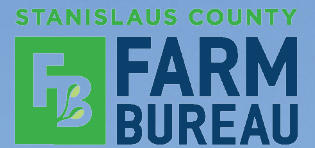


The Stanislaus Farm News

The *voice* of Stanislaus County Agriculture



For the **good** of your **food**.



**Official Publication of Stanislaus
County Farm Bureau
Vol.74 No.7 April 7, 2023**

Livestock Facts:

*Pork is the world's most consumed meat
Over 68 percent of the world's protein is
derived from animal sources*

*Livestock & Poultry Product's Value in Stanislaus County in
2021, \$849,181,000*

Stanislaus Farm News

Published Fridays by the
Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

PHONE (209) 522-7278

FAX (209) 521-9938

email: farmnews@stanfarmbureau.org

advertising@stanfarmbureau.org

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Thurs. April 13th, 2023

Stanislaus County Fair: 900 N Broadway, Turlock

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FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Employment Policy

On March 28, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee approved a budget change proposal to be wrapped into a trailer bill to implement last September's agreement between Governor Newsom, the California Labor Federation, and the United Farm Workers to implement revisions of AB-2183 (Stone) the Governor sought in exchange for signing a bill he had previously said he would not sign. Those revisions delete provisions of the bill establishing a "labor peace" status for agricultural employers under which they agree not to resist attempts to unionize the workforce, including access to the worksite previously granted under the Agricultural Labor Relations Board's access regulation overturned in its Cedar Point decision, finding that rule an unconstitutional infringement of employer's private property rights. However, no employer's opted for this status, and as a practical matter the deletion of labor peace status will work no meaningful change in the law. As amended, AB 2183 permits unions to collect employees' signatures up to one year in advance to be later applied to petitions to the Board to unionize an employer (a Majority Support Petition) claiming it has support of a majority of the employer's employees. To verify this, an employer will be required to furnish the prior week's complete payroll list (including street addresses and telephone numbers) which the Board would use to verify the union's claim. The list would also be available to the union to perfect the list of employees it claims support union status.

The bill also imposes unprecedented new monetary penalties for unfair labor practices (formerly, ULP penalties were remedial, including back-pay and reinstatement for improperly underpaid or terminated employees), and a requirement for an employer to file an appeal bond to appeal to a civil court after the ALRB's quasi-judicial process, in effect requiring an employer to pay a penalty to appeal to a higher court.

It is unclear what steps may occur later in the Assembly process or in the Senate, but it is clear that this revision to AB 2183 agreed to by private parties will never be considered by any policy committee in either house of the Legislature. Staff: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

Agriculture Technology

AB-1016 authored by Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer and sponsored by Farm Bureau passed from Assembly Committee on Agriculture with the unanimous bipartisan support. The bill provides the Department of Pesticide Regulations with the authority to establish a training and credentialing program that encourages the safe use of precision technology by farmers and qualified applicators.

During the hearing, San Diego County Farm Bureau member, farmer, and owner of a qualified applicator services business, Al Stehly, provided testimony to the Committee members focused on his hope to utilize a drone to remove the workers in his pesticide applicator business from close contact with pesticides that comes inherently in ground based

systems and backpack blowers. Next, the California Agricultural Aircraft Association provided testimony stating that they were not opposed to the bill but wanted to express concerns regarding the safety of drone applications. Assemblymember Jim Wood asked the CAAA why a drone agriculture pesticide applicator had to be trained by a fixed winged pilot, stating that he had just met with his local vector control district and learned that they do not train with the fixed wing pilots and primarily use a drone with 30-40 gallons on board to conduct pesticide applications. Assemblymember Jim Wood pressed CAAA to explain why, for agriculture, the pesticide training path needed to be limited to working with fixed winged pilots when the public good was being met by vector control in a structure like that authorized by AB 1016. Then, Assemblymember Jim Wood asked to be added to the bill as a Co-Author.

Assemblymember Juan Alanis commented next that when he was a local sheriff, he participated in drafting the state's rules regarding law enforcement's use of drones, and stated that the opposition during that drafting process came from fixed wing pilots. He then said he would support the bill. Finally, Assemblymember Devon Mathis commented that he wants to make sure that AB 1016 takes safety into account to ensure that the use of drones does not lead to more claims of pesticide drift, and he appreciates the author being willing to discuss those concerns with CAAA. Then, he voted in support of the bill, as did As-

semblymember Heath Flora, and the rest of the Agriculture Committee. The bill moves next to the Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection. Staff Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

CESA and Wildlife

AB 606, a Farm Bureau Sponsored bill, introduced by Assemblymember Devon Mathis passed unanimously out of the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee this week. This bill would remove the sunset provision on current accidental take statute. The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) prohibits the taking of an endangered or candidate species. Under CESA, the Department of Fish and Wildlife may authorize the take of listed species pursuant to an incidental take permit if the take is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity. The act also provides, until January 1, 2024, that the accidental take of a candidate, threatened, or endangered species resulting from an act that occurs on a farm or a ranch in the course of otherwise lawful routine and ongoing agricultural activities is not prohibited by the act, and would require a person, when an accidental take is known to occur under these circumstances, to report the take to the department within 10 days. This bill would remove that sunset date and extend indefinitely the above-mentioned exception to the act and the related reporting requirements. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Insurance

Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara announced that the California FAIR Plan Association has agreed to more than

double its existing commercial coverage limits to \$20 million for businesses unable to find coverage in the normal insurance marketplace. The FAIR Plan is an association comprised of all insurers authorized to transact basic property insurance in California, and designed to be the state's property "insurer of last resort," writing coverage for businesses and residences when other insurance options are not available.

Commissioner Lara and the FAIR Plan have been working on this issue since the Commissioner's investigatory hearing into the FAIR Plan last July where Jim Houston, California Farm Bureau's Chief Administrative Officer provided testimony with other businesses about the growing need for greater commercial coverage limits. Prior to Commissioner Lara taking office in 2019, the FAIR Plan's commercial limits had not been adjusted in more than two decades to keep pace with increasing property values and coverage needs.

The new limits for the combined coverage under the FAIR Plan Division I Commercial Property Program, increase from \$8.4 million to \$20 million per location and, under its Division II Businessowners Program, from \$7.2 million to \$20 million per location. State legislators investigated Commissioner Lara's call for an increased commercial coverage limit at the FAIR Plan with both the Assembly and Senate Insurance Committees conducting hearings. Napa County Farm Bureau President Peter Nissen testified at the Senate Insurance Committee hearing, noting that the existing limits in the FAIR Plan leave many Farm Bureau members with significant risk exposure.

The new coverage limits will take effect after the FAIR Plan submits a new rule filing for approval by the Department of Insurance. The FAIR Plan has 60 days to submit a rule filing to the Department, with the goal of the Department approving

these coverage limit increases, meaning coverage could be available in the fourth quarter. Staff Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Transportation

On March 23, 2023, the California Air Resources Board voted to give Director, Steve Cliff, delegated authority over some on-road emissions regulations. This is a huge delegation of authority. "The Board will consider delegating to the Executive Officer, for a limited time, specific powers to consider any CARB staff-proposed new, amended, or revoked emission standards, test procedures, and compliance test procedures for new on-road motor vehicles, which includes the authority to approve, with or without Executive Officer modifications, or deny such proposals." Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

Water

Agencies Clarify Important Details of Executive Order Allowing Diversions of Floodwaters for On-Farm Groundwater Recharge Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-4-23 ("EO") seeks to temporarily loosen restrictions on groundwater recharge in light of from a string of near-record winter storms and related snowmelt through June 1st, 2023.

Guidance for diverters and landowners interested in related groundwater recharge opportunities and a required online reporting form have been posted on a new Water Board website here. Additional information is available on the DWR/California Natural Resources Agency webpage here.

A fact sheet released by the Department of Water Resources ("DWR") includes a map showing Sierra snowpack levels, as well as specific geographic "historical areas of concern" in the San Joaquin River Basin and Tulare Lake Basin areas where potentially dangerous floodwaters will be present in abundance this year.

Not everyone will be able to take advantage of the opportunity to recharge under the EO this year. For those who do, there are important restrictions and compliance duties to be carefully considered. Notwithstanding, the EO is a major step in the right direction and an opportunity, not only to accomplish some recharge free from normal rigid restrictions, but also to learn and prepare for future years. Staff: Justin Fredrickson; jfredrickson@cfbf.com

Wildfire

SB-542 authored by Senator Brian Dahle and supported by Farm Bureau passed from Senate Governance and Finance Committee with unanimous bipartisan support and a committee recommendation to move to the Consent Calendar in Senate Appropriations. The bill provides personal income tax relief related to the 2019 Zogg wildfire. Staff Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE TO DISCUSS WINTER STORMS AND FLOOD IMPACTS AT UPCOMING MEETING ON APRIL 4th

The California State Board of Food and Agriculture will discuss current flooding impacts to local communities and available USDA disaster assistance programs at its upcoming meeting on April 4th. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the California Department of Food and Agriculture, 1220 N Street – Main Auditorium, Sacramento, CA, 95814.

The meeting is also available via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84015196235> Webinar ID: 840 1519 6235 Passcode: Board2023! Phone Access Passcode: 4815231070

"Recent regional flooding has significantly impacted local communities as well as California's farmers, ranchers and farmworkers," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "Federal and state resources are available to assist. Advanced planning

is critical as near record levels of Sierra snowpack will soon begin Spring run-off, increasing the likelihood of further flood impacts in the coming months." Invited speakers include: Blong Xiong and Navdeep Dhillon, USDA Farm Service Agency; Jeff Yasui, USDA Risk Management Agency; Tricia Stever Blatter, Tulare County Farm Bureau, Juan Hidalgo, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner; Supervisor Tod Kimmelshue, Butte County; Hernan Hernandez, California Farmworker Foundation and representatives from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and flood protection agencies.

"Flooding once again underscores the ongoing challenges we have within our water infrastructure," said President Don Cameron, California State Board of Food and Agriculture. "To meet these challenges requires close coordination among federal, state and local agencies. The Governor's recent executive orders on floodwater recharge and water resilience, combined with California's long-term water supply strategy, are providing critical steps forward and demonstrating leadership on the complex local and regional water challenges we are experiencing." The California State Board of Food and Agriculture advises the governor and CDFA secretary on agricultural issues and consumer needs. The Board conducts forums that bring together local, state and federal government officials; agricultural representatives; and citizens to discuss current issues and concerns to California agriculture.



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As another membership service, Farm Bureau members are offered FREE classified advertising in the Stanislaus Farm News. Ads must be 18 words or less and only one ad per month per membership (membership number required.) Ads may be MAILED to the Stanislaus Farm News, or BROUGHT to the SCFB office, 1201 L Street, Downtown Modesto. NO PHONE-IN OR FAX free ads will be accepted. Free ads are restricted to farm machinery or equipment or unprocessed farm products. Farm jobs wanted or offered will also be accepted. No real estate ads and no commercial items or services will be accepted. 209-522-7278

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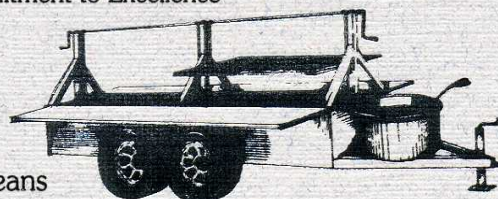
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Kids Corner:

Commodity Fact Sheet

Beef*Information compiled by the California Beef Council*

How Produced – There are approximately 670,000 beef cattle on about 11,000 ranches in California. In addition, there are 1.72 million dairy cows, which also play an important role in the state's beef industry. Cattle are ruminants, which means they have a four-chambered stomach. Most beef cattle in California graze on land that cannot be used for raising other crops. There are four types of cattle operations; cow-calf, seed stock, stocker, and feedlot. Many producers have a combination of these operations.

Cow-calf producers make up the largest segment of California cattle operations. These ranchers have a herd of breeding cows, replacement heifers (young cows), and bulls. The cows are bred to calve in the spring or fall. Calves are usually sold after they are weaned, at about seven months. After weaning, cattle are sent to feedlots for approximately 120 days where they are fed a high-energy ration of grain and hay. Nineteen percent of cropland in the nation is used to raise feed grains for livestock. Cattle are good recyclers and are often fed agricultural by-products such as almond hulls or rice straw.

Once cattle weigh approximately 1,200 to 1,400 pounds, they are processed. Ninety-eight percent of each animal is used, but less than half is eaten as beef. Cattle provide a multitude of by-products that consumers use every day, including photographic film, soap, tires, leather, and pharmaceuticals.

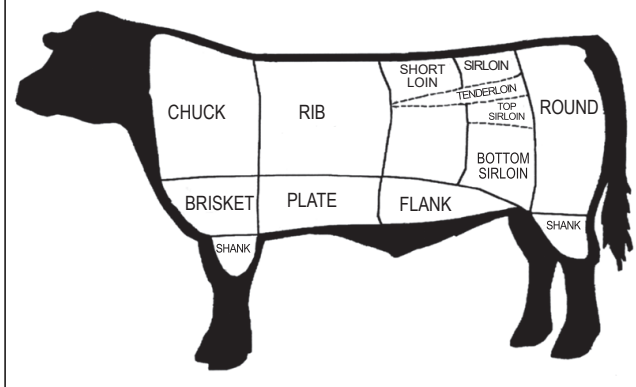
Breeds – There are 275 recognized breeds of cattle throughout the world. Most breeds in California originated from Europe or have a Brahman influence. Brahman cattle from India are known for their tolerance to heat.

Cattle brought to the Western Hemisphere by the early Spanish explorers were the ancestors of the Texas Longhorns. While extremely hardy, these cattle did not produce a palatable product. As a result, nineteenth century cattle producers imported purebred cattle, including European Angus and Hereford, to improve the quality of their herds. During the twentieth century, breeds such as Charolais, Limousin, and Gelbvieh became more prevalent due to their leaner meat characteristics.

Commodity Value – The sale of cattle and calves accounted for \$195.8 billion in cash receipts in 2021 and was fourth in terms of value in the state's top 10 commodities in 2021. Nationally, California ranks fourth in

total cattle numbers behind Texas, Nebraska, and Kansas. Beef and beef products are in the top 10 of California exports, bringing in \$413 million in 2020.

– BEEF CUTS –
Where They Come From



Top Producing Counties – Beef cattle are raised in every county in California except San Francisco. Top beef cattle producing counties include Tulare, Kern, Merced, and Imperial.

History – The introduction of cattle to North America mirrors the exploration and settlement of the continent by Europeans. Columbus introduced cattle to the Western Hemisphere on his second voyage to the New World in 1493. Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez took offspring of those same cattle to Mexico in 1519. In 1773, Juan

Bautista de Anza brought 200 head of cattle to California to supply the early California missions.

The hide and tallow trade sustained the California economy while it was still under Mexican rule and hides were used as currency to buy supplies from Boston trading ships. When James Marshall discovered gold in 1848, the beef business boomed, feeding the fortune seekers who came to the gold fields. Many of the miners soon realized there was more money to be made in cattle than in prospecting.

Nutritional Value – Beef is a nutritionally dense, high-quality protein. One three-ounce cooked serving of lean beef provides 10 essential nutrients and about half your Daily Value of protein. Beef is an excellent source of zinc, selenium, niacin, vitamin B12, and vitamin B6, and a great source of phosphorous, iron, choline, and riboflavin. There are more lean cuts available today than ever before. More than 60 percent of beef cuts found in a supermarket are considered lean by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards. Beef is also a primary source of monounsaturated fat in diets which is the same type of healthy fat found in avocados and olive oil.

For additional information:

California Beef Council
(916) 925-BEEF
Website: www.calbeef.org





Photo/Brian Baer

Farm Bureau delegation members from the Central Valley Jessica Filippini, Caitie Diemel, Trevor Cordova and Mark Avilla discuss issues with legislative aide Jessica Zaragoza and Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer, D-Los Angeles.

Farmers show 'unified voice' at Capitol

By Caleb Hampton, AgAlert


California Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer, D-Los Angeles, knows he might not have been voters' first guess to introduce agricultural legislation.

"I'm pretty sure they said, 'Jones-Sawyer... Ag bill! What?'" the assemblyman joked with members of the California Farm Bureau during the March 27-29 Capitol Ag Conference in Sacramento.


Despite representing an urban district, Jones-Sawyer introduced a bill this year that could change the way people in California farm. The bill, authored by Farm Bureau, would pave the way for the state Department of Pesticide Regulation to create a program allowing farmers to use drones to apply pesticides.

These types of collaborations exemplify what the Farm Bureau aims to foster through its

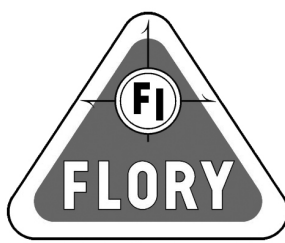
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annual Legislative Day. Held on March 28, the event marked the start of the legislative advocacy year, as members from across the state converged on the state Capitol to speak face to face with lawmakers.

“This is an important time to engage with lawmakers and show that agriculture has a unified voice in terms of our position on bills and the direction we need to go in California,” said California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson. The Legislature is considering dozens of bills that could impact agriculture. Legislation Farm Bureau is tracking include a state Senate bill that would simplify insurance options for many farm operations and an Assembly bill that would extend agriculture’s exemption from a provision of California’s

Endangered Species Act that pertains to accidental takes. Chris Reardon, California Farm Bureau director of government affairs, emphasized the importance of in-person interactions in policy advocacy. “Being here is a powerful statement,” he said. “It doesn’t hurt to have a bunch of people fill the hallways and elevators. It sends a message that we care about what we do, and our issues are important.”

Visits from farmers can be especially impactful for urban lawmakers such as Jones-Sawyer. “For a lot of urban legislators, these are going to be some of the few farmers and ranchers they meet with this year, but their vote counts just as much as the rural members,” Johansson said. “When it comes to legislators, the urban districts

outnumber the rural areas, so they are very important to engage.”

During a visit with Jones-Sawyer, farmers from Stanislaus

County explained the benefits of enabling farms to use drones for pesticide application. “This technology can improve efficiency,” said Mark Avilla, a Stanislaus County walnut grower. “Herbicides and pesticides are one of our biggest expenses. Any way we can cut down those expenses will help us stay in business and keep farming.”

The technology also has safety benefits. “When it comes to employees handling pesticides, it could give growers an opportunity to eliminate some of that personal contact with pesticides,” said Caitie Diemel, executive director of the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau.

Stanislaus farmer Trevor Cordova explained to Jones-Sawyer that aerial applicators can target specific spots in a field. “That way they might not have to treat the whole field,” he said. The farmers also used the visit to discuss other issues, such as regulations from the California Air Resource Board that severely limit the use of older diesel trucks and a proposed rule that

would phase out all diesel trucks in the coming years. “We’ve seen a lot of trucks taken out of use and a lot of problems moving products on farms and ranches,” Diemel said. Jones-Sawyer said he could relate to the challenges. “I used to work for the city, and we were trying change the trash trucks to electric. But then (the electric trucks) couldn’t get up the hill,” he said. “If you want to see something terrifying, there’s a trash truck, with all the trash in it.”


Jones-Sawyer emphasized the importance of bridging gaps between people in cities and rural farming communities.

“We’ve got to connect what you do on the farmland and what goes on in the city,” he said, mentioning urban agriculture-related businesses such as food processing centers. “People who have jobs in those processing centers are in my district. You supply them what they need to be able to feed their families and have a job every day.”

State Sen. Melissa Hurtado, D-Bakersfield, who is the daughter of farmworkers, spoke with Central Valley farmers about big-picture issues.


“I want us to start thinking about the near future and the challenges of having to meet the demand of feeding 10 billion people by 2050,” Hurtado said. “The resources are just becoming more limited, whether it’s floods or drought or hurricanes, whatever it may be, and those are impacting our food supply chain around the world.”

Martín Chávez, farmer relations director for Pacific Farm Management, a Central Valley labor contractor, encouraged Hurtado to invite other lawmakers to visit farms to understand “what we do day in and day out.” Hurtado said she loved the idea of creating a farm day for lawmakers “just spending the day in the shoes of a farmer or farmworker.” She added, “We have to do more to educate those who live outside the rural areas.”



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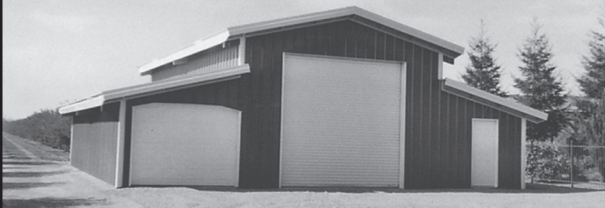


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American Farm Bureau Federation applauds ruling halting WOTUS rule in two states

Agricultural groups have expressed concerns over the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's latest "waters of the United States" rule – or WOTUS. The American Farm Bureau Federation filed suit, arguing the law creates confusing standards for "navigable waters" under the Clean Water Act that can impact routine farming operations. Now, in a separate suit, a judge has granted a preliminary injunction to halt enforcement of the rule in Texas and Idaho. AFBF President Zippy Duvall said, "The judge recognized the new rule likely oversteps EPA's authority."

Researchers test groundwater recharge, eyeing solutions to keep nitrates out of aquifers

A new study by University of California scientists is offering insights for farmers on how to recharge groundwater while preventing nitrates from fertilizer from entering aquifers. Torrential rains have piqued interest in recharging depleted groundwater supplies. Recently, UC researchers gathered groundwater recharge data from two vineyards in Fresno County to compile information on preventing leaching of nitrates. Study author Helen Dahlke said it is important to understand how much nitrate is in soil before considering flooding fields.

Hanford High School teacher honored as California's top ag educator

A teacher at Hanford High School has been honored as California's 2022-23 "Ag Educator of the Year." Jason Ferreira received the Golden Owl Award during the California FFA State Leadership Conference in Ontario. The prize comes with a \$3,000 Nationwide-funded donation to the school's agricultural education program. Award finalists included Brian Kim of Sunny Hills High School, Emily Brown of Corning Union High School, Celeste Morino of Ripon High School, Beth Swehla of Anderson Valley High School and Lauren Peterson of King City High School.

USDA announces new funding round for farmers in financial distress

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing additional financial relief for farm loan borrowers who are facing economic difficulties. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act provided \$3.1 billion to help distressed borrowers. In October, \$800 million in assistance went to help 11,000 delinquent or distressed borrowers, plus another

2,100 borrowers who had farms liquidated yet still had remaining debt. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced March 27 that another \$123 million in funding would be allocated, beginning in April.

Storms, flood waters wreak havoc in key farming regions

Months of heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding have dealt a new financial blow to California farmers. After a multiyear drought that had them fallowing land and plowing under crops, they now face flooded fields, property damage and crop delays. The damage has extended from dairies and orchards in the San Joaquin Valley to strawberry and vegetable fields along the Central Coast, with potential longer-term fallouts impacting some of the most productive agricultural regions in the world.

Court rejects challenges to water quality rules for farm irrigation

A Sacramento appeals court has sided with California farmers on three cases related to water quality regulations, which environmental groups had challenged for years. In deciding cases in favor of the California Farm Bureau and the California State Water Resources Control Board, the Third District Court of Appeal upheld the Central Valley's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Environmental groups had challenged the program as insufficient under the law. The program is intended to protect water quality in the Eastern San Joaquin watershed.

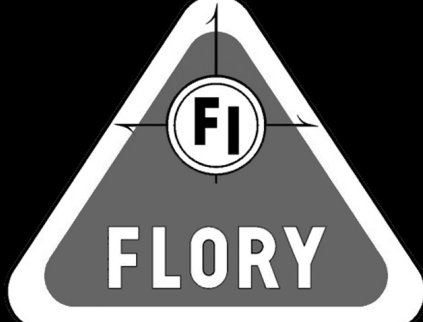
Farm Bureau members engage with lawmakers during Capitol Ag Conference

Farmers and ranchers from across California went to work this month on the legislative agenda for the California Farm Bureau – with Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis, state lawmakers and agency officials present for direct conversations. Water supply issues and recent flood impacts for agriculture fueled discussions at the March

27-29 Capitol Ag Conference in Sacramento. The Farm Bureau's March 28 Legislative Day also featured meetings at the state Capitol with numerous legislators and staff.

Desert farming region is at a crossroads amid Colorado River crisis

Every year, as many as 15,000 people with U.S. citizenship or legal status cross the border at the Mexicali-Calexico port of entry. They join the local farm workforce in the sprawling Imperial Valley region, which produces as much as 90% of America's winter vegetables. As Ag Alert reports in the final installment of its series on Imperial Valley farming, the Colorado River crisis may threaten agricultural employment in the region, where the \$2.9 billion agriculture sector accounts for one-fourth of the regional economy and one of every six jobs.



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Farmworker Appreciation 2023

By: Anna Genasci

Once again Modesto Rotary (MoRo), AgSafe and the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau (SCFB) came together to honor an essential workforce, farmworkers in Stanislaus County.

The idea for the award came from a desire of MoRo's Vocational committee to honor essential workers in some way and felt farmworkers were under-appreciated during the pandemic. So, they decided to have an award as a way to show appreciation to the people who have kept working throughout the pandemic and fed us when so many were sheltering at home. That brought us Farmworker Award 2021. Now that the pandemic is fading in its impact on our daily lives, we have turned our sights to the fact that agriculture is the economic engine of our county.

A recent report from the Ag Commissioner on economic contributions of agriculture in Stanislaus County found one in eight jobs are related to agriculture and its total economic impact is 7.15 billion dollars. The farmworker is the foundation to this economic engine and needs to be recognized which has inspired Farmworker Award 2023.

This past March, at a Modesto Rotary Luncheon, the committee honored the five amazing nominees.

First a shout out to our generous sponsors who provide the funding we used to gift surprise cash awards and plaques to our winners.

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Platinum Award : Jorge Anguiano with Bays Ranch

- Kate Donovan

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This year we had an amazing selection committee which

included Victor Delgado, Kate Donovan, James Shaw and Melissa Williams.

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Excellence Award : Jose Ceja with Triple C. Farms

Jose has been with Triple C Farms for nearly seven years. Darrel Cordova owner of Triple C. Farms, shared that if Jose is in charge of something he doesn't have to worry, "he will get the job done right." Jose has years of equipment experience and requires "no hand holding." Jose does a little bit of everything on the farm, driving equipment, spraying, irrigation and pruning. Jose and his wife have four children, two grandchildren and one on the way. Jose, who is described as, "quite the dancer," enjoys taking his wife out to dance.

Excellence Award : Jose Morales, with Gold Leaf Farms

The second Excellence Award goes to Jose Morales, with Gold Leaf Farms. Jose leads by example while demonstrating some serious "grit." He has been with Gold Leaf Farming for three and half years, but has worked at this particular ranch for over thirteen years. Garrison Quinn, Jose's supervisor, shared that Jose serves as a member on the company's employee council, nominated by his peers, and shares his valuable and candid input concerning the success of the farm. Jose and his wife have two kids, and Jose enjoys going to concerts in his free time.

Silver Award : Arthur Alves with Inderbitzen Dairy

Our Silver Award goes to Arthur Alves with Inderbitzen Dairy. According to Larry Inderbitzen Arthur does "everything" and deserves this recognition. Larry describes Arthur as treating the dairy as a way of life not just a job. Arthur spends his days doing all kinds of things; feeding, hoof trimming, repair work, fixing fence and he is always willing to help. Arthur and his wife have four children and four grandchildren. Arthur loves family dinners, playing cards and watching Portuguese soccer.

Gold Award : Jose Franco with JNM Dairy

Jose specializes in calf care and cattle comfort and has been the herd manager since 2012. Johnny and Nicole Morris, who own the dairy, said Jose is like family and they respect and trust his input on the dairy. Jose said his favorite part of the day is taking care of the calves and takes on the responsibility of training new employees. Jose and his wife have three kids and said he enjoys family time, having a good meal and attending church.

Platinum Award : Jorge Anguiano with Bays Ranch

Jorge has dedicated the last 34 years to working with Bays family. Daniel Bays, shared that Jorge manages a crew, serves as the irrigation foreman and is a problem solver. Jorge said he enjoys managing the

irrigation and learning about new water systems. Jorge was born in Mexico and came to California at a young age, he and his wife have raised three children. Daniel describes Jorge

as a kid a heart and part of the Bays family they feel lucky to have.

Thank you to these outstanding community members.



Excellence Award : Jose Ceja with Triple C. Farms



Excellence Award : Jose Morales, with Gold Leaf Farms



Gold Award : Jose Franco with JNM Dairy



Silver Award : Arthur Alves with Inderbitzen Dairy

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California Court of Appeal sides with farmers in precedential water quality cases

In a legal win for California farmers, a state appeals court rejected all arguments brought by environmental groups and sided with the California State Water Resources Control Board, the California Farm Bureau and others related to the Central Valley's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.

In its March 17 decision, the Third District Court of Appeal addressed three cases brought by environmental plaintiffs against

the California State Water Resources Control Board in which the groups challenged the adoption of general waste discharge requirements for growers within the Eastern San Joaquin Watershed.

"The Court of Appeal's landmark decision supports reasonableness and balancing in protecting water quality, while also maintaining our food supply and the economic viability of agriculture," said California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson. "The court's decision is precedential and applies to irrigated lands regulatory programs throughout the state."

Johansson added, "The decision upholds farmer anonymity for nitrogen application data, the use of township-level nitrate data and surface water representative monitoring."

Farm Bureau was represented in the case by Senior Counsel Kari Fisher and joined by fellow agricultural intervenors/respondents represented by Tess Dunham of Kahn, Soares & Conway and Jennifer Spaletta of Spaletta Law.

The California Farm Bureau works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of nearly 29,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of 5.3 million Farm Bureau members.

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Federal Disaster Declaration to Aid Recovery Efforts in California

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

President Joe Biden has approved California's request for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration. Federal aid will now be able to supplement ongoing state, tribal, and local recovery efforts. The counties of Kern, Mariposa, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Tulare, and Tuolumne have been included in the declaration. According to the White House, "assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster."

Severe storm systems have taken a toll on California communities, with flooding, landslides, and mudslides. Total damages are continuing to be calculated. Once assessments are fully completed, additional counties could be eligible for assistance.

"This declaration brings in more vital resources as we continue to work in lockstep with local, state and federal part-

ners to support communities that have been turned upside down by these storms," Governor Gavin Newsom said in a press release. "First responders and state personnel are on the ground in hard-hit regions across California to assist the ongoing response and recovery. We are committed to supporting our communities over the long haul and thank the Biden Administration for their continued partnership."

The disaster declaration was a point of conversation during the meeting of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture on Tuesday. Personnel from the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture's Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency detailed disaster assistance efforts. Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Juan Hidalgo, and Tulare County Farm Bureau Executive Director Tricia Stever Blatter also provided insight on how storm damage has impacted their communities.

The U.S. Small Business Administration has announced that low-interest federal disaster loans will now be available as a result of the disaster declaration. Businesses can borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace a variety of different business assets. Individuals and business owners who sustained losses can apply for disaster assistance online.



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California FFA's Increased Diversity Bodes Well for Future of Agriculture

\$600,000 in Farm Credit donations over the years have helped FFA grow and provide vital leadership development for future ag leaders

Roberto Lopez, a senior at Oakdale High School in Stanislaus County, is a strong believer in the value of FFA. Lopez is the president of both the school's FFA Chapter and the organization's central region, encompassing the area between Yolo and Merced counties.

His drive is so strong that he hopes to take a gap year between high school and college and be elected next month to serve as one of six FFA statewide student officers, who will interact with business and industry leaders, thousands of FFA members and teachers, corporate sponsors, government and education officials, local FFA leaders, and the public.

The team will lead personal growth and leadership training conferences for FFA members throughout the state and help set policies that will guide the future of FFA in California and the next generation of leaders.

"I was always an individual who was quiet and kept to himself," Lopez recalls. "But my ag teachers all introduced the idea of how FFA can turn a student into a leader. That really

sparked me. What better way to take my passion for ag than to be an advocate for industry?"

Lopez's ascent into leadership roles is representative of the growth of Latino membership in the California FFA. For decades after its inception in 1928, FFA – then the Future Farmers of America – was an all-male, all-white organization. During the 1960s, that began to change. Black members joined in 1965 when FFA merged with the segregated New Farmers of America, and women were first allowed to join in 1969.

But today, while 45% of members nationwide are female, nearly two-thirds of the membership is white.

California, however, is different. Twenty years ago, FFA membership in the Golden State was still roughly 60% white and 60% male. But according to FFA's 2021-22 Fact Sheet, 45% of members were Hispanic, 40% were white, 10% were of two or more races, and 2.5% each were Black and Asian. In addition, 73% of its 98,912 members were women. Although these changes are significant, FFA officials recognize that there is still work that needs to be done.

"FFA may not have radical changes, but change happens," said Katie Otto, executive director of development for the California FFA Foundation. "And that's not lost on our students and our leadership. We ask, are

we providing opportunities for all students? Are we accessible? And how can we better meet kids where they're at?"

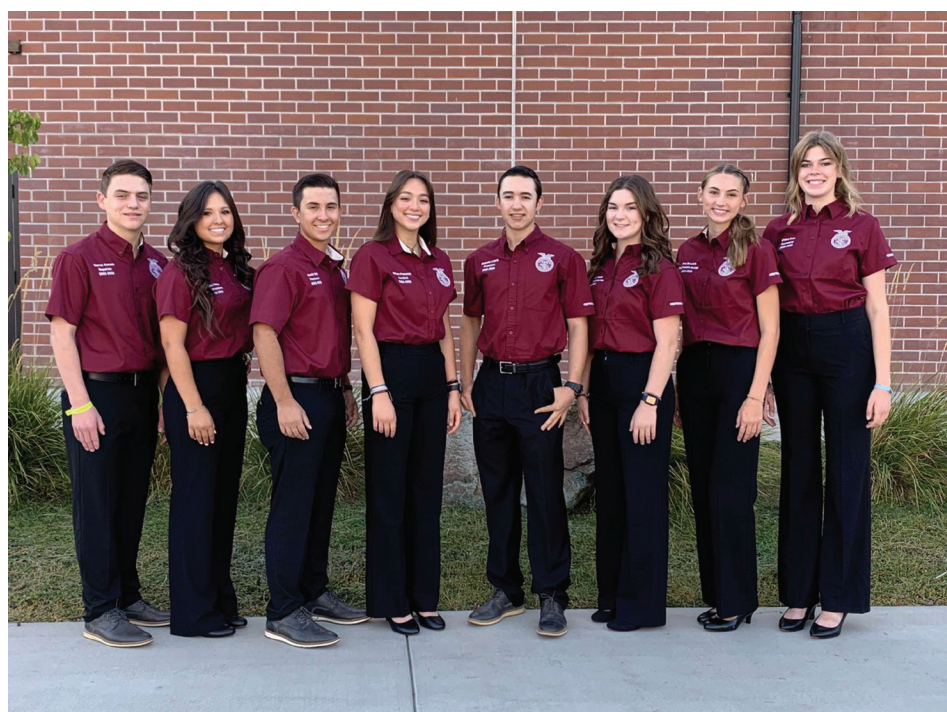
Mark Littlefield, President and CEO of AgWest Farm Credit, said FFA's growing diversity is crucial for the future of California agriculture.

"Farm Credit is a strong supporter of FFA and has donated over \$600,000 in the past 30 years to help FFA fulfill its mission," Littlefield said. "Farm Credit is committed to encouraging diversity and inclusion, and FFA's evolution is especially important to reflect the current make-up of California farms. This will ensure that our farms and ranches and the rest of the ag industry continue to

grow and prosper in the years to come."

Farm Credit Alliance members AgWest Farm Credit, American AgCredit, CoBank, Colusa-Glenn Farm Credit, Fresno Madera Farm Credit, Golden State Farm Credit and Yosemite Farm Credit are proud supporters of FFA. The organizations are part of the nationwide Farm Credit System – the largest provider of credit to U.S. agriculture.

Charles Parker, statewide FFA Advisor for the California Department of Education, said it took time during the 1980s and '90s to help Hispanic families understand that having their children participate in FFA was not just a pathway to working



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in the fields.

“The parents were farm laborers for the most part and the families didn’t understand what we did. We said we want your children to grow and to go to college and we can help you get there,” Parker said. “The students always wanted to be in it. Like all kids, they love to learn with their hands. But now we can show them that FFA students are going to college, and having those success stories is what drives parental support.”

Otto said the growing Latino and female membership reflects the expansion of FFA from its farming and ranching origins. Members must be enrolled in an ag course at their middle school or high school to be involved. Classes include biology, chemistry, floriculture, welding and mechanics and are as diverse as ag is in California.

Parker agreed.

“We let them know that FFA

is about more than working in the fields. It’s building the next robot; it’s doing engineering, developing new ways to sort fruit. Those are the alternatives we’re looking at.”

Lopez, who plans on being the first member of his family to attend college, is a perfect example of how FFA grows and develops members, said Isaac Robles, the ag department chair at Oakdale High and an FFA advisor.

“When he was a freshman, he was just another student. But through hard work and sticking to the program, I’ve seen him really develop into a young leader. We always have superstars from day one, but for Roberto it wasn’t easy – he worked his tail off, and you see the potential that develops out of hard work,” Robles said.

Developing tomorrow’s ag leaders is another reason why Farm Credit backs FFA so strongly, said Jeana Hultquist,

Vice President of Legislative Affairs with American AgCredit and a member of the California FFA Foundation Board of Directors.

“Roberto is a great example of how FFA develops great leaders. His long-term goal is to graduate from Cal Poly with a degree in ag business,” Hultquist said. “There are thousands of other California FFA members who will become leaders in farming, in finance, in the sciences and in advocacy in the years to come. Many of them would not have had these opportunities without FFA.”

###

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About the California FFA Foundation:

California FFA Foundation serves more than 100,000 California students and strives to make a difference in their lives by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through educational education.



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Byproduct Feeding Practices Important to California's Sustainability

*Jennifer Heguy – UCCE Stanislaus, Merced & San Joaquin, Rúbia Branco Lopes – UC Davis,
Noelia Silva-del-Rio – UC Davis & UC ANR & Ed DePeters – UC Davis Animal Science*

Nearly 41% of the California lactating cow ration is composed of byproducts. That number was calculated from responses to a 2022 survey of California dairy nutritionists. The data set represents approximately 936,700 lactating cows (26 returned surveys); 87.5% of those cows were housed in the San Joaquin Valley. Only 4% of lactating cows (38,100 cows) did not consume byproducts.

Our objectives were to quantify byproduct usage in dairy rations and to identify feeding trends and opportunities. Below are selected results from the study.

We asked a series of questions about byproduct inclusion rates of nutritionists' lowest and highest byproduct fed herds, as well as the average inclusion rate across all their herds. These values, as reported by nutritionists, are presented in **Table 1**. Average inclusion rate for the state was determined by weighting the nutritionists' "all herds" responses by number of lactating cows they fed. The result was a 41% average inclusion rate of byproducts in lactating rations.

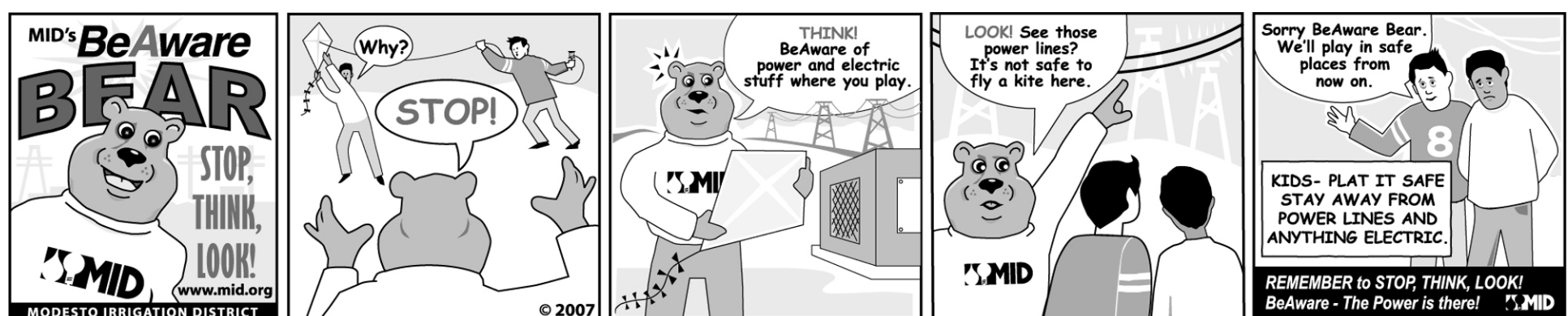
Table 1. Byproduct inclusion rates (DM basis) in California lactating dairy rations (not weighted).

	Lowest Fed (%)	Highest Fed (%)	All Herds (%)
Minimum	0	5	10
Maximum	70	80	80
Average	25	48	40

The range in byproduct feeding amounts was large. Ninety-six percent (96%) of nutritionists reported replacing both forages and concentrates with byproducts. In lactating diets, the three byproducts most frequently used to replace forages were almond hulls, citrus, and soybean hulls. Citrus, whey, and millrun were most frequently reported as concentrate replacements. Every nutritionist selected value (worth the price) as a reason for including byproducts. Less chose price (they're cheap; 38%) and availability (65%). Nutritionists reported increased byproduct feeding rates in the last five years (68%); 80% thought feeding rates would increase in the next five years.

Byproduct feeding is not a new practice. The wide range in feeding levels suggests it is possible to feed more byproducts on some dairies. Water regulation and reduced water availability will impact California's ability to produce forages. Summer 2022 saw rail disruptions prevent concentrates from entering the state. Byproduct feeding strategies may help mitigate feedstuff disruptions while contributing to the sustainability and resiliency of the California feeding program.

Thank you to the California dairy nutritionists who participated in the survey and to the California Dairy Research Foundation for funding this project. If you have any questions about this work, you can reach me at jmheguy@ucdavis.edu.



#StillFarming: Why the Farm Bill Matters

By: Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau President

Three years ago, Farm Bureau launched our #StillFarming campaign. Our goal was simple: reassure Americans that farmers and ranchers were committed to maintaining a steady food supply at a time when many Americans witnessed empty grocery store shelves for the first time in generations and supply chain disruptions made headlines. Farmers and ranchers take great pride in rising each day to grow the food, fuel and fiber we all depend on, and managing risk on the farm is critical to keeping food on our tables. We are still farming, for our neighbors near and far, thanks to our public investment in U.S. agriculture through the farm bill.

Thanks to risk management programs in the farm bill, farmers can hold on through tough times like high inflation, global market turmoil and natural disasters. We are also building a more sustainable future through conservation programs and

agricultural research and helping families facing hunger to keep food on the table through tough times. The farm bill matters to all Americans, and 73% of adults recognize there would be a significant impact if the farm bill were not reauthorized.

Not many Americans today are very familiar with the farm bill, though. To be fair, it's a big piece of legislation that comes up just once every five years. Even in Congress, many lawmakers are new to the farm bill as nearly half of them have been elected since the 2018 bill. The American Farm Bureau recently conducted a survey to better understand where public opinion and awareness stands on the farm bill and funding for key programs. We found that 71% of adults had not read or heard much of anything about the farm bill. This was a big reminder that we've got a lot of work to do.

The good news is that when it comes to talking about the farm bill, farmers and ranchers are perfect for the job. The American people trust us—nearly 9 out of 10, in fact, say they trust farmers. That's higher than any other

profession. Americans have not forgotten those empty shelves, and they are counting on our success on the farm to keep store shelves and pantries full for everyone. We found there is strong support for risk management programs with the most adults (67%) ranking that as one of the top priorities for federal funding in the farm bill. Risk management along with nutrition programs came in as top funding priorities among those surveyed.

This affirms what we have said for a long time across the agriculture community—the farm bill must remain unified. In fact, support for the farm bill dropped by half when we asked folks if they would still support a farm bill that no longer included funding for nutrition programs. The farm bill's nutrition programs provide a critical link to families hundreds and thousands of miles from our farms. America's farmers and ranchers are proud to grow the food that helps supply billions of meals annually to families facing hunger.

With the added pressures of inflation and rising food costs, we found that most

people now see the security of our food supply as critical. Not too long ago, I'd say many took it for granted that we have an abundant supply of American grown products. But following supply chain disruptions and global events like the war between Russia and Ukraine, Americans' eyes have been opened to how fragile our food system is. Eighty-four percent say that, in light of recent disruptions, the U.S. should make our food supply a matter of national security. Simply meaning, we are a stronger country when we can grow our own food.

Farmers and ranchers take great pride in our work—it is truly a calling for us. We show up, rain or shine, to grow and raise safe, sustainable food, fuel and fiber. We have found our purpose on the farm, and I believe we are still farming because we love the land and this great country. Farmers have America's back when times are tough, and it's important for us to know that America has our back and is committed to helping us keep our farms and food supply secure in all seasons. That's exactly what the farm bill achieves.



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From American Farm Bureau

By: Zippy Duwall

America's farmers and ranchers work hard every day to raise food, fiber and renewable fuel for families all over the world.

We rely on trade agreements and global cooperation to get products from our fields to tables worldwide. While the past year had some promising developments in international trade, there are more challenges on the horizon.

In 2022, the value of our agricultural exports was up, but the amount of product we exported decreased. Last year was only the second time in the past decade that the U.S. imported more agricultural products than we exported.

These statistics are concerning, as they highlight the challenges that our farmers and ranchers face in accessing international markets.

Agricultural trade is critical to our national economy and to the economic sustainability of family farms and ranches. But nonscientific trade barriers and tariffs restrict farmers' ability to compete in global markets.

While the pandemic disrupted global trade patterns, the ongoing disputes between the United States and Mexico over genetically modified corn have further complicated the trade landscape.

Mexico is an important market for U.S. corn growers with nearly 30% of our corn going to Mexico. Still, at the end of 2020, the country announced it would ban genetically modified or glyphosate-protected corn.

Then this February, Mexico updated its decree to state that certain U.S. corn—specifically white corn that is produced with biotechnology—will not be imported. However, yellow corn produced with biotechnology can continue to be imported while Mexico looks for alternatives.

This kind of flip-flopping makes it clear that these moves aren't about science.

The science shows that genetically modified crops are not only safe but also critical in helping achieve sustainability goals. It is important that biotechnology is recognized as safe, no matter the final use.

We should be working together to find solutions that benefit both our countries and that help us

deliver safe, sustainable products to customers everywhere.

I am grateful to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai for listening to farmers and initiating the enforcement mechanisms of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement to stop Mexico's ban.

By enforcing the agreement, we can ensure that our farmers and ranchers have access to the markets they need to be economically sustainable as well.

We rely on robust trade agreements to establish a level playing field for farmers and ranchers and to protect the jobs and businesses that agriculture supports.

While we have made progress in some areas of international trade, there is still much work to be done. The lack of any new trade deals during the Biden administration is concerning.

Other countries aren't waiting for us either. They are moving ahead with trade agreements, which give them strategic advantages and access to new markets. If we don't act soon, America's farmers and ranchers will be left behind.

Greater access to international

markets could help farmers as inflation and increased supply costs have left many operating on razor-thin margins.


The past year has brought unprecedented inflation in agriculture input costs, from fertilizer to seed to fuel. By expanding access to new markets, we can create more opportunities for farmers and ranchers to sell their products, which can help offset these increased costs.

We need the administration to get serious about reducing tariff and nontariff barriers to U.S. agricultural exports. This will require strong leadership and a willingness to engage in meaningful negotiations with our trading partners.

Ultimately, farmers and ranchers across the country must engage and advocate for stronger trading relationships. We need to ensure that policymakers understand the importance of international trade and its vital role in supporting rural communities across America.

By working together and speaking up, we can help ensure that America's farmers and ranchers continue their mission of providing the world with the food, fiber and renewable fuel that we all rely on.

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Building our Future on the Strengths of our Past. Some of you former Young Farmers and Ranchers program participants may remember a YF&R Leadership Conference with that theme from years ago. What a great theme for a YF&R event, and what a tremendous premise and perspective for our organization to build upon as we consider the value of investing in agriculture's up-and-coming leaders. Welcoming and engaging young members into Farm Bureau is the way we ensure our vitality and strength for the next 100 years. It's our commitment to the future of our organization, and it's our commitment to the future of farming and ranching in California.

Last week I was given the honor of participating in several parts of the California FFA Convention in Ontario. If you're looking to be energized with a renewed optimism for agriculture, look no further than the California FFA. This organization for middle and high school agriculture students brings together thousands of members to recognize numerous achievements, do business, have a lot of fun, celebrate the retiring State Officer leadership team, and welcome a new one. I served as

an industry representative as part of the State Officer selection process and then spent the day judging proficiency award applications. I can tell you firsthand, these kids are impressive. Their achievements, communication skills, poise, knowledge of the issues facing our industry, and all-around passion for agriculture is a force to be reckoned with and something we at Farm Bureau are tremendously proud to support.

Over the past several years we've worked with intention to build a partnership and invest in the students of the California FFA. Our Administrator Jim Houston serves on the board for the California FFA Foundation and many of our CAFB staff and leaders participate throughout the year as judges and industry support during contests and events. This year at the CAFB Annual Meeting in December we joined together as an organization and raised almost \$30,000 to support California FFA students through a Blue Jacket Bonanza. This program, founded by Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau Executive Director Teri Bontrager invests directly in FFA students by helping them purchase their "official dress" blue jacket. CAFB and Nationwide were proud to partner to purchase blue jackets for each

of the incoming Section and Regional officer teams across the state. CA FFA recognized Teri's passion and contribution and honored her commitment to these students by awarding her an Honorary State Degree during the closing session of the state conference. Building our Future... that's what Teri and all of you do each day when we invest in these young leaders.

The question is often asked, what do these accomplished high school FFA students do after they graduate? Is there life in agriculture after High School and FFA? The answer, absolutely, is the California Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers program. From Collegiate YF&R chapters to county YF&R committees, this Farm Bureau program for members ages 18-35 provides the next step for young members to engage in professional development opportunities, learn about and participate in advocacy efforts, and make an impact on their communities. YF&R helps grow the individual voices, that become the collective Voice of Agriculture across the nation. I can personally attest to the opportunities afforded by this leadership program. Without my experience as a member of the YF&R state committee and later as State Committee Chair, I can honestly say I would likely not be serving in agriculture leadership today.

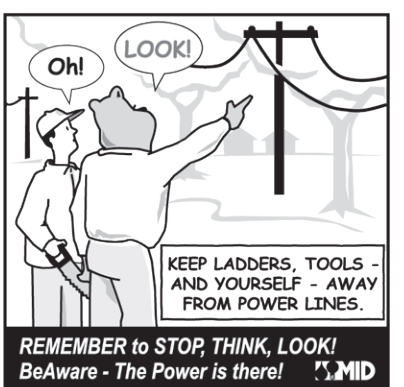
YF&R offers a place where college students can invest in leadership and communication training on their college campuses and through the Collegiate Discussion Meet speaking contest. County YF&R members can learn about Farm Bureau, and network with other members in their community

through events and activities geared to increase their connections and understanding of the industry and the issues we face. These young members often become active members in the County Farm Bureau serving on boards, committees and speaking on behalf of their peers through advocacy opportunities.

At the state level, YF&R members can compete in the Discussion Meet Contest, serve on the State Committee, attend state and national YF&R leadership events and ultimately receive exposure and training on agriculture issues across the nation. Every year the State Committee is given a challenge to raise \$100,000 for Farm Bureau's political action committee, FarmPAC. Through fundraising efforts that culminated at our recent Annual Meeting, this ambitious group of young leaders raised over \$126,000.

Each time I interact with these exceptional young members I'm reminded of the depth and caliber of our Young Farmers and Ranchers and the quality of leaders engaged in this program. Without a doubt, we're building our future, and we're doing so on the strengths of a solid foundation and the proud reputation of our 105 year past.

*Jamie Johansson
President, California Farm Bureau*



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Floodwaters Create 'Situational Crisis' for California Dairy Farmers

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

Dairy farmers in the San Joaquin Valley are working to overcome the impacts of substantial flooding. Last week's storms have left broad swaths of Tulare County under standing water. Evacuation orders have been in effect in several areas including Alpaugh, Al-lensworth, Porterville, and Cutler. CEO of Western United Dair-ies, Anja Raudabaugh said it has been a difficult task evacuating livestock from flooded areas.

"Not everyone in California is aware of the situational crisis that's happening in Tulare, now spreading into Kings County," said Raudabaugh. "Our members have been underwater. We've had to move almost 100,000 cows at this point in emergency evacuation circumstances since Wednesday of last week."

Moving the cows has been a "herculean" effort, according to

Raudabaugh. Industry members have been largely banning to-gether to provide assistance in transporting animals to other locations. Dairy farmers that have not been impacted by flooding are helping out by housing animals where they can. Raudabaugh said some older dairies that have shut down are now being used as "literal lifeboats" for evacuated cows. The next step is getting the cows back on some kind of milking schedule. "We are work-ing with CDFA and the state veterinarian to turn on those milking parlors as quickly as we can getting inspections done. It's not an easy task and it's not ideal," said Raudabaugh.

Dairy farmers forced to move their cows are also looking at con-tinued issues later in the season. The abundance of floodwaters has largely destroyed feed crops in the area.

"We've probably lost the entire year's wheat crop in the south valley which really sucks because we were just coming off some pretty short feed years with the drought. Then a lot of the bagged silage and replacement hay has been lost as well," Raudabaugh explained. "So, trying to find enough feed as these cows are relo-cated has been a huge challenge."



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Record-Breaking Snowpack Brings Additional Flood Risk

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

The fourth snow survey conducted by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) demonstrated a record-breaking snowpack. At Phillips Station, measurements were recorded of 126.5 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 54 inches. The April 3 survey results reflected 221 percent of the average for that location. Manager of DWR's Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit, Sean de Guzman explained that the number is even greater on a statewide basis. The statewide automated snow sensor network is reporting 237 percent of average to date.

"There have only been three other years where our April snowpack has been greater than 200 percent of average in April. Those years were 1952, 1969, and 1983," said de Guzman.

"As of right now, it's looking like this year's statewide snowpack will probably, most likely be either the first- or second-biggest snowpack on record dating back to 1950."

FLOOD CONCERNS MOVING FORWARD

By comparison, last year's April snowpack was measured at just 38 percent of average. The series of atmospheric rivers that California experienced has changed the state's outlook significantly. DWR explained that they have shifted focus to flood response and forecasting for the months ahead. "We're currently forecasting record-breaking spring snowmelt in the Tulare Lake region; which is ranging anywhere between 265 percent of average in the Kings River watershed upwards to an absurdly high 422 percent of average for a snowmelt runoff for the Kern River watershed," de Guzman explained.

The weather over the coming weeks will have a major impact on how the record-breaking snowpack will affect flood risks. The Southern San Joaquin Valley in particular is facing a severe flood risk. DWR's State-Federal Flood Operations Center is supporting emergency response activities. The spring snowmelt season could bring significant challenges, as the state's water infrastructure faces a substantial influx of water. "Our statewide reservoir storage is currently at 107 percent of average and we're expected to capture even more storage once this snowpack eventually melts later on in the spring and summer," said de Guzman.



We are excited to announce that Amanda Osmundson is the State Proficiency Winner in the area of beef production placement!

Amanda's project includes her work on her family's beef cattle ranch, Valley Home Beefmasters where she is involved in all aspects of ranching. Through her project she has gained a passion for embryology and has plans to become an embryologist in the future.

Amanda was one of three state finalists who interviewed for this award and was named the state winner!

Please help us in congratulating her!

Julie Schellhase, Oakdale Highschool FFA Advisor

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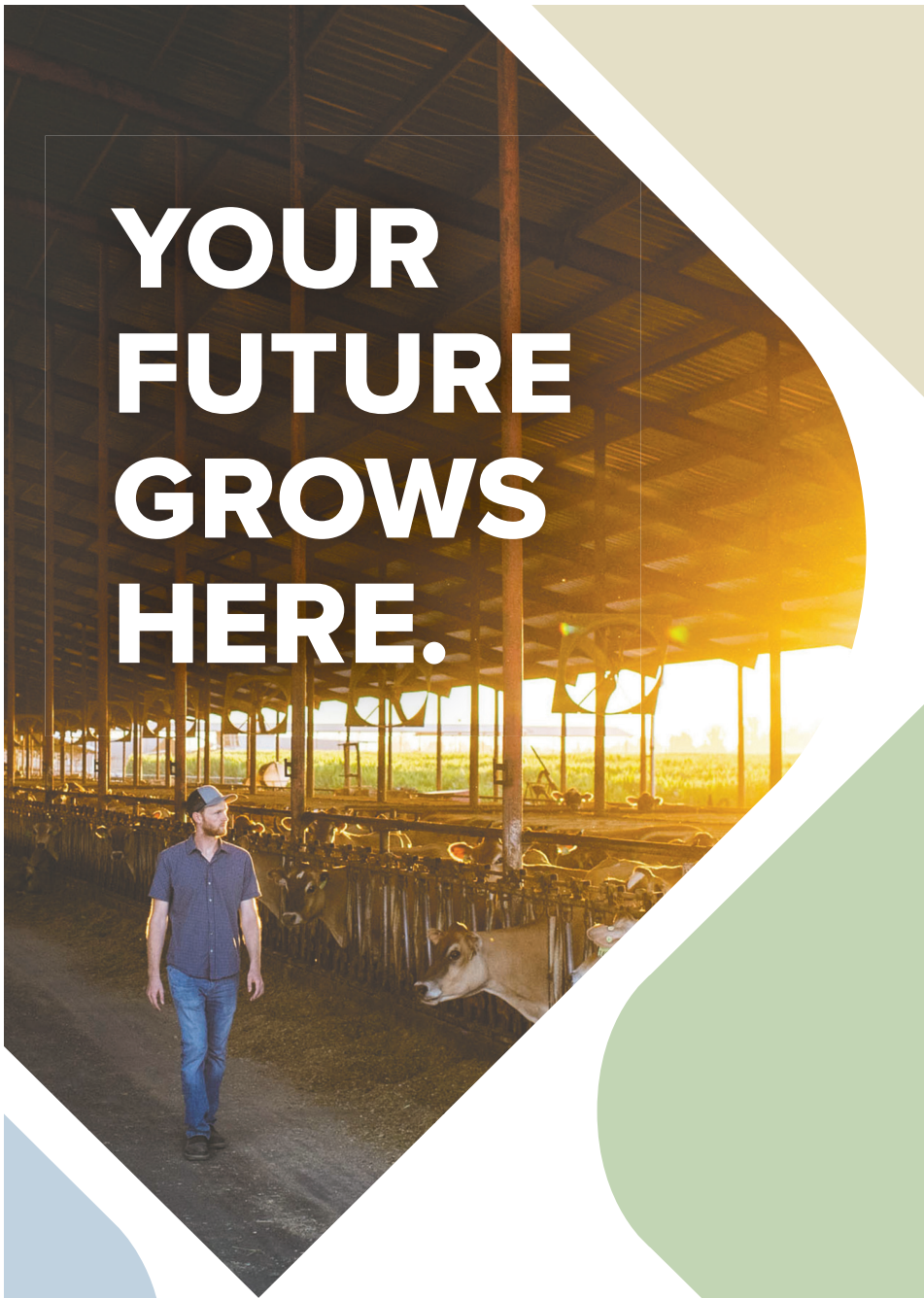
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Stanislaus County Farm Bureau was honored to be able to present newly elected to the 4th District, Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, with a hat and certificate at her community swearing in ceremony at Modesto Irrigation District's Boardroom on Thursday March 16, 2023.



Eric Heinrich, President of Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, said, "We look forward to building a strong working relationship with Senator Alvarado-Gil and finding solutions to the many issues threatening California farmers."

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