



California Walnut Board Post-Harvest Research Program
2022 Call for Letters of Intent

Background/Invitation

The California Walnut Board (CWB), representing over 4,500 growers and 85 handlers of California walnuts, invites agricultural research faculty, extension academics, and others affiliated with agricultural colleges, universities and agencies to submit requests for funding of applied research projects addressing identified post-harvest research issues and challenges.

The California walnut industry has a long and successful legacy of deploying innovative science-based solutions to foster industry growth, stability, health, and sustainability. It does this primarily through supporting a robust and diverse post-harvest research program whose direction and operations are overseen by its' Grades & Standards Committee.

Types of Support

The CWB supports domestic and international post-harvest related research on walnuts through grants and the provision of walnuts. We support first-time and well-established researchers meeting the requirements.

Research Priorities for 2022

This cycle we are currently soliciting Letters of Intent (LOI) supporting post-harvest research studies in the following priority areas:

- I. **Product Quality**
- II. **Shelf Life**
- III. **Storage**
- IV. **New Packaging Technology**
- V. **Sensory**
- VI. **Food Safety**
- VII. **Byproduct Alternative Uses / Sustainability**
- VIII. **Regulatory Stewardship and Compliance**

More Specifics on Projects and Areas of Focus

- **Achieving Pasteurized status without an expensive, time consuming and damaging process**
- **Color degradation of certain varieties after harvest**
- **Cost effective solutions for walnut shells**
- **Improve shelling, sorting, chopping, handling technology to reduce walnut scuffing**
- **Understand impact of growing Navel Orange Worm pressure on potential aflatoxin issues**
- **Reduction of Walnut Rancidity**
- **By-product utilization**
- **Stored walnut color deterioration**
- **Pasteurization impacts on walnuts**
- **Country of Origin determination**
- **Color uniformity and consistency improvements in grading and evaluating walnuts**

The CWB is open to additional suggestions/considerations as well, so please bring forward anything of particular interest to the post-harvest scope with ample time before the 2022 submission deadline.

How Do I Know If My Project Is a Good Fit?

Examples of types of questions for the priority areas:

- 1. Conformity of project with Grades & Standards Committee goals and priorities**
- 2. Fund request commensurate with benefits of a successful outcome**
- 3. Requested funds seem reasonable for the work proposed**
- 4. Likelihood that a successful outcome will result in practical benefits for the walnut industry**
- 5. For projects initiated in a previous year: Is the project on track toward completion in the time originally proposed?**

Timeline and Deadlines

Event	Date
Letter of Intent submission opens	March 25, 2022
Letters of Intent due	April 29, 2022
Invitations to submit full proposals sent	May 27, 2022
Full Applications due	July 01, 2022
Funding decision received	July 29, 2022
Funding allocation occurs	Varies, but usually by August 31, 2022

Evaluation of Submissions

There are two stages to the review process for CWB funding: **1)** Letters of Intent (2-page summary) and **2)** Full Applications, both of which are submitted online using [InfoReady Review \(infoready4.com\)](https://infoready4.com) (see details below). Letters of Intent will be evaluated by the CWB Grades & Standards Committee, and a limited number of applicants will be invited to submit Full Applications. Reviewer feedback is not provided to the applicant at the Letter of Intent stage. Full Applications will undergo evaluation by the CWB Grades & Standards Committee. The CWB will hold all information provided by the researcher in confidence while the Letter of Intent and Full Application are under consideration.

Eligibility Requirements

Before submitting the Letter of Intent, please ensure that our pre-eligibility criteria are met:

- The Principal Investigator must have a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree and be a research staff or faculty member at a non-profit academic or research institution.
- The proposed study must adhere to the CWB Research Integrity Guidelines (see below).
- The proposed study must address the effects/impacts of the research on the walnut industry, with specifics to post-harvest research priority areas and answer priority area questions (mentioned above)
- The total proposed budget must be no more than \$100,000 for a single year of the project. Proposals will be considered for single-year and multiple-year projects. Please note that whole walnuts must be used for studies and will provided by the CWB in order to facilitate research efforts.

How To Submit A Letter Of Intent (LOI)

Upload Letter of Intent into the <https://cawalnuts.infoready4.com/> online form according to the instructions provided there. The Letter of Intent must be limited to 2 pages (excluding list of references and optional letters of support), single-spaced, 11-point font and should include:

I. Specific Aims

II. Background and Significance

III. Project Description/Methodology

IV. Expected Outcomes and Limitations

V. Translational Message (Statement that demonstrates the potential value-added impact of the project to the industry.)

VI. Budget and Study Timeline

VII. Expertise/Experience

Upload letters of support if included (limited to 4 pages) and references (limited to 2 pages) as PDF file attachments.

CWB Research Integrity Guidelines

Engagement within the research community should be purposeful and transparent with meaningful interactions that provide tangible opportunities for learning, collaboration, and advancement of science. The California Walnut Board (CWB) is committed to eliminating research bias based on funding source, therefore CWB requires the following:

- Control of both study design and research is conducted by researchers
- The research team submit results from all completed studies for publication regardless of outcomes.
- Payment of research is not contingent on the outcome of a research project.
- Supported researchers disclose their relationship with CWB in all relevant publications and conference presentations.
- Only the highest quality research proposals are considered. CWB utilizes its Grades & Standards Committee (industry experts) in its selection of scientifically sound research proposals.
- CWB's Post-Harvest Research Program issues a formal request for letters of intent that is open to the entire research community.

Need Help?

If you have any questions, please contact Joshua Rahm, Director, Technical & Regulatory Affairs, California Walnut Board, at jrahm@walnuts.org or 916-932-7070.

For technical questions regarding the InfoReady online application system please contact their customer support hotline at support@inforeadycorp.com or call 734-929-0010 extension 256.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The CWB prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital/familial/parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance programs.

Persons with limited English proficiency or disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (translated materials, braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact the CWB offices at (916) 932-7070.

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or write a letter with all information requested in the form and either send to USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, fax to (202) 690-7442, or email to program.intake@usda.gov. CWB is an equal opportunity employer and provider.