



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Green Almonds 'Missing' From California Orchards

NEWMAN, CALIF. - April 20, 2006. Even though California's 2006 almond crop is just taking shape in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, a surprising number of green almonds seem to be missing. Actually, it can't be helped. Growing demand for immature green almonds as a garnish and gourmet ingredient has created a "fresh" market for the almond as a hand-picked delicacy – long before the normal harvest begins in August.

Unlike the familiar brown-skin almond with the solid white center, green almonds are harvested during a short period from late April to early June, when the almond has a fresh green color inside and out, and a jelly-like center with unique flavor. Their popularity with chefs as a garnish, as an ingredient in salads and soups, and even as a green almond paste for pastry decoration in Europe, has sent producers like Stewart & Jasper of Newman, California into their orchards to hand-pick almonds for the specialty food market.

Jason Jasper, company vice president, says "Demand for green almonds has grown steadily in the past several years, until now it is hard for us to ignore as an important new application for our California almonds. It's the 'fresh-fruit' version of a product that usually needs another 3-months before arriving to market."

Green almonds are sold in the hull, to preserve their freshness. The delicate green kernel is wrapped naturally in a soft green, fuzzy hull that is similar to an immature green peach in spring. The texture of the almond itself, in its green gelatinous form, is sometimes compared to a grape.

Long popular in the Mediterranean and Europe - where the green almond is found in salads and as a garnish - it is now more often found in the best kitchens and restaurants from San Francisco to New York. While the flavor of green almonds is hard to categorize, it is often described as delicate, grassy, fruity, and "fresh".

Green almonds can be soaked in brine or milk to soften them for snacking. They can be shaved, sliced, or used whole in soups or salads, adding a unique flavor and texture.

Stewart & Jasper is one of a very few sources for green almonds, and a long-established source for natural whole almonds. Commercial buyers with an interest in green almonds, either organic or non-organic, should contact them directly at (877) 256-6638. For internet sales, see their website at www.greenalmonds.com.

Green almonds are available in a clamshell pack of 1, 2, or 5-pounds. Restaurant buying programs are available.

For more information, call Stewart & Jasper, (209) 862-9600.