

## Almond projection lower

By John Holland The Modesto  
Bee

A federal agency Wednesday reduced slightly its projection of the state's almond crop this year — 1.80 billion pounds instead of the 1.85 billion estimated in early May.

The figure, announced at noon at the Modesto headquarters of the [Almond Board of California](#), suggests that this highly valuable crop is making it through the extreme drought.

The projection falls short of the record crop of 2.03 billion pounds in 2011, but it still would be the fifth-largest harvest on record.

“I think it's a good number for the industry,” said Dave Long, president of Hilltop Ranch, which grows and processes almonds in the Ballico area. “I think prices will stay strong for the grower.”

Long said prices likely will be \$4.45 to \$4.55 per pound for the nonpariel variety, the most prized.