California almond growers urge China-US trade reconciliation

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MODESTO, the United States - It's verdant almond groves for as far as the eye can see.  
In California's beautiful San Joaqiun Valley, rank-upon-rank of hearty young nut trees, laden with ripening, green-hulled almonds, basking in the California sun, cover thousands of acres of fertile heartland.  
Weddings and picnics may take place beneath their tranquil, leafy canopies, but make no mistake, this is business - very big business.  
This delicious nutmeat, nurtured within a fuzzy outer shell, has spawned an industry with a value of $4.5 billion in foreign sales and employs more than 100,000 people, accounted for nearly 25 percent of California farm exports in 2016.  
Travaille and Phippen, an almond growing and processing enterprise co-owned by "the five families," a collection of siblings and cousins, have 1,600 acres under cultivation and are still optimistic about the future of farming. They use specialized irrigation systems to reduce water usage, advanced soil testing techniques, and even high tech drones to aerially survey their acreage, all in efforts to optimize their harvest yields.  
A 4th generation farming family, they're close to hitting the coveted 100-year recognition threshold given to the most-honored founding farm families in the region.  
The family enterprise was founded by their grandfather from the Netherlands who had the foresight to gift each of his 9 children with 40 acres each (minus the mule), which his descendants have, through hard work and dogged determination, managed to increase to 1,600 acres today.  
When asked about the crop of younger generations following in their footsteps, co-owner, Dave Phippen, quipped, "They're going to need more dirt."  
California's vast San Joaquin Valley, known as the breadbasket of America (and many points beyond) is one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world. Farming, though an ancient and noble profession that is literally responsible for the rise of civilization as we know it, is facing serious challenges in California.  
Between regulatory quagmires and persistent 6-year drought that the journal of Geophysical Research Letters cited as the driest in over 1,000 years, California growers are now facing an other potentially debilitating challenge: The US-China trade war.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201804/27/WS5ae27db0a3105cdcf651ad47.html