



## **USDA Shrinks the California Raisin Administrative Committee From 47 Seats to 21 After Grower Referendum; Rule Effective November 9**

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USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service published a final rule amending Federal Marketing Order No. 989 for California raisins. The Raisin Administrative Committee drops from 47 members to 21, producer district seats and the bargaining-association seat go away, and quorum falls from 25 to 14. Growers approved every change in a January 2026 referendum. Effective November 9, 2026.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service published a final rule in the Federal Register on October 9, 2026 amending Marketing Order No. 989, which regulates the handling of raisins from grapes grown in California. The rule takes effect November 9, 2026.

### **What changes**

- The Raisin Administrative Committee shrinks from 47 members to 21.
- Producer district representation is removed. An unaffiliated producer member seat is added.
- The designated cooperative bargaining association member seat is eliminated.
- Quorum drops from 25 to 14.
- Independent and small cooperative producers no longer need separate nominations for member and alternate positions.

- Factor 4 and part of factor 5 come out of the committee's marketing policy considerations. New language says reconditioned raisins count as standard raisins.
- The committee gains authority to accept voluntary contributions, and the order adds language on ownership of intellectual property.

## How growers voted

USDA held the hearing in Fresno on February 13–14, 2024. The referendum ran January 12–30, 2026. Each change needed two-thirds of growers voting, or two-thirds of the raisin volume they represented:

- Committee size, district seats, bargaining seat and quorum: 76.25% of growers, 82.66% of volume.
- Nomination change: 67.50% of growers, 81.65% of volume.
- Marketing policy and reconditioned raisins: 81.25% of growers, 91.99% of volume.
- Voluntary contributions and intellectual property: 72.97% of growers, 87.75% of volume.

Three written exceptions filed in 2024 opposed removing the bargaining-association seat. USDA kept that change, and voters approved it.

## The farm picture behind it

USDA's analysis cites about 1,500 raisin producers and 17 handlers, and a 2022–23 crop worth \$381.78 million. Bearing raisin acreage fell almost 53%, from a 280,000-acre peak in 2000–01 to 133,000 acres in 2021–22. The order covers the whole state of California, and the committee office is in Fresno.

## Sources

1. Federal Register, Oct. 9, 2026, Doc. 2026-20792, Raisins Produced From Grapes Grown in California; Order Amending Marketing Order No. 989. <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-20792>
2. Secretary's Decision and Referendum Order, 90 FR 57384 (Dec. 11, 2025), cited in the final rule.

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## Notes

- Author: Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby.
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