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**Blue Diamond Growers Hosts Ambassador Katherine Tai from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative at Its Sacramento Processing Plant**

*CDFA Secretary Ross and GO-Biz Director Myers host industry roundtable with the Ambassador.*

Sacramento, Calif., September 15, 2023 – Blue Diamond Growers, at the request of Secretary Karen Ross of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), hosted United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai for a tour and roundtable discussion last Friday at its Sacramento headquarters and processing facility. Joining the Ambassador and the Secretary was California Governor Newsom’s Senior Advisor and Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) Director Dee Dee Myers.

Ambassador Tai, Director Myers, and Secretary Ross toured the historic, 60-acre manufacturing facility with Blue Diamond executives, Alicia Rockwell, Mel Machado, and Raj Joshi. The group viewed the almond receiving, storage, processing and shipping areas, seeing firsthand how almonds are prepared for export to the industry’s largest markets – India, China, and the Middle East. Throughout the tour, Blue Diamond operations leaders highlighted the Cooperative’s focus on superior quality and food safety noting that the facility can process up to 2 million almonds per day and conducts 3.3 million safety and quality checks per year.

While tasting the latest innovations in Blue Diamond® snack almonds and Almond Breeze® almondmilk at the world’s only Almond Innovation Center, the officials learned about the ongoing almond harvest, Blue Diamond’s accelerated sustainability practices, and the challenging conditions surrounding the 2023 crop and high grower production costs.

“Almond growers throughout the state are facing compounding challenges in depressed market prices, stalled consumer consumption, and inflationary production costs,” said Alicia Rockwell, Chief Government Affairs Officer, Blue Diamond Growers. “We appreciate the time and attention afforded us by Ambassador Tai and our California officials. Our hope is that continuing education and open discussions like this will accelerate favorable market access and sustain the future of small, family almond farms in California.”

Ambassador Tai concluded her visit with an industry roundtable discussion hosted by CDFA Secretary Ross. The Ambassador, Director Myers and Secretary Ross listened to industry representatives express the importance of protecting the premium on California agriculture in export markets given the advanced environmental, labor and regulatory practices expected of California growers, farmers and ranchers. Ambassador Tai recognized and appreciated the leadership of California agriculture and saw it as a strength when countering non-tariff barriers to market access. Attendees included representatives from the Agricultural Council of California, Almond Board of California, American Pistachio Growers, Blue Diamond Growers, California Apple Commission, California Fresh Fruit Association, California Tomato Growers Association, California Milk Advisory Board, Sunkist Growers and The Wine Institute.

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**About Blue Diamond Growers®**

Blue Diamond Growers, a grower-owned cooperative representing approximately 3,000 of California's almond growers, is the world's leading almond marketer and processor. Established in 1910, it created the California almond industry and opened world markets for almonds. Blue Diamond is dedicated to delivering the benefits of almonds around the world and does so by providing high-quality almonds, almond ingredients and branded products. Headquartered in Sacramento, the company employs more than 1,800 people throughout its processing plants, receiving stations and gift shops. To learn more about Blue Diamond Growers, visit [www.bluediamond.com](http://www.bluediamond.com) and follow the company on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter(X).