

Testimony of Marc McFetridge, Agricultural Economist from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Market Development Division

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My name is Marc McFetridge. I have worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) since 2006. From December 2009 to the present, I have worked as an agricultural economist where my duties include preparing economic and statistical analyses, which are used by government officials to help administer Federal programs for specialty crops programs.

I received a Bachelor's degree in agricultural business management in 2001 from Oregon State University and a Master's degree in agricultural and resource economics in 2004 from Oregon State University.

For this hearing on California Raisins, I have prepared a report titled "U.S. Raisins Crop Years: 2000 through 2022." The data source is the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), USDA. The purpose of this report is to introduce U.S. government data and other relevant information into the hearing record. The data and graphs included in the prepared report, are intended to be used by all parties involved in the hearing, in discussing and analyzing the merits of the various proposed amendments. The data used to generate the graphs can be found on page three of the report. Data for the 2023 crop

year will not be available until May 2024, when NASS will release the *Noncitrus Fruits and Nut 2023 Summary*. NASS reports the crop year as the year the raisins were harvested, the Federal Marketing order defines the crop year as a 12-month period beginning with August 1 of any year and ending with July 31 of the following year. To avoid confusion, I will be presenting the data as NASS reports so interested parties can easily reference NASS publications to verify the information I am presenting.

I would also note that after 2017, NASS stopped publishing production and pricing information for raisins in terms of dried tons. Also, when using the NASS quick stat database, NASS uses the term raisin type grapes to convey that the numbers are reported in fresh tons. To stay consistent, when I refer to raisins for yield, production, and pricing and value of production, those numbers will be in green tons.

For ease of use, note that all percentage calculations have been rounded.

In the report, graphs are shown for U.S. raisins. Raisins are primarily produced in California's San Joaquin Valley and are sun-dried.

Bearing Acres:

The graph on page four shows the total bearing acres. Bearing acres reached a fifteen-year high during the 2000 crop year at 280,000 (two hundred, eighty thousand) acres for the total U.S. Since the 2000 crop year, bearing acres have trended downwards. For the

2022 crop year, bearing acres were reported at 133,000 (one hundred, thirty-three thousand) acres. Acreage is down two percent compared to the 2021 crop year and down ten percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Yield:

The graph on page five shows the average yield for raisins in green tons. The average yield has varied greatly over the past 23 crop years with the average yield being 9.5 tons per acre. Average yields reached a high of 11.4 tons per acre during the 2002, 2008 and 2013 crop years. The lowest yield occurred during the 2022 crop year at 7.59 tons per acre. The 2022 crop yield was down two percent from the 2021 crop year and down thirteen percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Production of Raisins:

The graph on page six shows the total production raisins in green tons. As expected, the production of raisins has seen a significant reduction following the downward trend of bearing acres in the past 23 crop years. Production of raisins reached a high during the 2000 crop year at 2,921,000 (two million, nine hundred twenty-one thousand) tons. For the 2022 crop year, the production of raisins was reported at 1,010,000 (one million, ten thousand) tons, down four percent compared to the 2021 crop year and down 22 percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Prices Received by Growers:

The graph on page seven shows the average prices received by growers. Prices have trended upward as the supply of raisins has trended downward the past 23 crop years. Over the past 10 years, the average price of raisins has doubled compared to the price received by growers in the 2000 crop year. Raisin prices for the 2022 crop year were reported at \$378 (three hundred, seventy-eight dollars) per ton, up seven percent compared to the 2021 crop year and up ten percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Total Value of Production:

The graph on page eight shows the total value of production. Total value of production was calculated by taking the production of raisin, green tons, multiplied by the prices received by growers for raisin, green tons. Over the past 10 years, the total value of production was the lowest during the 2020 crop year at \$304,640,000 (three hundred, four million, six hundred, forty thousand dollars). For the 2022 crop year, the total value of production of raisins was \$381,780,000 (three hundred, eighty-one million, seven hundred, eighty thousand dollars), up two percent compared to the 2021 crop year but down fifteen percent compared to the previous five-year average.