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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Positive News & Opportunities at 54th Annual  
Membership Meeting***

**YUBA CITY, CA, July 27, 2023** – The 54th Annual Membership Meeting of the Prune Bargaining Association (PBA) and 9th Annual Membership meeting of the California Prune Growers Marketing Association (CPGMA) provided PBA prune growers with perspective on current field prices for prunes and positive market news along with guidance on harvest timing, and screening (or not screening) small prunes.

California prune production last year is expected to reach only 75,000 tons, down from 82,000 tons in 2021. Prunes smaller than 80 count initially ran only 7% of the crop compared to 13% in 2021. The sharp reduction in smaller sizes prompted some packers to buy up small prunes from growers and resulted in modest field price increases on some small sizes by most packers.

CPGMA and one independent packer, however, returned sharply higher prices, with the CPGMA returning \$800 more per ton compared to what most packers paid growers for small prunes. One medium size independent packer again returned much higher prices than other packers on 80 and smaller fruit with similar returns to CPGMA and even higher prices on some smaller prunes than the suggested PBA price schedule.

PBA Manager, Greg Thompson, pointed out that keeping focus on producing high quality larger fruit matches California markets. Crops that average in the average size count range of 55 to 60 produces the most pitting sizes for our industry. The higher costs and higher risks of that focus, however, require higher field prices for large prunes.

For the 2022 crop, the PBA recommended \$2,700 per ton on 60 and larger prunes, with a price schedule that would return an average of \$2,400 to \$2,500 per ton. Most packers paid prices of no more than \$2,300 or \$2,400 per ton on large prunes with an average return of \$2,000 to \$2,100 per ton. One small packer included in the PBA Field Price comparison, however, paid \$3,000 per ton on 60 and larger fruit with an average return of \$2,300 to \$2,400.

PBA members have access to information and marketing options for smaller prunes through the PBA and the CPGMA which helps reduce risk for growers and improves profitability. As growers face decisions about harvest decisions and marketing their prunes, PBA members are encouraged to view the annual meeting presentation which is posted in the members' section on the PBA website. Members are encourage to look at the PBA field price comparison by packer name along with information on small prunes and marketing opportunities through the CPGMA.

Members can find information in 'Field Prices, Small Prunes, Screening Decisions, & Marketing Opportunities with CPGMA' and 'PBA Annual Membership Meeting 2023 Pricing Report' under the 'Members' Only' password protected section found at [prunebargaining.com](http://prunebargaining.com).