



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CA SENATORS FEINSTEIN AND PADILLA JOIN EFFORT TO HOLD SUMMIT TO RESOLVE EXPORT TRADE CRISIS

*Farm Groups Demanding Solution to the Nation's Trade Imbalance  
That is Crippling American Agriculture and Damaging the American Economy*

**SACRAMENTO (May 13, 2022)** – The Almond Alliance of California today thanked California's U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla for joining with a collaborative of major agriculture associations in urging a summit with all stakeholders - ocean shipping carriers and agricultural exporters - to resolve gridlock at the nation's ports, where billions of dollars of exports are stuck on the docks.

"The agriculture community of California thanks and appreciates our Senate delegation for standing up to end this gridlock which has crippled California farmers for the last year," stated Almond Alliance President Aubrey Bettencourt.

The call to action – spelled out in a [letter](#) from the senators – urged a wide range of interests to come to the table to address this crisis. The communique was sent to March Bourdon, President of CMA CGM Maritime, the United States Secretary of Agriculture, the United States Secretary of Transportation, and the National Economic Council.

The senators implored those officials to work with American agricultural exporters to immediately expand export opportunities.

"We urge you to work with California agricultural producers to ensure their products, especially perishables, expeditiously get to export markets worldwide during this important season," the senators wrote. "We look forward to working with you to achieve our shared goals."

In their communique, Senators Feinstein and Padilla underscored the urgency of the crisis:

Our “agricultural commodities have been significantly hampered in exporting their products because of container and equipment shortages, canceled bookings, and inadequate receiving windows.

“According to the attached letter from several of California’s major agricultural producers, three out of four containers at U.S. ports are returning to Asia empty, resulting in a significant backlog of sold product in need of transportation.”

That letter from national and state agricultural groups specifically demands for an immediate federal effort to convene a meeting of ocean carrier companies and agricultural exporters to address the tremendous export trade imbalance which is crippling American agriculture and damaging the American economy.

Signatories of that [second letter](#) include leadership of the California Farm Bureau; Western Growers Association; National Milk Producers Federation; U.S. Dairy Export Council; Western United Dairies; the Almond Alliance of California, and the California Walnut Handlers Alliance.

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#### *About the Almond Alliance*

*The Almond Alliance of California (AAC) is a trusted non-profit organization dedicated to advocating on behalf of the California almond community. California almonds generate more than \$21 billion in economic revenue and directly contribute more than \$11 billion to the state’s total economy. California’s top agricultural export, almonds create approximately 104,000 jobs statewide, over 97,000 in the Central Valley, which suffers from chronic unemployment. The AAC is dedicated to educating state legislators, policy makers and regulatory officials about the California almond community. As a membership-based organization, our members include almond processors, hullers/shellers, growers and allied businesses. Through workshops, newsletters, conferences, social media and personal meetings, AAC works to raise awareness, knowledge and provide a better understanding about the scope, size, value and sustainability of the California almond community. For more information on the Almond Alliance, visit <https://almondalliance.org/> or check out the Almond Alliance on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.*