



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Contact: Milton O'Haire
Agricultural Commissioner
Phone: (209) 525-4730**

Walnut Buying Period Declaration

Stanislaus County's walnut buying period will officially begin November 3, 2019 and will end on April 30, 2020.

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.

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 which will not enter into commerce is exempted from the Purchase and Sale of Walnuts ordinance adopted by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors in July, 2014.

"The ordinance establishes a buying period and requirements regarding the transportation and identification of walnut crops. It also works to deter the theft of walnuts, an industry particularly vulnerable to theft due to the manner in which the nuts are harvested," said Agricultural Commissioner Milton O'Haire.. 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 to sell illegally. Over the last several years the ordinance has had an impact in lowering the reported incidence of walnut theft.

According to the Stanislaus County 2018 Crop Report there were 37,468 harvested acres in the county with a farm gate value of \$103 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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