



## News from the Markets



The big news has been **Poppy Seed**. Asking prices from origins advanced sharply in view of limited availability. Spot prices are likely to go higher as they currently do not yet reflect replacement values. Not much relief in sight. New crop plantings in many countries will be determined by the needs of the pharmaceutical industry rather than the need for poppy seeds. Turkish growers get better prices for white Poppy and have no incentive to increase the acreage for blue poppy.

Canadian **Caraway Seed** is firmer. European seller holding their prices for now. Eventually, we are likely to see a somewhat higher market.

Already attractive, **Flax Seed** prices have become even a bit more so. Popularity of Flax continues to increase but supplies seem to be ample to maintain the attractive price level.



**Pumpkin Seeds** continue their steady move up although at a modest pace. There are rumours that supplies of good quality Yunnan AA (the greenest) kernels will not last through to new crop.

Not much movement in the **Sesame Seed** market. We see a fairly steady market with limited up or down potential.

In the **specialty grains**, Amaranth has advanced sharply. New crop in May/June may bring only limited relief. Quinoa, Buckwheat, Millet are steady. Keep in mind that on request we can also source manufactured items such as quinoa flakes, buckwheat flour, buckwheat grits, amaranth flour.

Although there may still be an occasional cheap seller, the trend for **Cinnamon** is clearly up. During years of low prices, the Indonesian growers had little incentive to take care of their cassia trees. Now demand outstrips production. Expect higher prices to be around for a while.

Supplies of **Garlic** flakes in particular are becoming extremely difficult to locate in China, with a corresponding firming in price.



## Conventional Products for Export



### Almonds

Most readers have been aware of conditions prevailing in California during the Almond bloom—they ranged from freezing to sunny. This has led to the usual specula-

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## Sanctions Threat?

Further evidence of the increasing internationalisation (or globalisation – that much misunderstood concept) of the industry is the potential impact of the threat of sanctions on Iran.

With the Bush administration once again flexing its muscles over the supposed Iranian nuclear threat, there are suggestions that sanctions may be imposed on Iranian products. If this came about, it could possibly see a ban on Iranian Pistachios into Europe, which would increase European demand from the US, which would in turn see escalation in the US Pistachio price.

Although there are many parts of the world Iranian Pistachios are NOT sold, a politically motivated action unrelated to most of the world, could have an impact on the nut industry globally. Watch this space.

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tion of the potential out-turn of the crop later in the year.

As usually happens, there appears to be a direct correlation between sellers being prepared to offer and bees flying in the Almond orchards. When the bees withdraw to their hives, so too, the sellers withdraw from the market. In all the comment, and often hype, about prospects for the crop, one generally accepted wisdom is often lost – that generally only about 10% of the bloom will stay on the trees and mature into Almonds. So, whatever the conditions, there is always going to be a substantial portion of the bloom blown away. There are numerous opinions as to the potential crop loss, ranging between 5% and 30%.

#### Turkish Apricots

The next major bloom will be for Turkish Apricots in late March / early Apricot. The Turkish Apricot growing area is centered around Malatya in eastern Turkey. Every year the growing area expands, and therefore potentially the size of the crop. As usual around bloom time there is speculation, but firm evidence is probably still a few weeks away. However, there has been some firming of prices over the last few weeks, and we would anticipate prices to remain firm through to the end of the season.

#### Cashews

The market has been drifting back mainly led by the smaller Indian shippers needing to liquidate spot stocks. There have been reports of buying support at current levels in Vietnam with normal volumes being traded. Some have gained confidence from this that the falling trend is likely to stop or be reversed. Buying activity in Europe over the last 10 days would add weight to the theory that prices have bottomed – for the short term.

#### Turkish Figs

Stocks of good quality Turkish Figs appear to have been exhausted in Turkey for the season.

#### Dehydrated apple:

This has been a difficult season with Chinese dehydrated Apple production, which has also impacted on canned Apple production. Very little stock is still available, although we do still have some broken rings and dice to offer.

New Chilean crop is now starting to be available. Quality is substantially better than Chinese – and so also is the price substantially higher .

#### Pine Nuts

Our Chinese Pine Nut supplier reports that prices for Pine Nuts have escalated dramatically as the carry-in from the bumper 2004 crop disappears. An additional complication is the report that a substantial quantity of small Pine Nuts are still available in Mongolia, but that the Mongolian government has since last October been refusing to issue export permits. Buyers are reluctant to commit to existing stocks, when a flood of product could be released on to the market at any time. We are also receiving reports of small Pine Nuts being mixed with small white stones. Great to get the weight up, but not so good for the teeth. We are having all our shipments double cleaned before export. Call for further Pine Nut information.

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#### THE HP SCHMID / ORGANIC PLANET SERVICE



To many, HP Schmid is known primarily as a sesame seed trader. However, the reality is that we do far more than that. Amongst our activities;

**Organic Planet** : Import and Distribution into the USA of a very wide range of Certified Organic Natural Food ingredients; Export and international trading of organic ingredients.

**HP Schmid**: Import , Distribution , Export and International Trading of a wide range of natural food ingredients – including Sesame and other seeds. We currently source from 35 countries internationally.

#### Dates to Remember

Please visit us at the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim CA. Booth 4122 - Table 112 March 24-26, 2006

#### Do your internal systems meet the grade?

The FDA requires that anyone governed by the regulation provide information, within 24 hours of request, to identify the specific source of each ingredient that was used to make every lot of finished product, so that incoming ingredients can be linked to the outgoing finished products. **Failure to comply could result in risk of civil and or criminal penalties.**