

#### Valued Customer,

Price Changes as of February 2025. We have outlined for you some of the major factors that have resulted in price increases for 2025 that you will see in your assortment this year. Let your sales representative know if you have any questions or concerns.

### **CHOCOLATE**

**Cocoa Challenges:** Cocoa continues to face significant challenges. Following historical price highs in 2023, the cost of cocoa has surged an additional 95% since the start of 2024. Production in the world's top-producing regions has been disrupted by pests, diseases, and weather.

**Market Volatility:** Short supplies from the luory Coast have exacerbated volatility in the cocoa market. Experts estimate it will take 18–24 months for supply and demand to rebalance and bring prices back to traditional levels.

# **WALNUTS**

**2024 Crop Shortage:** The 2024 walnut crop is significantly lower than anticipated, with projections dropping from 750,000 tons to around 560,000–580,000 tons after harvest. This is a steep decline compared to last year's total supply of 945,000 tons. California's total supply for 2024 is now estimated at 660,000–670,000 tons.

# **ALMONDS**

**Reduced Supply:** Lower carry-in levels and smaller crop yields due to weather challenges have tightened the available supply.

**Strong Global Demand:** Increased exports to key markets like India and the EU continue to support higher prices. **Rising Costs:** Growers are facing higher input costs, including water, labor, and sustainable farming practices, which impact pricing.

# **CASHEWS**

**Global Crop Shortages:** Major growing regions, including Africa, Vietnam, and Brazil, have experienced reduced yields due to adverse weather and export restrictions, including the Ivory Coast export ban earlier this year.

**Increased Costs:** Sharp rises in raw cashew nut (RCN) prices, coupled with high freight and processing expenses, have created sustained cost pressures across the supply chain.

**High Demand & Limited Inventory:** Strong demand for cashew kernels, combined with delayed shipments and limited inventory, has maintained upward pressure on prices.

Please contact <u>customer.service@lehivalley.com</u> or your sales representative with any questions or concerns.

# Brady Freeman

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