NEWS RELEASE

Butte County Department of Agriculture

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Walnut Buying Period for vendors announced

Oroville, October 18, 2013- Today, Butte County Agricultural Commissioner Richard Price announced that October 25th would the beginning of the walnut buying period to allow the purchasing of walnuts by non-processing buyers, according to the Butte County Walnut Theft Ordinance. This period begins at the conclusion of the Chandler Walnut harvest. The harvest completion date is set in consultation with a committee of growers. Sellers of walnuts are still required to provide proof ownership of any nuts they sell and buyers are required to record that proof ownership when purchases are made.

Walnuts are the highest valued crop in Butte County, with 2012 value of $234,540,000. There are 37,970 acres of producing walnuts. There have many incidents of thefts from walnuts shaken from trees unattended into windrows left in the orchards until growers can gather the nuts with harvesting equipment. The intent of this ordinance is deter efforts by individuals to illegally access orchards, collect walnuts and then attempt to sell them. “There has definitely been an increase in illegal nut theft activity due to the increased value of walnuts in recent years” according to Commissioner Price.

The Butte County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted the revised Nut Theft Ordinance on May 7, 2013. The ordinance also provides provisions for proof of ownership while transporting walnuts and eliminates minimum amount of walnuts that requires proof of ownership.

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