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News Release

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International Promotions Increase California Grape Sales

FRESNO, California – Worldwide demand for fresh grape exports from California increased in 2008, the second highest year in export volume ever and an all-time high in export value for fresh grape exports from California through January, as retail stores around the world saw increased sales of California grapes. The California Table Grape Commission's global marketing campaign had global retailer promotions set up during the 2008 fresh California grape season, May through January.

As an example, AlfaMart, a large retail chain in Indonesia, said the commission's promotional efforts resulted in a 68 percent growth in their California grape sales in 2008 over the previous year. Commission representatives in Indonesia trained AlfaMart management on the best way to handle, display, promote and sell California grapes. AlfaMart also worked with the commission on an aggressive direct mail and display promotion during the California grape season in 2008.

This year, AlfaMart expects to expand, adding hundreds of stores plus new distribution centers to its rapidly growing retail chain. Grape sales increased from 243 stores in 2007 to 506 stores in 2008, of its total store count of 2,750. AlfaMart plans to stock and sell grapes in all of its stores in 2009, which will continue to drive California grape sales in Indonesia. Similar promotion and training programs occurred with major retailers around the world.

"The core of our export marketing program is retailer promotions," said Susan Day, the vice president of international marketing for the California Table Grape Commission. "Targeting over 40 countries in 2008, the program is a proven motivator to increase California grape exports worldwide."

In the last 10 years, exports of fresh California grapes have increased 36 percent, while the value of those exports has increased 102 percent (May-Jan, excluding shipments to Canada). Record high export volumes were seen in a number of the largest export markets for California grapes in 2008, including Mexico, Panama, Central America, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Thailand and Australia.

The California Table Grape Commission was created by the California legislature in 1967 to increase worldwide demand for fresh California grapes through a variety of research and promotional programs. More information can be found at grapesfromcalifornia.com.

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