



August 16, 2007

**CALIFORNIA TOMATO COMMISSION TO BE SUSPENDED
BASED UPON OUTCOME OF INDUSTRY VOTE**

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) recently conducted a referendum regarding the possible suspension of the California Tomato Commission. **The referendum results indicate that the statutory voting criteria required for suspension were achieved. Therefore, the operations of the Tomato Commission must be wound down and suspended by February 29, 2008.**

This industry vote was prompted by a unanimously-approved motion of the Commission Board of Directors recommending that CDFA suspend the operations of the Commission. Section 78723 of the Food and Agricultural Code states that upon receipt of such a recommendation, CDFA “shall hold a referendum among the producers and handlers of fresh tomatoes to determine if such a suspension shall in fact occur.” Suspension of the Commission requires that at least 40% of the total number of producers and handlers participate in the referendum and that one of the following occurs:

- 65% or more of the producers and handlers who vote in the referendum vote in favor of suspension, and the producers and handlers so voting account for a majority of the tomato volume marketed during the 2006-2007 marketing season by all those voting in the referendum, or
- A majority of the producers and handlers who vote in the referendum vote in favor of suspension, and the producers and handlers so voting account for 65% or more of the tomato volume marketed during the 2006-2007 marketing season by all those voting in the referendum.

A summary of the voting results is presented below.

TOMATO COMMISSION REFERENDUM RESULTS			
Voter Category	Portion of Eligible Participants that Cast Valid Ballots	Of Those Casting Valid Ballots	
		Portion By Number Voting in Favor of Suspension	Portion of Voted Volume in Favor of Suspension
Producers	62%	93%	94%
Handlers	72%	85%	97%

- OVER -



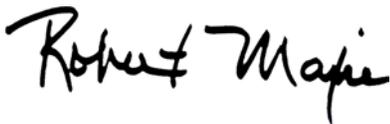
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During the next few months the Tomato Commission Board of Directors will be meeting to begin winding down the affairs of the Commission so that all operations can be suspended by the February 29, 2008 statutory deadline. Please note that **the Tomato Commission assessment is still in effect for the remainder of the current 2007-2008 season** and therefore handlers are still required to remit the producer and handler assessments just as in the past. If there are program funds remaining upon the Commission's termination, such funds shall be returned to producers and handlers on a pro rata basis.

As you may be aware, the California Tomato Commission has been authorized to conduct promotion, research and issues management activities on behalf of the California fresh tomato industry. Such activities have been funded by a mandatory assessment upon all California fresh tomato producers and handlers. The fresh tomato industry has had an industry-funded program since 1972. For the first 25 years, the program functioned as a state marketing order. In 1996, the program was restructured and began operating as a commission.

If you have questions about this referendum, please call Dennis Manderfield of this office at (916) 341-6005.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Maxie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Robert Maxie, Chief
Marketing Branch