



CALIFORNIA
TABLE GRAPE
COMMISSION

392 W. Fallbrook Avenue
Suite 101
Fresno, California
93711-6150
Phone: 559-447-8350
Fax: 559-447-9184
grapesfromcalifornia.com

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 16, 2023

Contact: Nick Nakashian
Nick@grapesfromcalifornia.com

California Table Grape Industry Applauds Pause to Chilean Systems Approach, Encourages Permanent Abandonment of Risky Scheme

Fresno, CA – Applauding the recent decision by USDA to pause regulatory work on the table grape systems approach proposed by Chile, Kathleen Nave, president of the California Table Grape Commission, said the industry is encouraging USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to permanently abandon the risky proposal.

According to comments submitted in the Federal Register by the California Table Grape Commission, the implementation of the proposed systems approach would end the current empirically effective requirement that all table grapes from Chile be fumigated before distribution in the United States. The published comments note that the current fumigation is highly effective at killing pests that pose serious risk to the California table grape industry.

“The Chilean proposal abandons an empirically successful treatment regime in favor of an ill-defined systems approach through which many invasive pests could travel. The change would introduce a significant risk of potentially devastating infestations to the wine, juice, raisin, and table grape crops across the country,” said Nave.

Noting a recent and very public push by Chilean importers that urged USDA to publish the proposed systems approach in the Federal Register as a final rule in time for the upcoming Chilean season, Nave said that Chile has perfectly adequate access to the U.S. marketplace. “Chilean table grape growers have been shipping under the fumigation requirement for decades,” Nave said. “The latest three-year average volume of table grapes from Chile to the U.S. is forty million 18-pound boxes so the idea that Chilean growers won’t be able to supply the U.S. market without this new untried system is simply not true. ”

Nave said that U.S. producers do not want this system put in place and the fact that Chilean importers do, should carry no weight with USDA.

###