



**MERIDIAN
NUT GROWERS**
DRIED FRUITS - NUTS

May 18, 2009

MERIDIAN NUT GROWERS

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MERIDIAN MONITOR

In a nutshell...

- Pistachio shipments down 6%

MARKET NEWS AND INDUSTRY INFORMATION FOR MERIDIAN'S VALUED CUSTOMERS

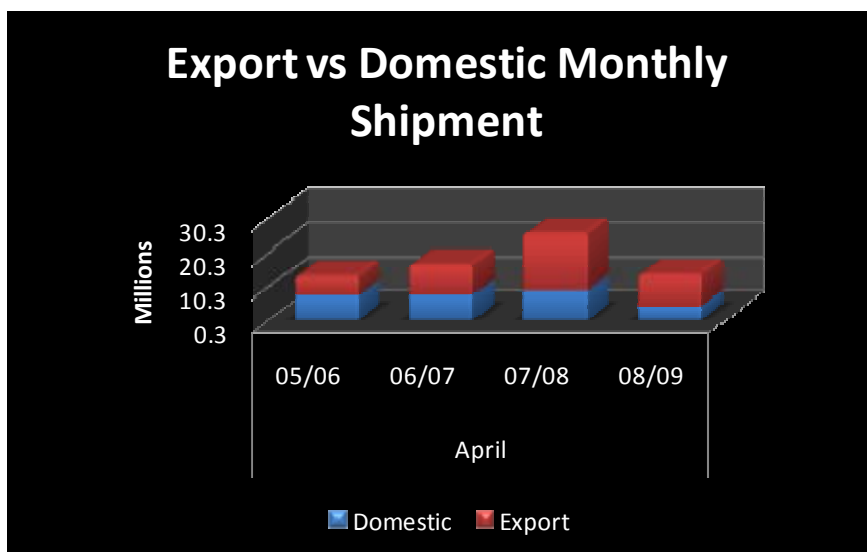
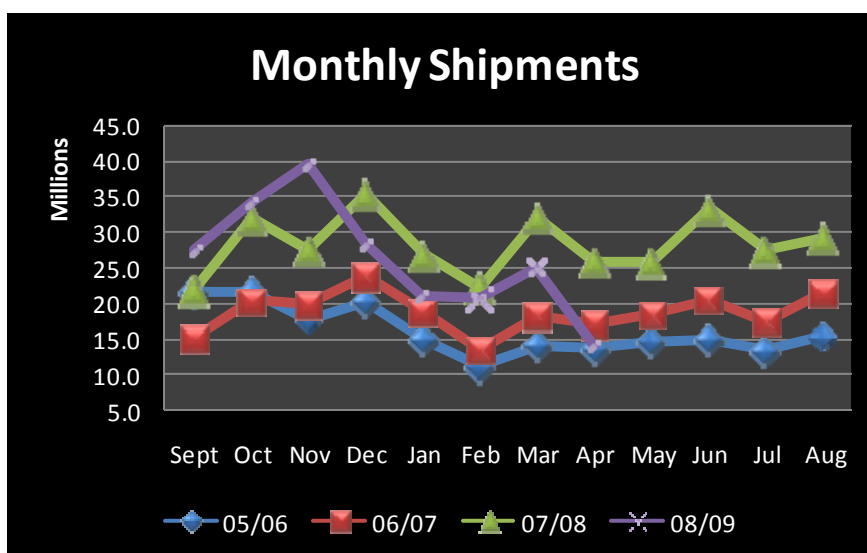
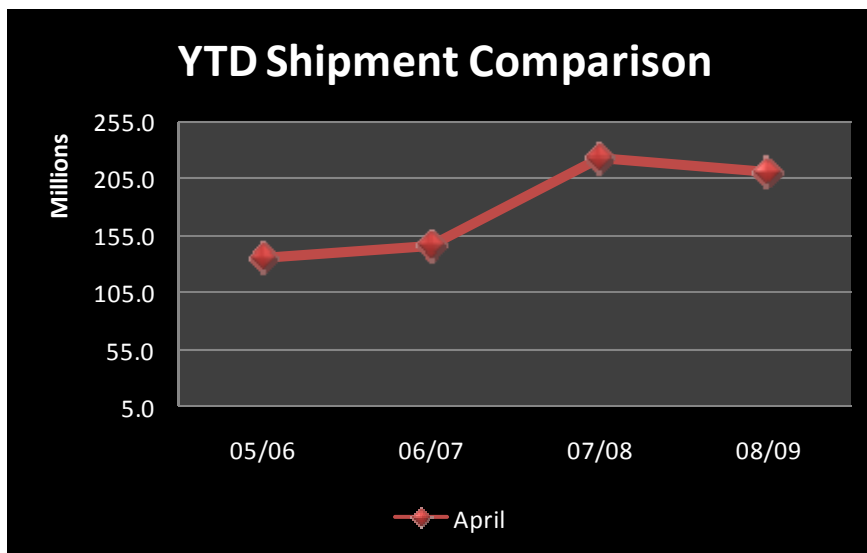
Pistachio Update

Please find enclosed the latest monthly shipment numbers for April. Overall shipments are down about 6% from last year. For the month of April, shipments were down by almost 45% from the same period last year. April was the first full month in which the industry was affected by the salmonella recall. The biggest drop in shipments was in the domestic market which was affected most by the FDA's announcement. Most overseas buyers consider this a US issue and consumers are either unaffected or unaware of the recall.

Our plant continues to undergo improvements in operations and food safety. We were fortunate that many of the recommendations being made by the industry and health officials were implemented in our plant prior to the recall.

In addition to the affects of the recall, we are getting low on inventories. Remember that we started this year about 35% less available than last year. We will soon run out of saleable product and that will be reflected in the shipping numbers as well. At this time, we have withdrawn from the market as we evaluate our final inventory numbers based upon the remaining product to process.

Growers are expressing cautious optimism over the 2009 crop. The only concerns at this point will be the actual sizing, the variable maturity of the clusters and the availability of water to finish the crop. Contracting of the new crop will probably begin at the INC in late May.



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