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TABLE GRAPE  
COMMISSION

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# News Release

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## **California Table Grape Industry Moves Record Volumes** **Heavy Advertising and Promotions Slated for November-January**

FRESNO, California – Setting a new five-week record, the California table grape industry shipped over 23 million boxes into the worldwide marketplace September 8 through October 12, according to USDA.

According to Kathleen Nave, president of the California Table Grape Commission (commission), the reporting of daily shipments to USDA is voluntary but most of the industry participates so on a year-to-year basis the number of shippers reporting is very consistent and so is the data. “This year, unfortunately, there was a period of nearly three months when shipments to USDA were under-reported compared to prior years,” Nave said. “This caused confusion as it appeared that with excellent quality and a large crop, the volume wasn’t moving. Once the reports were updated, two things became clear: volume was moving all along and the last five weeks set a volume record.”

Due to the voluntary nature of USDA daily reporting, the data collected is typically 22 percent lower than the actual volume reported to the commission.<sup>1</sup> “It is pretty easy to add 22 percent to the last five weeks of USDA data and see why the expectation is that the shipments will have blown away industry actuals,” Nave said. Based on the retail promotions and advertising lined up through the end of the season, the commission expects record volume weeks to continue.

Nave noted that while tariffs had impacted global markets, table grapes were shipping into all of the industry’s traditional export markets and according to the latest USDA data, exports were down less than eight percent through August. According to Nave, there are some markets that have increased volumes: Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, South Korea, and the Netherlands among them.

With 60-65 percent of the volume typically shipping September 1 through January, Nave said that planning for an aggressive fall and winter promotion schedule is the norm, but that this year dollars have been added to the budget to support additional late season retail promotions and extend consumer advertising reach.

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<sup>1</sup> Reporting shipments to the commission is required by state law. Data is not released until the end of the season after it has been compiled, reconciled, and confirmed.