

PRESS RELEASE:

NORTH SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA ISSUED 'AA' BDO ZONE RATING FOR TREE NUT BIOMASS

– Rating to Unlock New Regional Biomanufacturing Opportunities –

February 15th, 2024



The BDO Zone Initiative has issued a 'AA' BDO Zone rating covering 1,104,000 tons per year of underutilized woody and nut tree biomass in the North San Joaquin Valley, California.

[BEAM Circular](#), the [Almond Board of California](#), [Stanislaus County](#) and [Ecostrat](#) are pleased to announce the issue of a rare 'AA' rating to the North San Joaquin Valley [Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone](#) centered in Modesto, CA, North America's first BDO Zone rating for Orchard Biomass, Nut Tree Shells and Almond Hulls.

The North San Joaquin Valley BDO Zone investment grade rating denotes 'very high quality' feedstock supply chains and infrastructure. The region exhibits a longstanding industry supported by 6,300 nut tree growers and suppliers along with a robust network of processors and separators of nuts from shells and hulls in concentrated locations. Decreasing local demand for local biomass along with significant quantities of feedstock currently available for the cost of transportation create ideal conditions for large-scale bio-project development. Significant infrastructure advantages include flexible zoning, access to natural gas, rail connectivity, and proximity to an extensive highway system.

"The 'AA' rating for the North San Joaquin Valley's BDO Zone is a testament to our region's unique positioning for global leadership in the bioeconomy," stated **Karen Warner, CEO of BEAM Circular**. "Local communities here are proactively investing in the infrastructure, partnerships, and innovation that will allow us to grow world-class bioindustrial manufacturing facilities in the heart of the most productive agricultural state in America. This region is ready to support and scale the future of sustainable bioproduction."

"Almond biomass is uniquely concentrated with well established transport systems. With this rating and the research investments made by the almond industry, we stand ready to partner with companies in bio-based industries," said **Josette Lewis, Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer of the Almond Board of California**.

“Rated for over a million tons of underutilized project-available feedstock, this first ‘AA’ BDO Zone rating for tree nut biomass underscores the high level of regional readiness for biomanufacturing within the North San Joaquin Valley,” said **Jordan Solomon, Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative**. “The zone offers very low-risk supply chains and is positioned as a prime target for top-tier and innovative bio-based projects. The collaborative efforts of organizations dedicated to realizing this BDO Zone highlight the region’s visionary approach and the bold stance it takes in the global bioeconomy.”

“Stanislaus County is proud to be investing in the growth of our region’s bioproduction leadership,” said **Mani Grewal, Chairman of the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors**. “We are building upon our historic strengths in agriculture and manufacturing to grow the bio-based industries of the future. We welcome collaboration with new projects that create quality jobs and advance the economic vitality of our community.”

To see the full BDO Zone Rating for North San Joaquin Valley please click [here](#), or visit www.bdozone.org.

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About the North San Joaquin Valley

The North San Joaquin Valley (NSJV) is the ideal location for scaling globally competitive biomanufacturing. The NSJV is a tri-county region of 1.6 million people consisting of Merced, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus Counties, located in the heart of the most productive agricultural land in the United States. A global leader in large-scale agricultural production and food processing, the region’s combination of existing manufacturing infrastructure and abundant biomass feedstocks are unparalleled. The NSJV’s proximity to the San Francisco Bay Area and regional centers of technology innovation gives it access to world-class biotechnology and advanced manufacturing innovation.

About BEAM Circular

BEAM Circular is building a vibrant regional ecosystem for the circular bioeconomy in California’s agricultural heartland. Anchored in the North San Joaquin Valley, the non-profit organization facilitates public-private collaboration through the BioEconomy, Agriculture, & Manufacturing (BEAM) Initiative to scale the most promising innovations in bioindustrial manufacturing and to advance solutions that support economic and environmental outcomes for local communities.

For more information about **BEAM Circular**, visit www.beamcircular.org. The BDO Zone Local Development Leader (LDL) is **Matthew Godinez, Community Engagement Director** (matthew@beamcircular.org).

About the Almond Board of California

California almonds make life better by what we grow and how we grow. The Almond Board of California promotes natural, wholesome and quality almonds through leadership in strategic market development,

innovative research, and accelerated adoption of industry best practices on behalf of the more than 7,600 almond farmers and processors in California, most of whom are multi-generational family operations. Established in 1950 and based in Modesto, California, the Almond Board of California is a non-profit organization that administers a grower-enacted Federal Marketing Order under the supervision of the United States Department of Agriculture.

For more information about the **Almond Board of California**, visit www.almonds.com or contact **Guangwei Huang, ABC Associate Director for Food Research & Technology** (ghuang@almondboard.com).

About Stanislaus County

Stanislaus County is located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, the geographical center of California. The county, with an economy and heritage deeply rooted in the agricultural sector, is quickly becoming one of the fastest growing regions of the state and a center of bioindustrial innovation. The bioindustrial manufacturing sector was identified as a strategic priority industry in the Stanislaus 2030 Investment Blueprint, and Stanislaus County provided seed funding to launch the BioEconomy, Agriculture, & Manufacturing (BEAM) Initiative in January 2023.

For more information about [Stanislaus County](http://www.stanislouscountycalifornia.gov), please contact **Sonya Severo, Public Relations & Communications Director** (severos@stancounty.com).

About The BDO Zone Initiative

The BDO Zone Initiative certifies regional readiness for bio-based manufacturing, creates global connections with project developers, and ignites an influx of clean energy opportunities.

A BDO Zone rating is an internationally recognized standards-based technical risk assessment of biomass feedstock, supply chain, and infrastructure risk with respect to the development potential of new biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas, and bioproduct plants. Investment grade ratings attract new bio-based manufacturing plants to the areas where they are most likely to succeed-- and create jobs.

For more information on the **BDO Zone Initiative**, please contact info@bdozone.org. To view all current and upcoming BDO Zone designations, visit www.bdozone.org or check out the BDO Zone [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.

About Ecostrat

Ecostrat is the North American Leader in supplying biomass due diligence for biofuels, renewable chemicals, biogas, and bio-product project development and finance. Ecostrat led the USDOE/BETO funded project to develop the new investment [Standards and Ratings for Biomass Supply Chain Risk](#) which were subsequently used in the development of the [CSA W209:21 Biomass supply chain risk National Standard of Canada](#).

Ecostrat's Advisory Group combines the BSCR Standards with powerful predictive analytics to understand and minimize supply chain risk. It's Biomass Supply Group has 25 years of experience in sourcing and supplying more than 5 million tons of biomass feedstock for bioenergy, biofuel, and biochemical projects across North America.



Jordan Solomon is Chairman of the BDO Zone Initiative and President of Ecostrat. He can be reached at jordan.solomon@ecostrat.com. For more information about **Ecostrat**, visit the company's website at www.ecostrat.com or check out the Ecostrat [LinkedIn](#) page for all news and updates.