board kicked off the 2011-2012 Domestic Promotions Campaign. Here are a few snapshots of campaign highlights as of the end of September.

### School Nutrition Association & Best Show Ever for Canned Peaches

The Annual School Nutrition Association Conference took place in Nashville this year from July 10th through July 13th, and by all accounts, was the busiest school foodservice show in years (attendees were up 67% over 2010). This outreach event is the largest influencer event for the school foodservice sector with over 4,100 professional attendees. Prior to the show, the Agency partnered with all three canned processors (2011 was PCP's "debut" SNA show) to ensure participation across the board and to co-create a show marketing program that would increase visibility for canned peaches, encourage nutrition conversations, and promote sales of canned peaches. Strategically located in Produce Row, the California Cling Peach Board led a coordinated marketing effort aimed at repositioning CA canned peaches as "locally grown, locally packed," nutrient-dense peaches.

As our luck would have it, the exposition company lost a number of exhibitors' shipments, including all the Board's canned peaches. The Agency then set out to purchase as many canned peaches from the greater Nashville area, and our shopping journey took us to Kroger, WalMart, and Target.

When Ginny Hair opened the first can of the Market Pantry brand from Target, the green colored fruit gave it away: these were peaches from China. The Agency served the CA peaches as samples (purchased under the Kroger, Libby and Del Monte labels) and put the Chinese peaches on display adjacent to the beautiful product from our CA processors. This "show and tell" approach led to hours of conversations over the course of the conference. (Upon return from Nashville, the Agency shared the terrific response with Rich Hudgins, shipped him materials from the show, along with a can of the Target peaches. Together with the Association, the CCPB is launching a "Target Target" campaign. See subhead later in article.)

*Other show highlights include:*

### Key Nutrition Messages:

- OSU Study shows canning increases key nutrients
- CA canned peaches are higher in antioxidants, Vitamin C and 10X higher in Folate
- Grown on generations-old family farms
- Kid-friendly, mom-approved
- Year-round nutrition
- Grown in the USA
- Picked and packed at peak of freshness

As our luck would have it, the exposition company lost a number of exhibitors' shipments, including all the Board's canned peaches.



## Key Marketing Messages:

- Bring more family-grown fruits into school lunches
- Schools can save \$'s with CA canned peaches
- Visit our processors' booths for SNA show specials
- CA canned peaches make "Great Cents"
- CA canned peaches are packed with key nutrients
- Buy American

## Key Metrics & Features:

- With approximately 1,000 visitors to our booth, we positively impacted menuing and ordering practices with school districts across the nation
- 800 "I Heart CA Peaches" Nutrition shopping bags were given away @ 4 booth locations
- These "green," reusable shopping bags now serve as "bag billboards," reaching thousands of consumers each week, promoting CA canned peach nutrition, [www.calclingpeach.com](http://www.calclingpeach.com) and @ [calclingpeach](https://twitter.com/calclingpeach) via Twitter
- 800 "Peach Nutrition News" handouts were given across 4 booth locations
- 79 more directors, representing tens of thousands of school lunches each month, signed The Peach Pledge, pledging to increase servings of canned peaches on school menus

## Key Features:

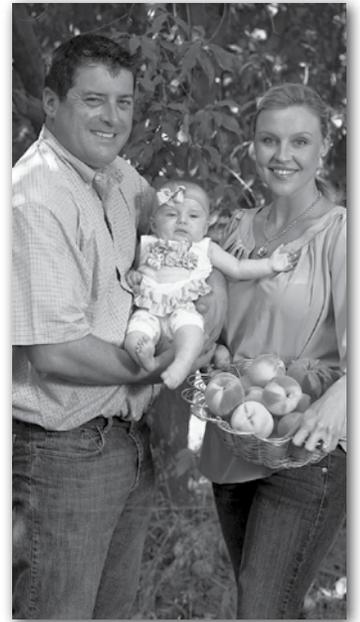
- CA Peaches vs. Chinese Peaches (Target private label) comparison
- Revised OSU booth banner graphics
- CA peach sampling
- CA peach smoothie handouts & Peach Pal giveaways

## "Target" Target Campaign

The Agency is working with the CCPA on a "Target" Target campaign to educate consumers about what's inside Target's private label (Market Pantry) peaches. At the writing of this article, the Agency has received sign-off from Dennis Manderfield of the CDEA, who confirmed that the "CDEA is comfortable with you tweeting your CA Cling Peach followers about this. Additionally, CDEA is comfortable with you including a link on the CCPB's homepage so that consumers can easily send an e-mail to Target's buyers about this matter." To date, the Agency has launched a social media campaign, and is actively retweeting press supporting the "Target" Target campaign (e.g. the October Sacramento Bee article), and is featuring the campaign on the [www.calclingpeach.com](http://www.calclingpeach.com) homepage. Get involved. Tell your family, friends and fellow growers to send Target an email letting them know to only buy CA peaches. Every consumer counts!

## California Country Magazine

As peach harvest was winding up, Justin Micheli and family, Anthony Laney and family, as well as Angelo Micheli of Pasquini's Restaurant were kind enough to peel off a few hours one early morning to work with the Agency and Barbara Arciero of California Country Magazine on a story about California's Cling Peaches. Barbara wanted to feature a local chef using canned peaches, so Pasquini's and the extended Micheli-Laney clan were a natural choice. Justin and Cassandra Micheli's new baby, Olivia, was as sweet as they come, posing without a fuss for various shots. Anthony's kids: Jack and Sofia were terrific as well, and as you can see by the photo of Jack: lovers of cling peaches too! This feature is the first of several media features the Agency is working on to spotlight CA Cling Peach growers, peach nutrition, and the importance of Buying American to the greater consumer audience. Circulation of the publication is 50,000; reaching an estimated 150,000 readers. The Agency has also secured a CA Country television piece for next year.



*Justin Micheli and family*



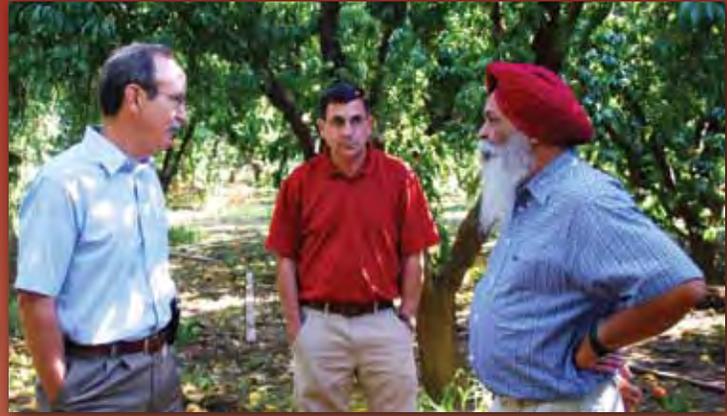
*Jack Laney*

*Continued on page 16*

# Spotlight Album



*Balbir Sohal*



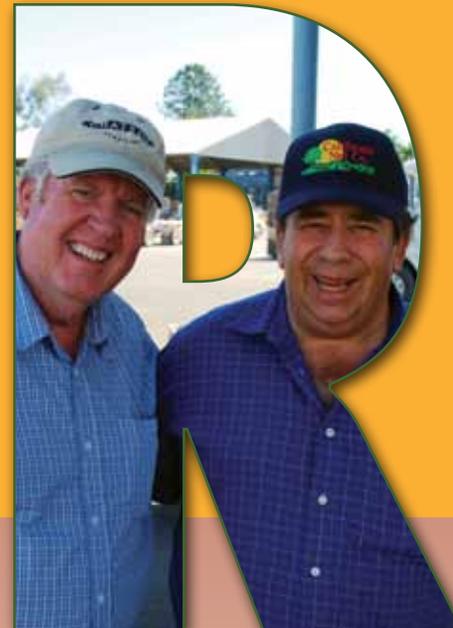
*Rich Hudgins, Gary Darpinian, and Rajinder Chohan*



**H:** *Christine Ivory and Richard Harp*



**A:** *Pete Martini*



**R:** *John Starn and Jim Tavernas*



*Doug Kajioka*



*Norm Kline*



*Dan Stephens*



*Jivan Bihala*



*Paul Muradian*



*Manjit Gosal and Surjit Gill*



*Jeff Cederlind*



**V:** *Simon Sibota*



**E:** *Kuldip Madare*

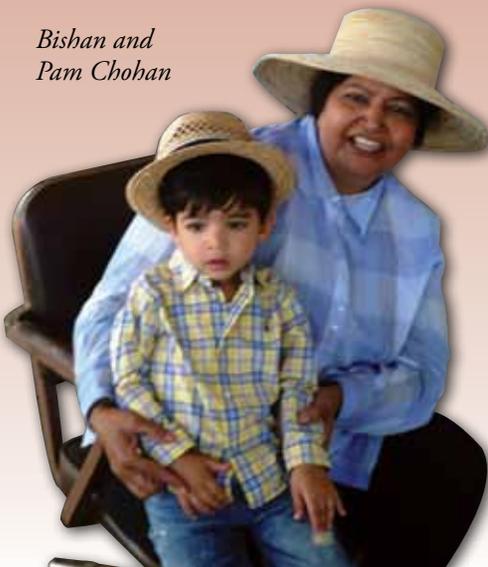


**S:** *Ranjit Davit*



**T:** *Harley Freeman*

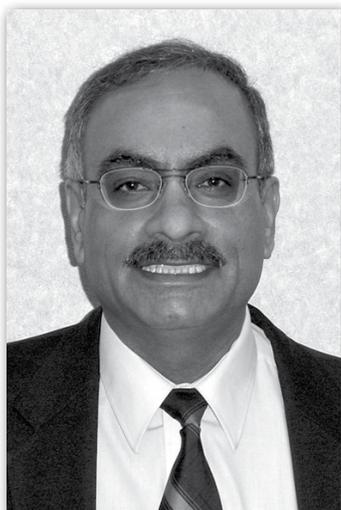
*Bishan and Pam Chohan*



*Sarab Thiara and Sarab Johl*



*Akram Khan*



Ajayab Dhaddey



Brian Sowden

**We had 8,550 tons of unsold fruit and we were able to place all of it with processors.**

## Northern District

**P**each harvest of 2011 was definitely a season of question, coming into the season with high pre-thin estimates (439,051) and a high case inventory. Could this be another bumper crop? However, with the strong weather conditions we experienced in June, which brought rain, hail and a small tornado in the northern sections. The question of a bumper crop was answered.

Going back to our full bloom on March 14th which was two days after last years seemed like a lighter set, yet enough to set a crop. Our May 23rd reference date was one day before last year's with a size of 35.8mm compared to last years 35.9mm. The rainfall for the year was recorded at 25.62 inches, which is a little over 3 inches above normal.

The CCPA pre-thinning estimate for the Yuba/Sutter area was 225,607 tons, a 14% increase from last years (197,496) delivered tons. The Block x Block estimate came out at 207,327 tons and the actual delivery was 195,071 tons. Statewide the pre-thinning estimate was 439,051 tons, Block x Block at 417,067 tons and CASS 430,000 tons. The actual delivery was 391,367 tons.

The harvest started with Loadels on July 16 which was one day later than last year and ended on September 15 also one day later than last year. Total off-grade was low except for the fact of the hail damaged fruit around Lomo, with PCP being affected the most. However, the fruit looked better than anticipated, but was not holding up after harvest in storage. As the harvest progressed in the north the Extra Earlys were down 19%, Earlys 9% and Lates 1%. The Extra Lates ended at 102%.

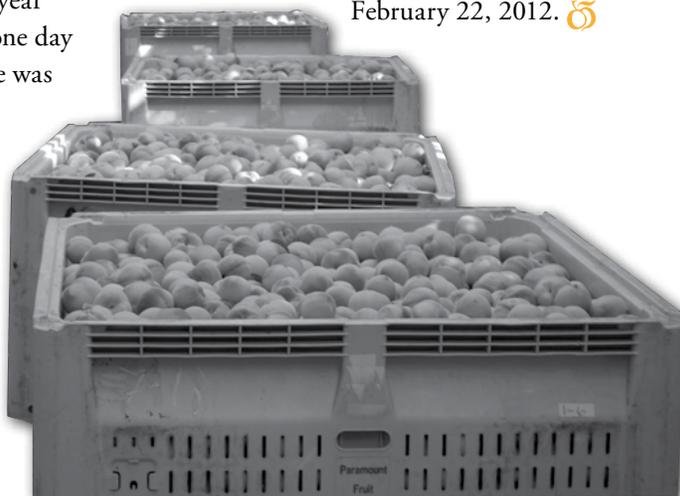
The total crop (195,071 tons) was down 6% from the Block x Block estimate (207,327 tons) in the North.

This year we had 8,550 tons of unsold fruit and we were able to place it all with processors. Wawona purchased 2,655 tons, Tree Top (Sabroso) purchased 3,510 tons and PCP and Dole came in later in the season to purchase 2,380 tons out of the unsold pool.

Also this year labor became a factor, some growers faced hard times and had to pay more than usual in some cases to harvest. The labor became very tight toward the end of season.

Since harvest the Yuba /Sutter area has pulled 495 acres. As growers make plans for replanting, we strongly urge that they check with their canner about a contract for acres to be replanted. Growers shouldn't assume that they will automatically get a contract for replanted acreage. There are some contracts that have expired this year and not all will be signed back up by the canners. Do not plant any acres without a contract in 2012!

In conclusion, we would like to thank everyone for a great harvest and we look forward to seeing you at our Annual Meeting in Sacramento on Wednesday, February 22, 2012. 🍑



# Central District

The final rainfall amounts for the 2010-2011 season would come out to be 15.97 inches just below the 16.76 inches we received during the 2009-2010 season. With three inches of rain in March and more than an inch in June plus freezing temperatures in April our central district peach quality would be below normal. Below normal temperatures during the spring and early summer would delay harvest about five days, fruit would have excellent size throughout the season.

Reference date for Modesto would be May 27 this compares to May 28 in 2010. Our reference date sizing would be 37.7mm, nearly the same as in 2010 when our average size was 38.1mm. Growers would do a very good job of thinning this crop knowing that the number two program was going to be more restrictive in 2011.

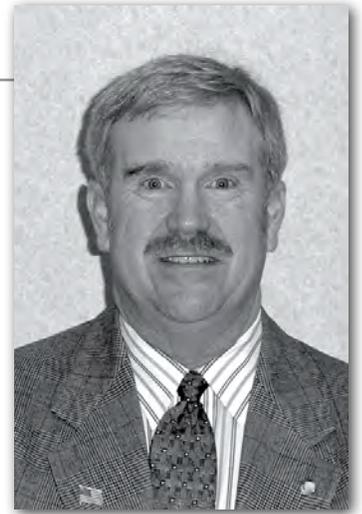
The peach harvest would begin on July 8 with the Ceres Carson that compares to July 7 in 2010. The Loadels would begin on July 12 the same date as last year. Even with below normal quality in the area, the statewide average off grade was 3.12% third lowest

figure in our history. The harvest would end on September 21, five days later than in 2010.

Preliminary tonnage figures indicate that the Stockton district delivered 8,494 tons down 13% from the block by block estimate; with an average yield of 15.4 tons per acre. The Modesto district delivered 144,042 tons down 6% from the block by block estimate; with an average yield of 18.3 tons per acre. Overall statewide tonnage number is 391,355 tons down 6% from the block by block estimate of 417,067; with an average yield of 17.6 tons per acre.

Please report any cling peach pullouts to your local association field office. Currently in the Stockton and Modesto area we have pulled 296 acres.

In conclusion, it appears our over supply problem has corrected itself and all Modesto area growers should have a home for their fruit in 2012. All growers should mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting in Sacramento on Wednesday, February 22, 2012. 🍑



William F. Bryan

All Modesto area growers should have a home for their fruit in 2012.





Steve Mobley

## Southern District

The 2011 Cling Peach crop year experienced another late start (June 21 this year and June 23 in 2010). Our last deliveries were on September 16 this year (one day earlier than 2010). The season started out with a higher than normal amount of small and soft fruit and some uneven fruit maturing that steadily decreased as the season progressed and was replaced with the usual invisible splits and some heat damage in the later varieties.

This year, the Kingsburg area delivered 44,000 tons, down about 26% from last year's 56,000 delivered tons. In addition, Districts 10 & 11 recorded an average yield of 19.5 tons/acre, down 7% from last year's 21.5 ton/acre yield but still 2 tons above the 17.5 tons/acre statewide average. The extra early varieties were significantly below estimates but improved with the early varieties. Lates were slightly below estimates while the extra lates actually met their estimates.

Generally, for the Southern districts, most growers began the season with little concern over the availability of labor as the economy continues to struggle. The costs for labor was fairly consistent with last year's costs. However, some Kingsburg area growers did experience some shortages of labor while competing with the local grape harvests in September.

Due to lower than anticipated tons being delivered, the season did end on a high note with all expiring contracts being offered renewals. Pullouts are expected to be very minimal this off-season with only 15 acres pulled so far; however, if any grower does pull any acreage this winter, please let me know so that we can update our records. I look forward to seeing everyone at our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, February 22, 2012. 🍑

Some Kingsburg area growers did experience some shortages of labor while competing with the local grape harvest in September.



## Mechanized Harvest Research Continues

**T**he Good Fruit Grower magazine recently featured an article which highlights the new vacuum assisted fruit harvester developed by Michigan-based DBR Conveyor Concepts. This unit was evaluated in Washington State this September and the Canning Peach Mechanization Research Fund is currently working on arrangements to test this unit during the 2012 cling peach harvest in California.

*Excerpts of the Good Fruit Grower article are reprinted as follows:*

An apple harvest prototype machine that's part of a national research effort to automate specialty crop production was put to test in Pacific Northwest orchards during the 2011 harvest. The vacuum system apple harvester, designed by Michigan's DBR Conveyor Concepts, has been tested in eastern U.S. orchards, but its arrival in Washington State at the end of September marked the start of the machine's first trials in large-scale West Coast orchards.

The machine is a combination of machinery fabrication know-how and farmer ingenuity. Phil Brown of Phil Brown Welding in Conklin, Michigan, came up with the original concept. Michigan fruit growers Mike Rasch and Chuck Dietrich joined with Brown to commercialize the harvester under the name DBR Conveyor Concepts.

Both Brown and Rasch demonstrated the harvester in a Washington research orchard during a late-September technology field day sponsored by Washington State University.

The harvester is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded project Comprehensive Automation for Specialty Crops. The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission is also funding the harvester project. WSU Extension Specialist Karen Lewis is evaluating the machine for fruit quality and bruising, along with other attributes, like picker efficiencies. Bruising that could occur from harvesting machines has been a concern of growers. She also hopes to test the machine under nighttime harvest conditions.

### Farmer friendly

After testing in Pennsylvania and Michigan orchards last year, the DBR apple harvester underwent several changes to make it more farmer-friendly, Brown said during the field day demonstration. The Washington unit is pulled by a tractor, to save the expense of a self-propelled machine, and runs off the tractor's PTO hydraulics. The four-worker platform can be adjusted to fit 9- to 14-foot-wide row spacings. Units developed for Michigan have a wider platform reach to accommodate the industry's wider row spacings of up to 18 feet.



Photo by M.I.Hansen, Good Fruit Grower

*A four-person picking crew can have two on the ground or all four on the platform, but each pick into their own tube.*

**An apple harvest prototype machine that's part of a national research effort to automate specialty crop production was put to test in Pacific Northwest orchards during the 2011 harvest.**

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## California Cling Peach Board

*Continued from page 9*



*Rich Hudgins and Bill Hammerstrom working in the Del Monte booth at ADA show.*

### Del Monte Foods Hosts CA Cling Peach Board at the American Dietetic Association Annual Show

As a result of several conversations the Agency had with Del Monte's Dietitian, Sarah Ludmer and Dr. Larry Hawley, Director of Nutrition and Regulatory Affairs, the Board was asked to participate at the company's ADA booth. The Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibit took place in San Diego this year from September 25th through 27th. This outreach event is the largest influencer event Del Monte participates in with over 8,000 professional attendees. The Agency recommended featuring a Del Monte grower at the booth to better "tell the story" of Del Monte's commitment to procuring and packing CA Cling Peaches. Del Monte asked grower Bill Hammerstrom to attend, and the Agency developed signage and handouts promoting Bill as one of the many local growers who supply Del Monte. Ginny Hair and Rich Hudgins worked with the nutrition and marketing team for two intensive days,

visiting with dietitians and nutrition media about peach nutrition, the importance of buying American, and the added sugar vs. juice issue. In fact, Bill and Rich led the "Peach Challenge," encouraging dietitians to try Del Monte's juice pack vs. their extra light syrup pack. The tasting results were split about 50/50, but Rich and Bill were able to make the point that each should purchase the one they prefer best, as the sugars content was exactly the same: 14 grams. Ginny worked with Senior Marketing Manager, Jennifer Galasso to hand out the popular Del Monte "Teaching Tool Plates" that clearly showed that half your plate needs to be made up of veggies and fruits.

The Agency was extremely pleased to have this opportunity to showcase CA Cling Peaches and one of the Board's growers at the 2011 ADA show. Based on the tremendous feedback from dietitians and the timing of the upcoming nutrition publication, the Agency plans to book the CCPB for next year's ADA show slated for October 6th-9th in Pennsylvania.

In an email blast, Sarah Ludmer thanked team peach: Rich, Ginny and Bill Hammerstrom (and Bill Ferriera of the Apricot Producers), noting "they dedicated many hours at our booth and we would not have been so successful without them."

Dr. Larry Hawley, Director of Nutrition and Regulatory Affairs, had this to say about the Board's support:

"Del Monte is committed to helping consumers understand their food – what it is, what's in it, where it comes from and how to use it to make healthy meals for themselves and their families. The California Cling Peach Board has been a valuable ally in that commitment and we greatly appreciated their help at the recent ADA FNCE in San Diego, where Rich Hudgins and Ginny Hair helped visitors to the Del Monte Booth take the "Peach Challenge" and learn about the different kinds of canned peaches Del

**"Del Monte is committed to helping consumers understand their food – what it is, what's in it, where it comes from and how to use it to make healthy meals for themselves and their families."**

Monte offers. Ginny was also instrumental in bringing Bill Hammerstrom, a 3rd generation peach grower for Del Monte, to our ADA booth. Bill helped visitors to the booth understand that the peaches that Del Monte uses really are grown locally to our plants and that Del Monte and our growers really do care about good growing practices and the quality of the fruit we use to make our canned peaches. We think the Del Monte booth - and our terrific California-grown peaches - made a big impression on the thousands of dieticians in attendance at FNCE San Diego, and Rich, Ginny and Bill were a big part of making that happen.”

The Board would like to in turn thank Del Monte for their partnership, hospitality and great work!

### Leveraging Electronic Media:

**PEACH PRESS:** The ever-popular “Peach Press” kicked off this school year with a feature by CCPB Board Chairman, Sarb Johl, and our returning columnist Roberta Duyff, R.D., encouraging our growing list of subscribers to purchase CA canned peaches for this school year.

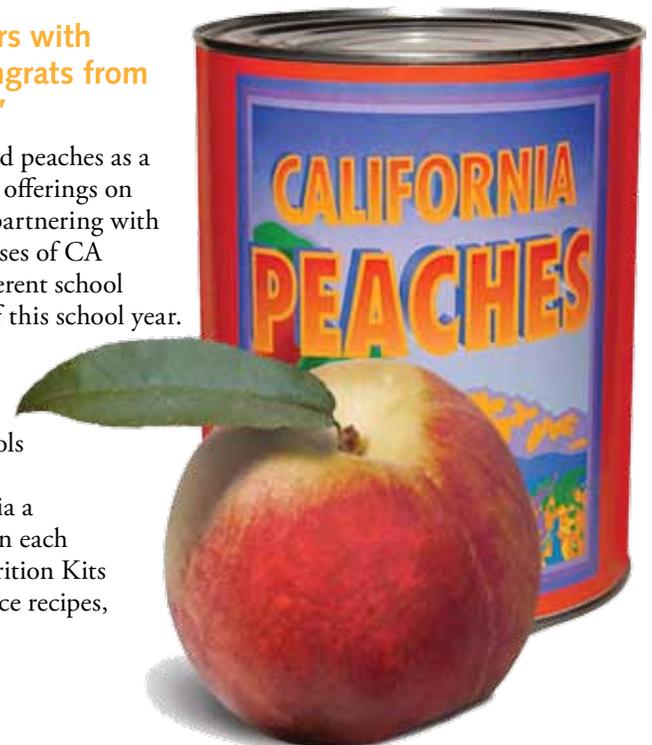
**TWITTER:** The California Cling Peach Board’s Twitter account, CaClingPeach, was started in June 2009. Over the course of the past two years, the account has grown to 546 followers, has reached over 500,000 consumers (including list followers), and features tri-weekly scheduled postings plus additional “conversation” postings to active followers. Some key followers include InspiredRD (3,625 followers), KnowaCaFarmer (1,110 followers), MrsButtersworth (2,866 followers), and EatRight (5,501 followers). All of these accounts have involved us in their postings – giving the CaClingPeach account even further reach. For example, MrsButtersworth posted/retweeted the CaClingPeach suggestion to add cling peaches on top of pancakes – which went out to all 2,866 of their followers.

**YAHOO’S SHINE:** Registered Dietitian and Association Nutrition Editor at EatingWell Magazine – Kerri-Ann Jennings – released an article on Shine from Yahoo\* on August 1st. The article, “How to get all your fruit and vegetables for \$2.25 a day,” included canned peaches as a good dessert option and listed a half-cup serving as costing only 29 cents. This article was shared on social networking sites – over 100 shares on Facebook and 9 on Twitter and cultivated 34 comments. Jennings is quoted as saying “Produce delivers important nutrients, such as vitamins and fiber, as well as phytochemicals that may protect us against a host of chronic diseases.” Jennings explains how she often hears “healthy food is expensive,” but shows it is possible to fit in 4 ½ servings of fruits and veggies for the price of a bag of chips or a soda by including a list of the cost of fruits and veggies. For the full article, please visit: <http://yhoo.it/qBGEG7>. (Shine from Yahoo has 32.6 million unique users visit per day and is aimed at young females ages 18-49 and “online moms.”)

### Let’s Move Salad Bars with California Fruit “Congrats from CCPB Nutrition Kits”

In order to position canned peaches as a welcome addition to fresh offerings on salad bars, the Agency is partnering with processors to deliver 75 cases of CA canned peaches to 75 different school districts over the course of this school year. Starting in October, the Agency worked with Seneca to have the first 25 shipments sent to schools that had recently received “Let’s Move Salad Bars” via a grant program. Included in each shipment were Peach Nutrition Kits featuring school foodservice recipes, peach nutrition facts, and more!

The Board would like to in turn thank Del Monte for their partnership, hospitality and great work!



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## California Cling Peach Board

*Continued from page 17*

**Upon acceptance, the Agency will launch the first in a series of press releases, along with a Peach Nutrition Kit to the national media, promoting the nutritional benefits of CA canned peaches.**

### **Peach Nutrition Study—OSU Finalizing Internal Review; National Media Campaign Set**

The Agency worked with Bob Durst at OSU this July and August to finalize the Peach Nutrition Study for final peer review within the University and for journal submission. At the writing of this article, the study is undergoing its fourth and final internal peer review before being submitted to two leading journals—Journal of Food Science and Journal of Agricultural & Food Chemistry. Upon acceptance, the Agency will launch the first in a series of press releases, along with a Peach Nutrition Kit to the national media, promoting the nutritional benefits of CA canned peaches. As a part of the Peach Nutrition Campaign, the Agency is also at work drafting a “white paper” that spotlights OSU’s findings, while framing them within a larger, historical context of existing nutrition science and government dietary guidelines.

### **Processor Partnership**

The California Cling Peach Board is committed to partnering with all of our processors to support their marketing efforts. Would you like a grower and a CCPB representative to attend an upcoming tradeshow? We can make that happen. Need grower profiles written for your website? Call us! Looking for marketing materials for your sales force? A CCPB update at your next board meeting? Just let us know. The California Cling Peach Board is here to support our processor partners in promoting our terrific product. Please call Ginny Hair, Echo Communications, to discuss your request with her: 510-654-5400.

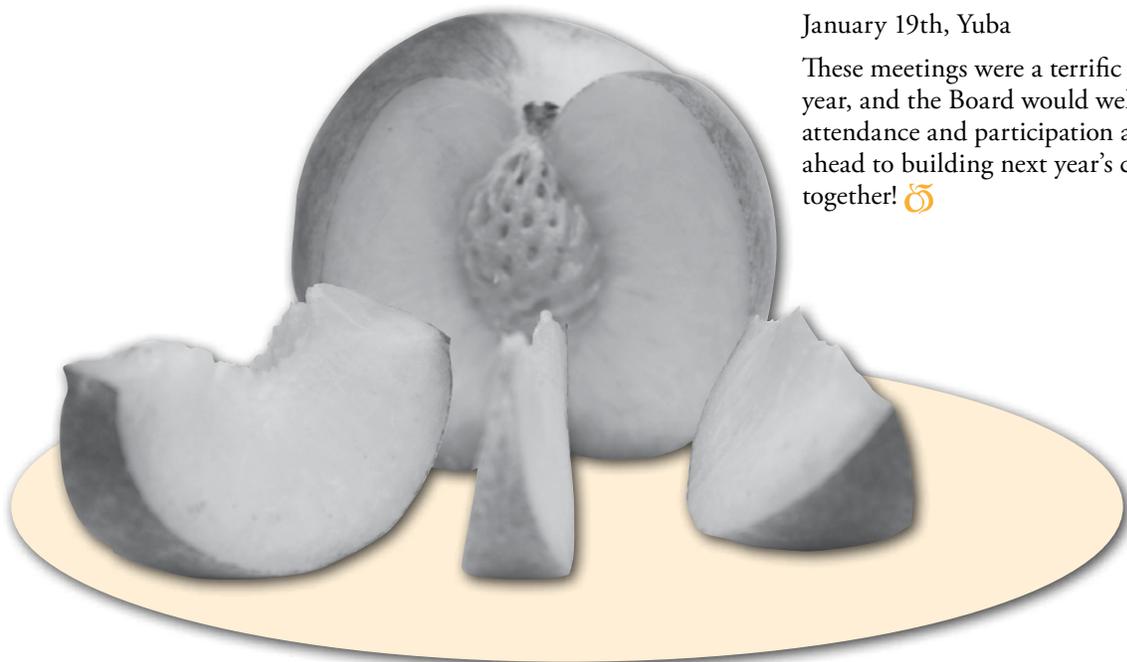
### **Want More Information?**

Please come for a detailed presentation on the 2011-2012 Domestic Promotions Campaign at the next Growers Meeting. Tentative dates are:

December 13th, Modesto

January 19th, Yuba

These meetings were a terrific success last year, and the Board would welcome your attendance and participation as we look ahead to building next year’s campaign, together! 🍑



## Mechanized Harvest Research Continues

*Continued from page 15*

Control levers enable workers to widen or narrow their platform to best reach the fruit. Apples picked are placed in a hose lined with quarter-inch neoprene foam and moved by vacuum to the dry-system decelerator. The patented decelerator is a large wheel with foam wedges that controls and extracts the apples out of the vacuum environment, Rasch said. The maximum apple diameter that can be accommodated by the machine is 4.5 inches.

Apples are gently distributed in the bin by large neoprene foam flaps dubbed “elephant ears) by Penn State researchers, Rasch said. An electric eye moves the bin filler up and down.

Four empty bins on a trailer follow the harvester. Filled bins are discharged onto the ground, with a fresh, empty bin put in its place.

Though special skill isn't needed to pick and place the apples in the hose inlet, timing of apple placement in the tubes is important, Rasch said. “The singulation (time between each apple) must be coordinated between picks,” he said, adding that three-fourths of a second is needed between each apple to keep them from bumping into each other as they move through the tube. “If you put sixty apples in the tube within 10 seconds, you'd have bruising.”

### Picker efficiency

How does the machine compare to traditional ladder and bag picking?

An average picker using a ladder can pick a bin of fruit per hour, which equates to about 40 bins for a crew of four in a 10-hour day. Rasch believes that to make the harvest machine cost effective, the four-person crew

must pick a bin every 10 minutes, a speed he considers doable because ladders, picking bags, and walking to and from the bin are all eliminated. That would be six bins an hour or 60 bins in a 10-hour day.

Only 1.3 seconds are needed to pick an apple and bring it to the tube inlet, so picking efficiency could be faster than six bins per hour, he said. “The speed of the machine will always be as fast as your slowest worker on the crew.”

### Versatility

Once a harvest is over, the picking apparatus can be replaced with a regular platform, and the machine used for pruning, limb tying, thinning, and other orchard chores, explains Brown, adding that four workers can be situated on each side.

“Basically, it's a year-round machine,” Brown said. “That makes it real versatile and gives it a quick payback.”



*Mike Rasch (with microphone) describes how the apple harvester works as Phil Brown makes adjustments on the platform.*



Photo by M.Hansen, Good Fruit Grower

*The decelerator has a large wheel inside with foam wedges to remove apples from the vacuum environment. Large elephant ears of foam gently distribute apples in the bin.*

**“The speed of the machine will always be as fast as your slowest worker on the crew.”**

Photo by M.Hansen, Good Fruit Grower



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**90<sup>th</sup>**  
Annual Meeting

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February  
22, 2012  
4pm

See You at the Sacramento Hilton!