

Crisis Communications Manual

Organization – Blue Diamond Almonds

What is this organization's name and overall mission?

Blue Diamond Almonds: An agriculture almond co-op comprising of 3,000 growers to provide almonds and almonds products to the world.

Mission: "It's the fruit of commitment to a craft, and care woven into every step of the process. It's a beautiful reward for countless subtle decisions. And as a co-op of more than 3,000 growers, with one guiding goal, to bring the benefits of almonds to the world, we've been pioneering how almonds are enjoyed for over 100 years."

Source: [Our Story – Almond Quality is Our Legacy](#)

What does this organization do?

1. 3,000 Growers Strong - Co-op grows and harvest California almonds
2. Advanced Manufacturing – Raw almonds are turned into almond-based snacks, beverages, and other ingredients using state-of-the-art technology. Examples of almond products include almonds snacks, crackers, almond milk, and almond flour.
3. Rigorous Quality Assessments – Every almond product undergoes strict quality assessments and food safety standards procedures

Source: [The Blue Diamond Way](#)

What are this organization's publicly stated values? What about its implied values, determined by the logo, colors and images used on the organization's website? (Slide decks from week 5 on brand values & associations may be very helpful here.)

Values: Act with Integrity, Work as Partners, Innovate, Plan to Win, and Deliver Quality Every Day

Core values of company culture: To build strong relationships among growers and with their customers, to communicate directly and honestly, and to work as a team to realize the best return on their investment.

Source: [Our Values](#)

Logo: The logo consists of colors of blue and orange. Blue symbolizing a calming, relaxing, and trustworthy feel. Orange symbolizing optimism, happiness, enthusiasm, and youthfulness. Images used throughout the company are of employees, growers apart of the co-op, and children/high school students. Blue Diamond

supports and provides outreach efforts with schools and high school agricultural programs through their community giving program.



Logo Image from [Google Images](#)

Community Giving Program: This is a funding opportunity through a small grant request focused on the areas of agricultural education and health and wellness. The agriculture education focus provides hands-on learning opportunities for schools focused in the area of agriculture to expand school garden programs, classroom agriculture science projects, and other hands-on learning opportunities. The health and wellness focus is for schools interested in expanding nutrition, and community events centered around wellness. Examples of this grant are food banks, family shelter centers, and community garden education programs.

With these values, Blue Diamond prides itself on their sustainability efforts and creating a sense of belonging within the company. The company takes action on sustainable efforts and provides incentives through outreach programs. For a sense of belonging, the company wants a range of perspectives and cultures to make the business grow into a more diverse and dynamic company. Company culture is a key component of the inner working operations of Blue Diamond.

Purpose

What is the purpose of this manual? How should it be used?

The purpose of this crisis communication manual is to be used to help respond to a critical situation happening endogenous or exogenous. This manual provides an immediate response to a crisis with the direct aim of minimizing the damage through communication efforts on who to keep informed. This manual outline specific measures if a crisis were to happen what would be the proper steps to try to get business back to normal for the employees, customers, and community.

- Endogenous Crisis: Self-inflicted harm, violates customer trust, something the organization did or failed to do, response to boost or break a brand
- Exogenous Crisis: Issues external to the company
 - Brand infection: same industry, similar product, shared association
 - Brand Contamination: crisis caused by unexpected, unrelated event
 - Natural, financial, technological, terrorism/war conflict, political/cultural
- Week 6 – Responding to Indirect Crises PowerPoint

This manual can be used for a variety of crises that could happen within Blue Diamond or the almond/agriculture industry. Examples of crises could be natural disasters, severe weather, accidental events in factories/warehouses, technology issues, and domestic/international trade issues.

Media Spokesperson

Who in the company / organization is the spokesperson? Why have you selected this individual? What qualifies this individual to serve in this capacity? (We discussed spokesperson selection week 3, day 1.)

For the spokesperson, there are three chosen individuals from the company. The primary spokesperson would be the President & CEO [Kai Bockmann](#). The secondary spokesperson would be the Chief Global Supply Office, [Brian Barczak](#) because he would help be the lead communicator for the stakeholders and international partners. The tertiary spokesperson would be Vice President of Member Relations, [Mel Machado](#). He would be the lead communicator with the co-op growers. These individuals have been picked because of their leadership within the company. Their roles would be played out a little differently since there are multiple sectors of this company. For all crises that effect the entire company as a whole, Kai Bockmann would be the lead spokesperson.

Stakeholders

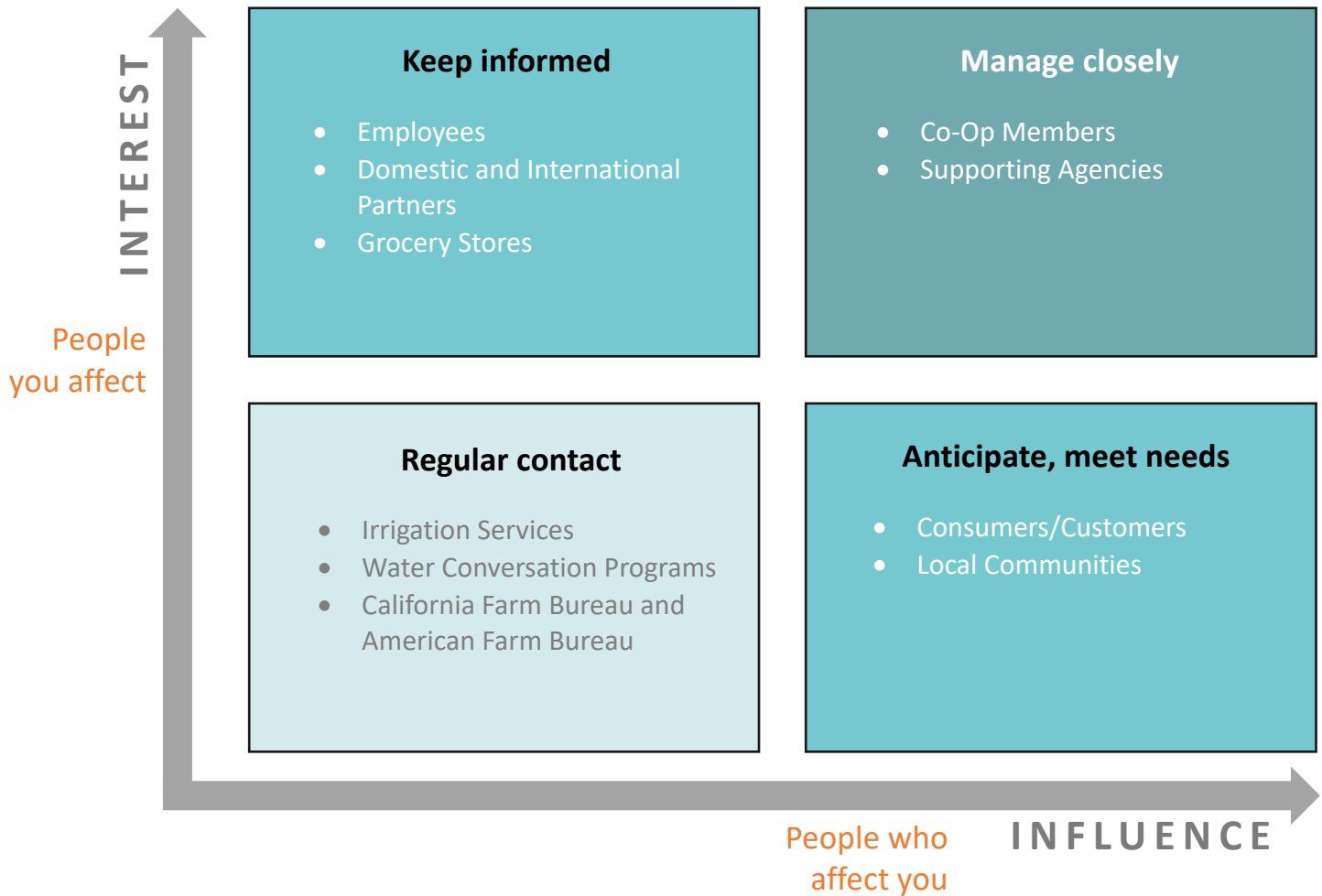
Considering the stakeholder interest / influence grid introduced earlier in the semester (week 1, day 2), identify potential internal and external stakeholders below *and* place them in their appropriate locations within the grid at the end of this section.

Internal Stakeholders

- Co-Op Members (There are about 3,000 growers apart of the co-op across California)
- All Employees (Blue Diamond Departments: Marketing and Communications, Information technology, Engineering, Production and Operations, Research and Development, Sales, Supply Chain and Planning, Finance, Human Resources, and Legal, Retail, Membership, Quality, and Manufacturing)
- Partners (Domestic and International)

External Stakeholders

- Consumers/Customers
- Irrigation/Drought Management Services
- Local Communities (Main locations are Sacramento, Salida, and Turlock, CA)
- Water Conversation Programs (Orchard Stewardship Incentive Program)
- Supporting Agencies (California Almond Board and California Almond Alliance)
- Grocery Stores
- California Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau



Communication Channels

Part I:

Following the PESO model (week 5, day 1), list **and link to** your organization's owned channels of communication, as well as identifying **and linking to** at least two shared channels (look for brand fans / influencers who discuss the brand). You also can provide screenshots of influencer content where they mention the org's brand.

Owned Channels

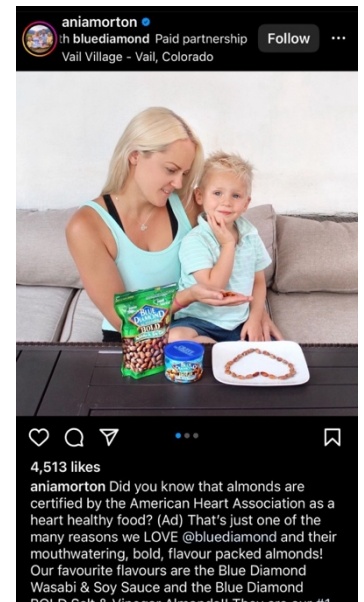
General Accounts (All social media accounts are verified)

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Pinterest](#)

- [X](#)
- [Tik Tok](#)
- [Almond Breeze Instagram](#)
- Media Inquiries: communications@bdgrowers.com
- General Inquiries: support@bdgrowers.com, (800) 987-2329
- Order Assistance: (916) 446-8643

Shared Channels

- [Body By Kurt](#): Group and Personal Trainer
- [Morgan Yates](#): Blogger in Los Angeles, CA
- [Georgina Stokes](#): Blogger in London, UK
- [Ania Morton](#): Blogger in Colorado



Part II:

List the ways you will communicate crisis updates both externally (website, customer emails, social media, etc.) and internally (employee email, meeting rooms, etc.). Also make note of when each stakeholder should be notified.

External Stakeholders

- Email/Phone Calls to communicate directly with all partner agencies and programs (notify 1st within 48-72 hours)
- Social Media using all platforms with action to lead to the website for more information (notify 2nd within 48-72 hours)
- Website with all information expanded in deeper detail with official statement (notify 3rd within 3-4 days)

Internal Stakeholders

- Email to all Co-op Members and phone calls to regional/territory-based managers (notify 1st within 24-48 hours)
- Email to all employees and press conference for all employees (notify 2nd within 48-72 hours)
- Zoom call and phone calls for all domestic and international partners (notify 3rd within 4-5 days)

Potential Crises & Key Messages

List all crises that your organization may face (minimum of 5, but you can add others).

- Review the different types of crises identified early in the semester (week 1, day 1 slide deck), and consider the endogenous versus exogenous crises discussed in class (week 6, day 2) as you consider the risks for your organization. (It may be helpful to review the football crisis walk-through from week 3, day 1.)
 - If risk is exogenous, note it as either brand infection or contamination, including the type for the latter.

Additionally, list one key message (short, concise, repeated often) for each potential crisis. Be very thorough in this section. (Consult the week 7, day 2 slide deck on writing official statements & messaging strategies.)

1. Almond Blossom Season Natural Disaster with severe ice and snow storms across the California Central Valley
 - Exogenous – Brand Contamination (Natural)
 - Key message: We are committed to working together to manage this impact on our company, our customers, and our growers. Blue Diamond is working with their research team to analyze the economic impact on the almond industry and each individual grower.

2. Severe weather of flooding during peak almond growing season
 - Exogenous – Brand Contamination (Natural)
 - Key message: We are aware of the unfortunate severe weather of flooding affecting the peak almond growing season. We as an almond community are committed to finding innovative ways to sustain California's number one crop.
3. Loss of Support for the Almond Industry, Increase Sales for Walnuts
 - Endogenous and Exogenous – Financial and Cultural
 - Key message: We as a company are creating strategies to expand and advertise almonds in a new way to our domestic and international consumers. Blue Diamond is working with our sales and marketing team to create a dynamic strategic plan to increase the support for almonds.
4. Post-Harvest Bacteria Found in Almond Crop
 - Exogenous – Brand Infection
 - Key message: We as a company take full responsibility for the poor-quality control measures in our processing facility. We are aware of the contained crop and will investigate all facilities with a new and expansive set of procedures in collaboration with the USDA.
5. New Flavor of Almonds fail to hit the local grocery store shelves
 - Endogenous
 - Key message: Blue Diamond is deeply sorry for promising our customers a new flavor of almonds this week. We as a company are disappointed with our actions but promote to do better to service our customers.
6. California Drought Strikes Again for the Almond Industry
 - Exogenous – Brand Contamination (Natural)
 - Key Message: We as, Blue Diamond Almonds, owe our company, employees, and growers an apology due to the lack of service we have provided. We are committed to working through this drought together to come back stronger than the almond industry has ever seen before.
7. Employee injured during shift
 - Endogenous
 - Key Message: We are committed to the safety and wellness of all employees. Safety is our number one priority for all departments, especially our processing and distribution centers with the heavy machinery.

Negative Impacts of Crises

List some potential negative impacts your organization may face as a result of some of the crises you identified and/or as a result of poor crisis management (It may be helpful to review the football crisis walk-through from week 3, day 1.)

- Revenue and Profit Losses with Growers, Consumers, and Trade Partners
- Bankruptcy of Company
- Decrease income for farmers
- Layoffs of Employees
- Stakeholders and Industry Partners stepping away to place support into another business
- Decrease in California's agricultural economy (Almonds contribute about \$7 Billion, California produces 80% of the world's almonds and 100% of the United States' commercial supply)
- Growers sign contracts with other processing/distribution centers for their products
- Consumers support other nuts like walnuts, pistachios, cashews, etc.

Positive Impacts of Crises

List some potential positive impacts your organization may benefit from after handling a crisis properly. (It may be helpful to review the football crisis walk-through from week 3, day 1.)

- Reform with the entire state's natural resource management agencies and organizations
- Increase with water storage of reservoirs around the state and proper water management
- Advancements in almond production use less water and resources and to create a sturdier crop
- Find a new substitute or replacement crop for almonds to better grow with climate change
- New research and studies within the almond industry to better aid crop to compete with similar nut trees

Practice Generic Crisis Message

Write a first official statement for one of your potential crises noted above. Do not use your draft manual statement, as it was completed before many critical course concepts were explored. (Be sure to consult the week 7, day 2 slide deck on writing official statements and key messaging strategies.)

[Organization name] statement regarding [crisis]

Write your statement here, complete with good grammar and correct spelling.

Blue Diamond Almonds statement regarding Almond Blossom Season Flood Disasters

We, as Blue Diamond Almonds and the rest of the almond industry discovered the unfortunate natural disaster event of extreme flooding across the California Central Valley this week. The flooding will take a significant hit on all almond orchards especially because of the bloom season.

With the prestigious Blue Diamond research team, our researchers are analyzing the potential economic impact the flooding will have on this year's almond harvest. In addition, we are working with our partner agencies to measure this economic impact.

We are thankful for the endless support our customers and growers have provided our company. The cheerful and optimistic spirits have helped our community feel better in a time of the unknown. We express sincere gratitude for our customers supporting our company throughout the year. Our company can always count on our customer support.

Growers, we will be emailing you by Friday of this week with direct action and an update for the next steps. Our research team is working with our communication department to create a full economic impact to prepare our growers better for what harvest will look like this fall.

Please follow our social media and website for daily updates. For more information, please visit our website at bluediamond.com or call us at (800) 987-2329 on our dedicated almond flood hotline to address this issue in our industry.

Blue Diamond Almonds and the rest of the almond industry will come back stronger after this severe weather event.