



**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Walnut Buying Period Declared

Stanislaus County - Stanislaus County's walnut buying period will officially begin November 4, 2014 and will end on April 30, 2015. The buying period is declared after consultation with the walnut industry and coincides with the completion of the walnut harvest.

The announcement, made by Agricultural Commissioner Milton O'Haire, is part the Purchase and Sale of Walnuts ordinance adopted July 29, 2014 by the Board of Supervisors. The ordinance is meant to deter the theft of walnuts.

The walnut industry is particularly vulnerable to theft due to the manner in which the nuts are harvested, O'Haire said in a press release. Typically the walnuts are shaken from the trees and left unattended in windrows until they are collected by harvesting equipment. Unfortunately some people steal them from orchards and sell the walnuts illegally.

The ordinance establishes a buying period and requirements regarding the transportation and identification of walnut crops.

During the buying period non-processing walnut buying operations within the county may lawfully purchase and receive walnuts that have not been dried or processed. Non-processing buyers must register with the Agricultural Commissioner's Office prior to commencing buying walnuts.

Any person selling less than 2,000 pounds of walnuts must possess a form of Proof of Ownership approved by the Commissioner at the time of sale. A Proof of Ownership certificate may be obtained free of charge by contacting the Agricultural Commissioner's Office Monday - Friday between 8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. Any person possessing walnuts which will not enter into commerce is exempted from the ordinance.

According to the Stanislaus County 2013 Crop Report there were 37,435 harvested acres in the county with a farm gate value of \$248 million.

More information on the Stanislaus County Purchase and Sale of Walnuts ordinance can be found on the County's website at <http://qcode.us/codes/stanislauscounty/> Title 9 Health and Safety, Chapter 9.48 Purchase and Sale of Walnuts.

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