



ALMOND VARIETY MARKET CLASSIFICATION

Due to changes in the varieties produced within the industry, some older varieties are contributing very low volumes to the overall production and marketing numbers. At the same time newer varieties have come into production. Based on current marketing conditions, the Almond Board industry has re-evaluated how varieties are currently grouped for marketing purposes and has updated the market classifications. Because the market classification affects the price received, it is important for growers to consult their handler before planting and delivering new varieties. It is also important not to mix varieties at harvest even when these varieties are in the same marketing category, as this will make handling more difficult and will reduce marketability and value.

- Only varieties producing in excess of 1,000,000 pounds will be listed. Other varieties that are not listed are still produced; if you have any questions about where they are classified for marketing purposes, please contact your handler.
- Marketing classifications are grouped by general size and shape.
- Whether varieties are able to be blanched is an important issue and is a factor for the “California” classification. Since almost all varieties can be blanched with different degrees of effort and success, please contact your handler to discuss whether a variety is “blanchable”. You will note that some varieties fall into more than one classification since they have characteristics of one type (such as Mission), but are also blanchable (a requirement of the California classification).

Of the five classifications listed, most almond production falls into the three major classifications of Nonpareil, California, and Mission. Beyond these standard classifications there are numerous “minor varieties” whose use, and therefore market classification, will vary among almond handlers. The physical characteristics of some varieties vary from year to year, which also may affect how they are marketed.

It is important to remember that these classifications are for reference only. Your handler can provide specific information since they may classify market varieties differently:

Marketing Classifications Almond Varieties Producing >1,000,000 pounds

<u>Nonpareil</u>	<u>-----California-----</u>	<u>Mission</u>	<u>NePlus</u>	<u>Inshell-Hardshell</u>
Nonpareil	Aldrich	Mono	Butte	NePlus
	Avalon	Padre	Butte/Padre	Peerless
	Butte	Price	Fritz	
	Butte/Padre	Sonora	Mission	
	Carmel	Thompson	Padre	
	Fritz	Wood Colony	Ruby	
	Livingston			
	Monterey			

Some varieties can also be considered as “California” classification due to blanching considerations.

Nonpareil Classification – This is the Nonpareil variety, which has the widest range of uses of all the marketing categories -- from use as whole natural kernels to manufactured products. The attractive kernels are a medium shape and size, uniform, fairly flat and light (blond) colored. Nonpareil is often used where the nut is visible and also in manufactured products because the kernels are readily blanched and/or mechanically cut to produce a variety of forms. Furthermore, the thin shell allows maximum yield of undamaged kernels after cracking. Nonpareil is the major producing variety of the California almond industry. Because Nonpareil receives a premium price, it is most critical that this variety not be delivered mixed with any other varieties.

California Classification - This marketing classification was established in June 1972 by the USDA, Federal-State Inspection Service, Sacramento, at the request of the almond industry.

In addition to the varieties displayed on Page 1, the variety Nonpareil may be included in the "California" classification but not to exceed 25 percent by weight of the lot. All varieties in the "California" classification shall be blanchable. Further, with the exception of the variety Nonpareil, other varieties included in the "California" classification shall not be permitted in the Nonpareil classification.

This group has become the marketing outlet for kernels of many almond varieties with a wide range of shapes and sizes. Despite this diversity, the almonds in this classification must be blanchable. More notable among the varieties classified as California are varieties like Carmel, which is a relatively long, narrow, large, light colored kernel. Some processors are offering Carmel as a separate item and this action is based on sufficient volume received, handling and processing facilities which can accommodate such a separation, and marketing opportunities. Also as mentioned above, caution must be exercised by growers not to deliver mixed varieties -- even when they are in the same market classification like California.

Mission Classification - Mission type kernels are small, wide and often thick (plump) and their pellicles (skins) are brown. Blanching is not a criteria, and in fact, this group is often used as whole brown-skin forms.

Neplus Classification - Most NePlus is used for manufactured products. The NePlus kernel is long, narrow and large and has a brown colored pellicle.

Inshell-hardshell Classification - Peerless is the principal variety sold to consumers as an inshell-hardshell product. These inshell varieties are characterized by an attractive closed shell with a firm outer "cork", which both protects the kernel against worm damage and other contamination. The inshell-hardshell market is firmly established but has a relatively limited volume in relation to other marketing outlets.

Variety	California Type	Mission Type	Nonpareil	Neplus	Inshell Hardshell	Long & Flat	Short & Plump
Aldrich	✓					✓	
Avalon	✓					✓	
Butte	✓	✓					✓
Butte/Padre	✓	✓					✓
Carmel	✓					✓	
Fritz	✓	✓					✓
Livingston	✓					✓	
Mission		✓					✓
Mono	✓					✓	
Monterey	✓					✓	
Neplus				✓		✓	
Nonpareil			✓			✓	
Padre	✓	✓					✓
Peerless	✓				✓	✓	
Price	✓					✓	
Ruby		✓					✓
Sonora	✓					✓	
Thompson	✓					✓	
Wood Colony	✓					✓	