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News Release

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WALNUT BUYING SEASON BEGINS

Stanislaus County's walnut buying period will officially begin November 8, 2018 and will end on April 30, 2019. The buying period is declared after consultation with the walnut industry and coincides with the completion of the walnut harvest.

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 buying walnuts.

At the time of sale, any person selling less than 2,000 pounds of walnuts must possess a form of Proof of Ownership approved by the Commissioner. 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 that will not enter into commerce is exempted from the ordinance.

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

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

"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. Over the last several years the ordinance has had an impact in lowering the reported incidence of walnut theft. This year's lower price for walnuts may also be a deterrent in reported walnut theft.

According to the Stanislaus County 2017 Crop Report there were 36,618 harvested acres in the County with a farm gate value of \$164 million.

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

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