

the nation

Brown urges giving income tax incentives to improve health level of Americans

United Press International
CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — California Gov. Edmund Brown Jr. Saturday proposed giving Americans income tax credits as an incentive to stay healthy and said restrictions on laetrile should be eliminated.

The ideas were part of Brown's outline of a national health policy based "on wellness as a way of life

rather than sickness as an obsession."

Brown, a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, criticized traditional medical practice and plans for government-paid catastrophic health insurance.

Catastrophic health insurance is favored by both President Carter and Sen. Edward Kennedy —

Brown's political rivals — but he made no direct mention of either man's health plans, both of which are pending in Congress.

The governor said Americans should be allowed to choose a variety of treatments.

"Medical practice," he said, "is not just the province of doctors."

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Iranian turmoil responsible

Pistachio exports threatened

United Press International
NEW YORK — Oil isn't the only commodity threatened by the political turmoil in Iran. That country's other major export — pistachio nuts — accounts for 90 percent of the world's supply.

But California pistachio producers, who have been trying for years to make inroads into this profitable market, think they now are in a position to fill any shortage of the favored Iranian nut.

After 10 years of experimentation, California growers this year harvested a crop of 12 million pounds worth an estimated \$17 million.

But this is little comfort to the small band of pistachio lovers — the nut has only a 4 percent market penetration in the United States — since it won't bring lower prices.

Pistachio nuts retail for between \$7 and \$10 a pound and the price could escalate dramatically since,

even without other problems, an early frost hurt this year's crop in Iran.

Jack Bobker, president of Zenobia Nut Co., a leading importer, processor and distributor of pistachios, said wholesale prices have risen about \$1 a pound to around \$3.75 in the last six months since the Iranian revolution.

"This year's crop from California is a beautiful nut. It's the best so far,"

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Bobker said. "But it still doesn't have the taste of the best Iranian nut."

California producers began growing pistachios in earnest 10 years ago in the San Joaquin Valley. There are 31,000 acres planted but this year's crop comes from only a little more than 4,000 acres, according to the California Pistachio Association.

According to Bobker, earlier efforts were a disaster. "The quality was so bad we had to give guarantees to our customers not to mix them with Iranian nuts," he said. "This year is much better."

The California producers have indeed had problems with the little nut, primarily because it takes from 8 to 10 years to mature properly. And the crop is alternating — trees bear a heavy crop only every other year.

Pistachios must be harvested in a 30-day period in September. They must be hulled and dried within 24 hours or the shell discolors. California growers use an abrasive vegetable peeling machine to hull the nuts and forced air to dry them.

Unlike the familiar red-dyed shell, California nuts are marketed with the natural color — as are premium Iranian nuts.

"Only the lower grades and smaller nuts are dyed," Bobker said. "Pistachios have a pink cast on the tree and years ago it was thought the red shells more or less resembled the natural nut."

Excluding the latest disorder in

Iran, Bobker said the rest of the government has honored its commitments for pistachios.

"Yes, we're getting short but even with only a 4 percent market penetration there's enough to handle demand," he said. "If there were 10,000 tons of pistachios in the United States, we could sell 20,000 tons. There's 96 percent of the market left."

"We hope the California growers can keep improving their quality. There's a tremendous market they will find a home."

But Bobker doesn't look for relief from skyrocketing prices if Iranian imports stay at the level.

"California producers will ask equal or higher prices for their production at its present level. Prices could come down."

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Cut in sentence denied
Sirhan stays in jail
United Press International
SAN FRANCISCO — Sirhan Sirhan, convicted assassin of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, has been rejected by the California Supreme Court in his bid for a reduced sentence.

The court Friday denied a petition for a writ of habeas corpus, filed by Sirhan after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against him on June 5.

Sirhan asked the Supreme Court to cut 45 months off his 30-year sentence.

He has served 16 years and nine months of the multiple crimes involving the 1968 hotel shooting in which Kennedy was slain and others were injured.

The Community Release Commission previously set May 1, 1985, as the date when Sirhan is eligible for parole.

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