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Good Afternoon:

Thanks for allowing me to walk your beautiful property. A couple of things about growing and harvesting Macadamia Nuts that may help put things into perspective. The Macadamia Nuts grown in SoCal are self harvesting and fall to the ground when mature. Thus, it is important during the harvest season that the grass is mowed tight and leaves and debris are removed from under the trees to facilitate the harvest. Nuts are not harvested from the trees directly like other tree nuts. The nuts are picked up from the ground say once a week, the green husk is removed and the nuts are air-dried in the shade for 2-3 weeks. This accomplishes two things, 1) it dries the moisture of the nut from about 30% down to ~18% which helps keep the nuts from molding and going rancid and, 2) it allows the nut to change in flavor going from tasting like a raw Pea to a rich buttery flavor. The nut is then dried at 103 degrees in mechanical dryers to get the moisture content anywhere from 2%-8% depending on what the nut is being used for (shipping in-shell, cracking and roasting, pressing for oil, etc.).

1. CA Ground Squirrel Infestation: This is the number one problem. At this point, all of the harvest has been robbed by CA ground squirrels. I did not see even ONE nut on the ground in the entire orchard. There are still trees that have some nuts on them but not a lot. I have a DRP Pesticide Applicator License and a Pest Control Business License and looking at the infestation level, it is as bad as I have ever seen! Before any harvest could occur next year, the ground squirrel infestation needs to be controlled!





2. Tree Damage: The overall the health of the grove is pretty good. At some point, someone miss pruned many of the trees raising the canopies too high resulting in ‘Sun Scalding’ of the bark and damaging he cambium layers of the tees. Some trees have compensated and are still healthy and some others are badly damaged and need to be removed. The trees where the canopies have been raised should be “white washed” to help protect the cambium of the tree from further damage.



3. Varieties: It looks like many of the trees are Cates – a production variety common in socal. Pick flowers, reddish new growth/flush, whorls of 4 leaves is a tetraphylla most likely a “Cate”) You may have some Beaumonts too or some other hybrid varietal.



Warm regards,

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