

THE AMERICAN EXPORTER

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Volume 19, Issue 2





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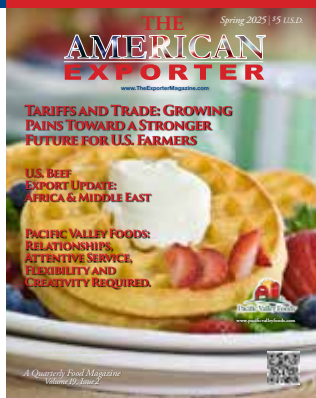


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from the publisher

The Great Trade Wars

One could say that the tariff war started with China and will probably end with China. That isn't necessarily what's starting to emerge. The European Union and the United States are now looking to be the new battle. Potential 50% tariffs maybe imposed July 9th on the EU if certain conditions are not up to par with the Trump administration. China is also on deadline. They have until roughly the end of August to come up with favorable deal or tariffs will go back to 145% threshold. The ironic thing is that the administration is making better progress with China than the EU. Either way, the United States will have a vastly different playing field once the negotiations are complete.

There have been many reports that the trade war was really directed at China and that the rest of countries were collateral damage. From the perspective of our magazine and covering the food and agricultural industry for over 20 years, we tend to agree. Well, up to the point until you really see the tariffs imposed by other countries besides China. To put it simply, it's shocking! From 425% tariffs on US dairy products imposed by Canada to beef products being completely banned in certain countries in Europe and Pacific Rim. To hell with tariffs...your banned period. To make matters worse, the trade war of President Trump's first term was directed at China. They were the "big boys on the block" and the tariffs imposed by China versus the United States was basically a left over from the Cold War in which the Soviet Union was our focus. Fast forward some 50 years and a similar Cold War has emerged with the remaining Communist power and make no mistake...China is still rigid in their belief in that orthodoxy.

President Trump's "Liberation Day" started April 9th but the real trade started with China back in 2017, that was the warm up for the big rumble that's going on right now. The good news for the US food and agricultural industry is that this stuff is old hat. China was one of the hottest markets back in the early teens. China was buying everything including chicken, nuts, dried fruit, and grain products just to name a few. Once candidate Trump was elected President in 2016, his administration immediately homed in on China and the trade imbalance. And so began the major trade wars. The food industry was directly in the path. Products like poultry was banned from the China market and US beef was reduced to a trickle. The nut industry along with the rice industry demand from China evaporated overnight! Companies that shipped 80% of their product to the China market saw it reduced to nothing. For the food and agricultural industry, the trade war began and has not ended. Many companies that appear in this magazine have survived the trade war of 2017 and are "veterans" in dealing with this.

So, when China increased their tariffs to 125% this time around, most of the US suppliers we deal with shrugged. They long ago diversified themselves to new markets and refocused on the domestic demand. In this issue, we focused on the impact of tariffs on 2 industries...California Almonds and US Rice. Please take time to read it because it explains the resiliency of the US food producers. They've been through punitive restrictions to container shortages to complete bans. The US food producer is smart and understands not to put their stock in any single market. The 2017 trade war taught them that lesson. If a company strayed from this strategy, they possibly aren't around anymore. We are still early in the true second round of the great trade wars. This is only an overview of what should be a very interest August and September. Next... we will look at the new "hot" trade war emerging with the EU and where we stand on Canada and Mexico. And with that, I'll see you out on the road somewhere!

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Tariffs and Trade: Growing Pains Toward a Stronger Future for U.S. Farmers

by Courtney Ferris

U.S. tariffs on foreign goods – and the retaliation they’ve sparked – are creating short-term challenges for American farmers. Yet many in agriculture see these disruptions as growing pains on the path to long-term trade stability and stronger global positioning.

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Exports of key commodities like soybeans and pork have dipped significantly in recent months, with U.S. goods exports falling by over 5 percent in May 2025, according to preliminary data from the U.S. Census Bureau and USTR reports.^[1] Countries like China have imposed steep retaliatory tariffs, shifting purchases to alternative suppliers like Brazil and Argentina.^[2] Meanwhile, American farmers are wrestling with rising input costs and tighter margins, creating economic stress in key producing regions like Iowa and Illinois.^[3]

California's specialty crops are also feeling the pressure. Tree nuts – such as almonds, pistachios, and walnuts – have been directly impacted. California almonds, which account for nearly 80 percent of the global supply and generate nearly \$4 billion in export value annually, have faced significant market volatility due to tariffs from China, the EU, and India.^[4] Prices dropped sharply between 2019 and 2023, though they are now slowly rebounding despite ongoing concerns of oversupply, according to the Almond Board of California.^[5]

Pistachio growers have seen some relief thanks to a recent U.S.-China agreement, which reduced retaliatory tariffs from 125 percent to 10 percent, improving export opportunities in Asian markets.^[6] This has renewed optimism for one of California's most profitable specialty crops.

Walnuts, however, remain among the hardest hit. Since 2018, China – formerly the largest importer of California walnuts – has imposed tariffs as high as 75 percent.^[7] In response, China shifted its sourcing to countries with better trade terms, particularly Chile, which benefits from a bilateral free trade agreement.^[8] Australia and Kyrgyzstan have also gained market share.^[9]

Simultaneously, China has dramatically increased its walnut production, now accounting for more

than one-third of global output. In 2024, China harvested over 1.55 million metric tons, largely from Yunnan and Xinjiang provinces, according to the China Nuts Association.^[10] As a result, U.S. in-shell walnut exports to China have fallen by more than 90 percent since 2020, from \$3 million to under \$500,000, reports the California Walnut Commission.^[11] Many growers have been forced to accept below-cost prices or even remove orchards entirely.

Other crops, like processed fruits (e.g., prunes) and lettuce, face pressures from rising labor and water compliance costs, particularly in California, rather than foreign tariffs.^[12] Meanwhile, apple and table grape growers are turning toward emerging Southeast Asian markets, such as Vietnam and Indonesia, to compensate for losses in China.^[13]

Despite the current strain, many farmers and trade experts remain cautiously optimistic. They argue these trade battles are part of a bigger-picture strategy aimed at securing fairer global trade agreements that will ultimately support U.S. agriculture. Emergency

aid from federal programs has helped soften the impact, but the goal remains to build a resilient and balanced trade landscape.^[14]

Importantly, U.S. agriculture continues to benefit from a significant global advantage – quality. American-grown products are internationally known for food safety, reliability, and excellence. While some buyers have shifted in the short term, many global markets still prefer U.S. commodities when available.^[15] The strength of the “American farming brand” remains strong.

However, quality alone isn’t enough to remain competitive. Small and mid-sized farms are adopting new strategies to diversify revenue and improve resilience in an uncertain trade environment. These may include:

- Branding & Direct-to-Consumer Marketing – Using tools like Shopify and Barn2Door to develop farm brands and sell directly.
- Developing Value-Added Products – From nut butter to dried snacks,

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processing adds margin and flexibility.

- Diversifying Export Markets – Focusing on Southeast Asia and India with support from USDA export programs.^[16]
- Leveraging New Technology – Utilizing AgTech and artificial intelligence to create new opportunities for precision farming and improved yields.
- Targeting Niche Markets – Promoting organic, regenerative, or non-GMO characteristics to reach premium buyers.
- Joining Co-ops and Alliances – Focusing on home turf expansion in the U.S.
- Engaging in Policy – Working with trade associations to support pro-agriculture policies.

- Exploring Agritourism – Hosting farm tours and events to bring in supplemental income.

As trade agreements change and global markets stabilize, many believe that the current turmoil could become a turning point. Between ongoing strategic marketing and employing emerging technologies, combined with advocating for pro-farmer policies, American farmers and exporters are positioned to emerge stronger. In the end, the unmatched quality of U.S. agriculture – paired with bold innovation – remains its most powerful global asset.

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U.S. Beef

Export Update: Africa & The Middle East

by Lisa Mooney

It's that time as we start the new year to try new culinary ideas and there isn't a more perfect ingredient to cook with than U.S. Beef.

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Pacific Valley Foods doesn't believe in one size fits all. We believe in the power of personal relationships, attentive service, flexibility and creativity. As a family business we know what it takes to go that extra mile, and we treat everyone we meet as extended family. We believe that means something in an era of high tech, and decreased human interaction. We are celebrating our 50th anniversary this year, which has been achieved through decades of dedication and understanding each customer's unique needs. We have survived and thrived through the challenges of the international food industry, and will continue to supply quality food products to customers in the U.S. and across the globe.

Scott and Lynn Hannah founded the company in 1975. Scott had worked for many years in the food business and knew what it took to create a great product with exceptional service. He knew he had to strike out on his own, so he and Lynn started Pacific Valley Foods in the basement of their modest home. Scott developed a team of brokers to represent the company's frozen vegetable and French fry lines sold to U.S. grocery stores. With young kids under foot, Lynn was given an international lead and through stubborn persistence she started the international division of the company. Pacific Valley Foods soon established itself as an important U.S. supplier while trailblazing the international market, becoming one of the first U.S. companies to export frozen vegetables to Japan. And those young kids under foot? Son John and daughter Susan worked their way up in the company, starting out of college to owning and operating the company. They have continued the legacy of believing in the power of relationships and working with a hands on approach.

Pacific Valley Foods has expanded sales into other Asian markets such as



Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and China. In China we formed an office in Shanghai to provide in country management for a large QSR customer. Just one example of our willingness to go that extra mile to serve our customers! Much of our success has been rooted in creating personal relationships with our customers who are not just colleagues, but friends. We are honored to have been invited into homes to spend time with families, and have maintained close relationships for decades. For Pacific Valley Foods, our relationships with customers and vendors alike are what sets us apart and has earned us the reputation as a company people truly enjoy working with.

From Asia we expanded into other regions such as Mexico, Central and South America, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand. In New Zealand we created an additional office to manage sales to one of the top retailers. Our customers have come to rely on us not only for supplying a wide array of products, but to provide a full range of exceptional services. Whether it is providing required documents, customizing product ingredients, creating foreign labeled packaging, or managing logistics....Pacific Valley Foods can do it all. Our half century in the international industry equates to a wealth of knowledge and experience, earning the trust of



customers across the globe.

From the early days of supplying frozen French fries, fruits, and vegetables, we have expanded our product range to include frozen desserts, frozen appetizers, frozen juice concentrate, frozen tortillas, frozen fruit and yogurt snacks, dehydrated potatoes, canned vegetables, dried fruits, bulk popcorn, dried peas and beans, grated parmesan cheese, and breakfast products. We are excited to be promoting a variety of breakfast items such as frozen hash brown patties, frozen pancakes and frozen waffles. "Breakfast" has become an all day affair with consumers enjoying their favorite breakfast item any time of the day. Our hash brown patties are enjoyed as a side to a meal, or eaten alone as a delicious snack. Frozen pancakes and waffles are an easy, convenient way to make a quick meal or snack without the hassle of starting from scratch. The ease of cooking in a microwave or toaster means an instant meal or snack can be enjoyed in no time at all! Add your favorite toppings for that great homemade taste and appeal. For information on our breakfast items or any other products, please contact us at; (ph) +1-425-643-1805 or susan@pacificvalleyfoods.com. We'd love to hear from you!

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Continued from page 16

According to recent surveys, more people are looking to incorporate high protein foods into their diets this year – going beyond protein powders and bars and prioritizing whole foods such as beef. Along with beef's great taste, it's a protein powerhouse and provides a variety of essential nutrients that support overall health. For example, a 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 10 essential nutrients in about 170 calories, including high-quality protein, zinc, iron and B vitamins.

2024 ended as a strong year for U.S. beef. November exports of U.S. red meat posted year-over-year gains across all categories, according to data released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

From January – November 2024, exports increased 5 % in value (\$ 9.56 Billion) from the same period in 2023 while volume was basically steady to a year ago.

The U.S. Meat Export Federation has worked diligently over the last several years to build demand for U.S. beef in Africa and the Middle East. USMEF's strategic focus in the African region is focused more on long term development in key regions such as Morocco, West Africa, and South Africa as the economies continue to develop and the middle class continues to further evolve over the next 5-10 years.

According to their website, USMEF was among the 50 ag companies and organizations that recently visited Morocco during a trade mission hosted by USDA. Foreign Agricultural Service Administrator Daniel Whitley led the delegation, which participated in business-to-business meetings, meetings with Moroccan government officials, studied transportation logistics and visited retail and foodservice outlets in Casablanca.

USMEF Africa Representatives Matt

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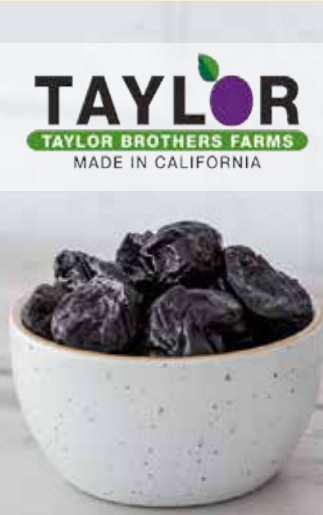
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Continued from page 20

Copeland and Monty Brown, and USMEF Director of Trade Analysis Jessica Spreitzer participated in the trade mission, with funding support provided by USDA's Regional Agricultural Promotion Program.

Morocco has a free trade agreement in place with the U.S. and is the second-largest export market for U.S. agriculture in Africa. "Morocco is a promising

market and its free trade agreement with the U.S. could fuel momentum in a broader region of Africa," says Copeland.

"But there are trade barriers to overcome, including technical ones. The major challenge now for U.S. exporters relates to financial risks on containers arriving in Morocco. There are no financial mitigations in place for exporters to receive payment after containers arrive, which adds



tremendous risk to any transaction."

While the market for high-quality beef in Morocco is largely untapped and the U.S. now has duty-free access for Choice and Prime cuts, Copeland points out that modern retail holds a very small share of the market and the cold chain infrastructure is in early stages of development.

Morocco is the sixth largest export market for U.S. beef livers in 2024 as the volume through October totaled 856 mt. Through the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement, U.S. Choice and Prime beef cuts and some standard beef HS codes enter duty-free. But other standard beef HS codes, including livers, remain subject to a tariff-rate quota that increases by 2% per year. The quota volume is 2,692 mt for 2025, indicating room for further growth in U.S. beef liver exports.

Middle East

November beef exports to Egypt, a critical destination for U.S. livers and other variety meat, increased 70% from a year ago to 3,955 mt, the highest since 2022. Export value climbed 81% to \$6.6 million. This pushed November shipments to the Middle East 40% above a year ago, despite a severe decline to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) due to an impasse over halal certification. This obstacle has been temporarily

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Ag Alumni Seed

Craig Anderson Named President and CEO of Ag Alumni Seed



The Ag Alumni Seed Improvement Association of Romney, Indiana, has appointed Craig Anderson as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. Anderson succeeds Jay Hulbert, who is retiring after leading the organization through years of growth and innovation.

"We are excited to have Craig joining Ag Alumni Seed," said Jay Hulbert, outgoing President and CEO. "His extensive experience in the seed industry, strategic leadership, and deep

understanding of growers' needs will be a tremendous asset as we continue to build on our strong foundation."

Anderson brings decades of experience in the seed industry, with expertise in business strategy, sales, marketing, and operations. Most recently, he served as Chief Operating Officer at Dryland Genetics, where he designed and implemented a fully integrated seed company model for proso millet, driving market expansion through a streamlined go-to-market approach and strong grower relationships.

Prior to that, Anderson held key leadership roles at AgReliant Genetics, serving as LG Seeds Brand Manager, Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Sales & Marketing, and Chief Operating Officer. He oversaw strategic acquisitions, drove market share growth, and implemented capital investments that improved operational efficiency.

"I'm excited to join Ag Alumni Seed and look forward to working with the team, our partners at Purdue University, and our business collaborators," said Anderson. "Ag Alumni Seed has a strong legacy of innovation in the seed industry, and I'm eager to explore new opportunities that will drive future growth and success."

The Ag Alumni Seed Improvement Association was

established in 1938 as a not-for-profit foundation seed association with the mission of taking seed varieties developed at Purdue University, building up inventories, and making advanced genetics available to farmers. Today, Ag Alumni Seed focuses on the research, development, and marketing of popcorn seed for domestic and international markets, as well as contract seed production, conditioning, and a private label licensing program. In addition to popcorn seed, the company works on advanced trait development with researchers at Purdue University.

Anderson's leadership marks the beginning of a new chapter for Ag Alumni Seed as the organization continues its commitment to innovation and service to the agricultural community.

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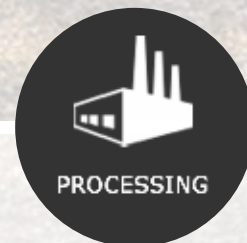
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resolved but regaining full access to the UAE remains a top priority for the U.S. industry.

Through November, beef shipments to the Middle East region increased 25% in volume (49,901 mt) and 17% in value (215.8 million). This included a 24% increase to Egypt, where exports reached 36,233 mt, while value was up 7% to \$58.3 million.

November shipments to Qatar were the highest since 2011 at 362 mt, up 59% from a year ago, while value was record-high at \$4.3 million.

Sources:

USMEF Website

Beef.org

BASCOM

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Web site:

www.bascomfamilyfarms.com

Contact: Arnold Coombs

Company Profile: Bascom Family Farms is America's leading independent supplier of pure and organic maple syrup and maple sugar products in a wide range of forms, sizes and packaging. Top food manufacturers, private label maple marketers, food service buyers and chefs choose Bascom Family Farms for our high quality selection, R&D capacity, competitive pricing, and rapid turnaround times. **Product Line:** Grocery items, organic products, pure and organic maple syrup and maple sugar products

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E-mail: marketing@mopecans.com

Contact: Ben Bennett or Joe Wilson

Web Site: www.mopecans.com

Business Type: Grower, Shipper,
Packer, Manufacturer

Product Line: Our product offerings include Pecans, Pecan Oil, and Pecan Meal-Flour in Certified Organic and non-Organic



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greatlakespacking@ameritech.net

Web Site: www.glparking.com

Contact: Adriana Alcalá -
General Manager

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