



To our customers,

Here it is mid-October and normally our family would be gearing up for the citrus harvest. At this time of year, a flurry of activity begins at our grove as we begin to see the color change occur in our mandarin crop. The onset of the shorter days and cool nights drives that change and for us truly signifies the beginning of fall and winter. Normally, we would be preparing ourselves for the start of our shipping season and the numerous activities that occur within a 2-month period at our grove. Our excitement builds as we start hearing from customers that we haven't heard from since last season. Many of you and your families have been shipping with us for years and have become like friends and we look forward to hearing from you.

However, this year the mandarin crop in Placer County is at a historic low, with most orchards predicting harvests that are 5% or less of normal. Many will not harvest at all this year simply because the labor cost will be too high. The unprecedented rains that we saw in California last winter and spring brought much needed drought relief. Our reservoirs are full for the first time in years. Unfortunately, in today's environment rain brings with it nitrogen fertilizer that fuels growth. Many of us in the California foothills use nothing more than compost and cover crops to nurture our soil and feed our crops. The nitrogen available to our crops from these sources is more than enough. Citrus can be fickle. In good soil, they are not heavy nitrogen feeders. The unprecedented rainfall in our area deposited an even larger amount of nitrogen in our soil. Nitrogen fuels growth, not bloom. Our trees look beautiful, the best they have in years, but there was no bloom this Spring and hence no fruit.

While we are starting to see color break on the few mandarins we have, there is no flurry of activity around our grove this October. For the first time in our family history, we have no crops to ship. For us the small size of the crop means that we will not be taking orders this year for shipping.

Our expectation is that this is a period of recovery for our trees and that the crop will be back in all its glory next season.

Usually, when a group of farmers get together you will inevitably hear one of them say "well there is always next year." It is the nature of what we do.

Wishing you and your families all the best during the coming year.

Thank you for your support all these years as we look forward to next year.

The Snow Family