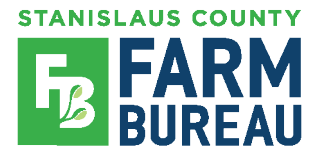


The Stanislaus Farm News

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**Official Publication of Stanislaus
County Farm Bureau
Vol.75 No.7 April 26, 2024**

Eggs that have been candled and washed are held in a refrigerator while awaiting sale at MJC, see full article on page 15.

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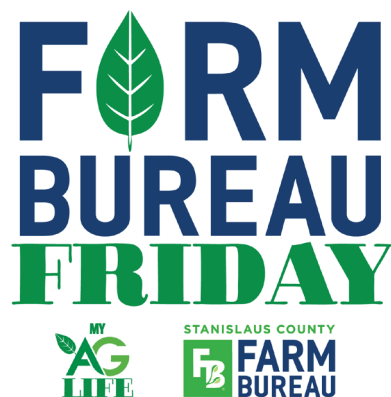
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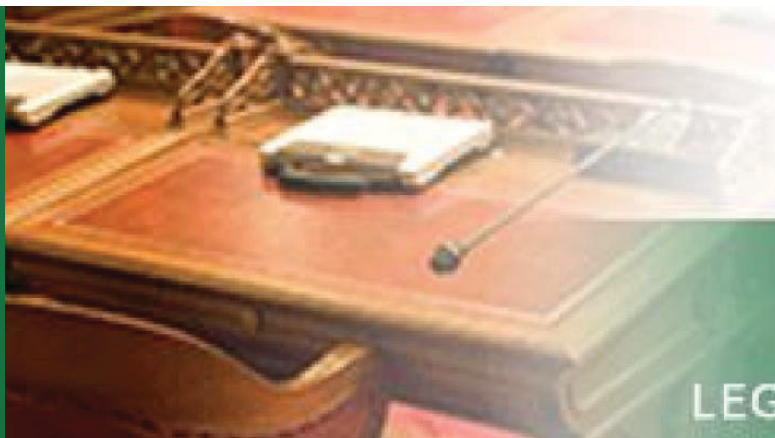
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To serve as the voice of Stanislaus County agriculture at all levels of government, while providing programs to assist its farms and family members and educate the general public of needs and importance to agriculture.



FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



Agricultural Employment Policy

On April 17, the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee considered and rejected Assembly Bill (AB) 3056, Assemblymember James Gallagher (R Yuba City), which would have revised the Labor Code to allow agricultural employees to work up to 8 hours in a workday and 48 hours in a workweek, effectively allowing employees to be employed for up to six full 8 hour days with no overtime liability on the part of the employer. The vote was two aye Assemblymembers Heath Flora (R Modesto), and Juan Alanis (R Modesto) to five no Assemblymembers Liz Ortega (D San Leandro), Chair; Juan Carillo (D Los Angeles); Christopher Ward (D San Diego); Alex Lee (D Milpitas); and Rick Chavez Zbur (D Hollywood). Several of those opposing

AB 3056 expressed a willingness to engage the concerns of rural California residents, and the hearing included a robust discussion of interpretation of statistics indicating that agricultural employees have suffered loss of hour and income as a result of the implementation of the most recent revision of agricultural overtime requirements, AB 1066 (2016). Farm Bureau supports AB 3056. Staff: Bryan Little, blittle@cbbf.com

On April 16, the Assembly Judiciary Committee passed Assembly Bill (AB) 2499 Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo (D Chatsworth), which expands the availability of job-protected leaves to employers of five employees (presently 25 employees) for virtually any conceivable eventuality related to supporting a family-member crime or violence victim (defined so broadly as to include non-family members) for a huge variety of purposes. AB 2499 also requires an employee to offer reasonable accommodation for employees in these situations. The bill passed 7-2 and was referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Farm Bureau opposes. Staff: Bryan Little, blittle@cbbf.com

On April 17, the Assembly Labor & Employment Committee passed Assembly Bill (AB) 2751 Assemblymember Matt Haney (D San Francisco), which requires employers to establish strict pre-set working hours for all employees and creates a “right to disconnect” from off-schedule communications from employers except in the event of an emergency or schedule change. Alleged violations would result in an investigation by the Labor Commissioner and potential employer fines. Farm Bureau opposes due to the undue restriction on employer/em-

ployee flexibility in necessary communications. Staff: Bryan Little, blittle@cbbf.com

Assembly Bill (AB) 2754, Assemblymember Anthony Rendon (D Lakewood), expands Labor Code Section 2810 client employer liability for wages and workers compensation originally established in 2014 from client-contractor relationships to shipper-carrier relationships, exposing agricultural shippers to liability for carriers transporting containerized freight. This will further squeeze small carriers already stressed by more stringent employer/contractor definitions in AB 5 (2019) and restrict options for agricultural shippers. AB 2754 passed the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee on April 17. Farm Bureau opposes. Staff: Bryan Little, blittle@cbbf.com

On April 18, the Cal/OSHA Standards Board announced its next steps on the Indoor Heat Illness Standard, which it originally approved at its March meeting in spite of its defective cost and economic impact analysis. The Administrative Procedures Act requires the Department of Finance to reject a regulation unaccompanied by required analysis, but the Government Code allows a 120-day window to “fix” a defective regulation, apparently outside the one-year window for approval of proposed Cal/OSHA regulations (the one-year clock on the Indoor Heat regulation ran out on March 31). The original regulation’s fiscal analysis fell apart when the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation objected to the cost and complexity of application of the regulation to prisons – a stunning acknowledgement of the cost and complexity con-



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See "REVIEW" on page 4

From "REVIEW" on page 3

cerns Farm Bureau and others have voiced about the Indoor Heat regulation for years. The agency's announced way forward will be to exempt state- and locally operated prisons and jails from the regulation with a separate regulation to be proposed at a later time. The revised Heat Illness regulation can then be moved forward in May or June and is expected to be effective by summer. Staff: Bryan Little, blittle@cfbf.com

Air Quality

On Tuesday, May 7, CARB will host a second public workshop on the proposed update to the Carl Moyer program guidelines. Register here. Register Here.

On December 19, 2023, CARB staff held a virtual kick-off public workshop to notify the public of the process of updating the Carl Moyer Program Guidelines. During this second workshop, CARB staff will provide an overview of the Carl Moyer Program and the process for potential updates to the incentive program Guidelines. These

proposed changes will ensure consistency throughout the source category chapters, reflect current regulations and advances in technology, and streamline program administration.

Some of the changes being proposed as part of the complete and comprehensive update include, but is not limited to:

- Pointing to the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER) Program Guidelines for off-road agricultural projects;
- Adding flexibility that further supports zero-emission replacement projects;
- Streamlining and clarifying program and project administration processes;
- Expanding eligible costs and funding percentages for multiple source categories;
- Updating emission inventory factors for emission reduction calculations.

Prior to CARB staff proposing these changes for Board consideration in October 2024 a third public workshop will be held. The public notice for the third public workshop and release of the draft Guidelines for 45-

day public review will be released once the final date in August is selected.

On April 11, CARB held a workshop on a revised Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). California Farm Bureau was on hand to make comment expressing the need for continuing the use of avoided methane credits in the program, to ensure the continued viability of existing manure digesters, and the development of additional ones that we will need to address California's methane emissions. Opposition groups have sought to eliminate dairy digesters and the credit around avoided methane. Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cfbf.com

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has posted the Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment (SRIA) for the Cap-and-Trade Regulation. The SRIA is not a staff proposal for amendments, but rather an initial economic evaluation of potential changes to the Cap-and-Trade Program. The submittal of the SRIA is one of many steps CARB must take prior to updating the



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Cap-and-Trade Regulation. CARB anticipates releasing draft regulatory language for the Cap-and-Trade Program for a formal 45-day public comment period in the coming months, which may be further informed through public workshops and reflect an updated economic analysis. The Cap-and-Trade SRIA was submitted to the Department of Finance on April 9, 2024. Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Ballot Measures

The California Supreme Court has set oral arguments for the court case involving the Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act. This ballot measure, already qualified for the November 2024 ballot, is being sued by Governor Newsom and the Legislature to remove it from being voted on. California Farm Bureau has endorsed this initiative and is part of the coalition working to pass this generational tax protection measure. The campaign is confident we will win this case after making our arguments before the Court. There is a strong legal case that it would violate decades of precedence for the Court to preemptively remove an initiative before voters can decide its fate. Over 20 County Farm Bureaus have endorsed this measure. Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Dairy

An on-line version of California Dairy Quality Assurance Program's April newsletter is available for download.

All previous newsletters can be found at the renovated CDQAP website, collected on the newsletter page. Please feel free to reprint any of these articles in part or in their entirety in your own dairy producer communications, we ask only that you credit CDQAP for the information. In this issue you will read about some of the newest laboratory and epidemiologic investigation results that give us some important clues as to how we might best prioritize preventative actions on our dairies.

There is also a reminder about forage sampling during harvest and some "save the dates" for three exciting field days in May that will demonstrate some of the latest manure management technologies on working

dairies.

Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Endangered Species

California wildlife officials voted Thursday to list the Southern California steelhead trout as endangered, guaranteeing protection from development and water diversions for the dwindling population. The federal government listed the Southern California steelhead under the Endangered Species Act in 1997. A California Endangered Species Act listing will require any development that requires state permits to include measures to protect the fish, not just those under federal authority. California Farm Bureau's Justin Fredrickson testified at the hearing as well as local county farm bureaus impacted by this decision. This could have tremendous impacts on our members, and we will continue to actively engage on this issue. Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

Energy and Utilities

Farm Bureau submitted two separate letters of support for different bills seeking to advance the use of advanced reconductoring and/or grid enhancing technology.

- Senate Bill (SB) 1006 authored by Senator Steve Padilla (D San Diego) would require transmission utilities, as defined, on or before January 1, 2026, to jointly prepare a grid-enhancing technologies strategic plan that is designed to, among other things, cost-effectively increase transmission capacity and increase capacity to connect new renewable energy and zero-carbon resources. The bill would require each transmission utility, on or before January 1, 2026, and at least every 4 years thereafter, to complete an evaluation of which of its transmission and distribution lines can be reconductored with advanced conductors in a cost-effective manner to, among other things, increase transmission or distribution capacity and increase capacity to connect new renewable energy and zero-carbon resources. The plans would also require a timeline for implementation and progress reports on that implementation. The bill was on the consent calendar receiving unanimous support and is headed to Senate Rules.

- Assembly Bill (AB) 2779 authored by As-

sembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris (D Irvine) is similar to SB 1006 but focuses solely on grid enhancing technology (GET). The bill would require the California Independent System Operator to report to both the legislature and Public Utilities Commission on any new use of GET and the savings in deploying that technology. The bill was on the consent calendar receiving unanimous support and is headed to Assembly Appropriations.

Farm Bureau also submitted a letter of support for Assembly Bill (AB) 2750 authored by James Gallagher (R Yuba City) which would extend the investor-owned utilities (IOUs) obligations to collectively procure their proportionate share of 125 megawatts (MW) of cumulative rated generating capacity from bioenergy projects to July 1, 2025. As well as expands eligibility of the 5-year extensions for procurement contracts from biomass facilities to include facilities located in areas that voluntarily opt for federal "severe" or "extreme" nonattainment status but that have measured levels of air pollutants below "severe." The bill provides a necessary fix to air districts that voluntarily reclassified themselves to "severe" and "extreme" nonattainment (where actual measured levels of particulate matter are below these classifications) and was voted out of committee 16-0. The bill will now head to Assembly Appropriations. Staff contact: Kevin Johnston, kjohnston@cfbf.com

Farm Bureau submitted a letter on Assembly Bill (AB) 3238 authored by Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia (D Coachella) with an Oppose Unless Amended position. Our concern with the bill, which has a long list of coauthors, is the newly proposed process and standards it would use for approval of transmission lines. We are aware that agricultural lands bear a disproportionate impact from locations to build out transmission lines. Provisions in the bill would shift important environmental and other reviews from the California Public Utilities Commission to the California Independent System Operator, which is ill equipped to effectively consider impacts to landowners and com-

See "REVIEW" on page 7

FREE ADS FOR FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

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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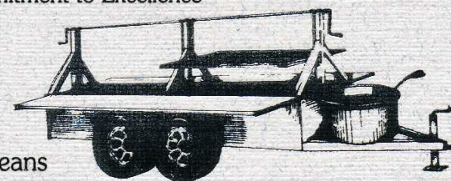
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From "REVIEW" on page 5

munities. The bill has been triple referred and has already been heard and passed out of the Utilities and Energy Committee, as well as the Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee. It will be heard at the Natural Resources Committee on Monday, April 22. Staff contact: Karen Mills, kmills@cbbf.com

Fish and Wildlife

On Thursday April 11, the Department of Fish and Wildlife released a summary report detailing how the agency allocated \$3 million appropriated in the Budget Act of 2021 for the Department's Wolf-Livestock Compensation Pilot Program. The summary reveals that, in a span of just over two years, the Department awarded 109 wolf compensation grants to 36 individual producers with livestock operations in four of the nine counties with known wolf activity (while the total number of grantees may appear small at first blush, it is well established that wolf impacts are not uniform, and individual ranchers often experience disproportionately high levels of wolf impacts). The Department's analysis demonstrates that nearly two-thirds of available funds (\$1,919,825) were expended under the non-lethal deterrent grants prong of the program. By reducing conflicts between livestock and wolves, non-lethal deterrent safeguards livestock herds and wolf populations alike – and directly furthers a major conservation strategy identified in the Department's Conservation Plan for Gray Wolves in California.

Of the remaining funds, \$135,043 were expended on direct loss compensation (reimbursing ranchers fair market value for animals whose deaths or injuries were the confirmed or probable result of livestock attacks) as a result of 26 payments, and \$945,130 were directed at "pay for presence" (compensating ranchers for other impacts of wolf presence, such as stress effects that result in lost pregnancies and decreased weight gains in cows).

This report comes on the heels of our renewed ask for \$3 million for the Wolf-Livestock Compensation Program in the 2024-25 Budget. As the Department's analysis shows, however, even a much more modest

appropriation will allow the Department to prioritize the most vital function of the program – direct loss compensation – and to direct additional resources toward reducing conflicts between wolves and livestock. Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cbbf.com

Forestry and Wildfire

Farm Bureau's sponsored Senate Bill (SB) 945 passed from the Senate Environmental Quality Committee on the Consent Calendar. The bill picked up support from the California Medical Association, California Cattlemen's Association, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. Farm Bureau's bill directs the state to develop data correlating the public health benefits from wildfire mitigation investments. The bill is authored by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil (D Modesto). Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Insurance

Assembly Bill (AB) 2996, authored by Assemblymember David Alvarez (D Chula Vista) passed from the Assembly Committee on Jobs with bipartisan unanimous support. The bill moves to the Committee on Insurance with a recommendation for the Consent Calendar. AB 2996 authorizes the California iBank to back bonds for the California Fair Plan in the event of a massive claims occurrence. This bill increases the financial stability of the Fair Plan while it has sustained unprecedented growth due to the state's current insurance market crisis. Farm Bureau supports AB 2996. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Land Use

The California Farm Bureau stood alone in opposing Assembly Bill (AB) 2528 in the Assembly Committee on Utilities and Energy. Testimony in support of the bill came from the Large Solar Association and Western Growers. The bill, as previously reported, would allow landowners to attest that they do not have water due to groundwater pumping limitations and that would allow a Board of Supervisors to cancel Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone contracts without paying the well accepted cancellation fee. The bill passed from Committee with two Republicans (Assemblymembers Jim Patterson and Joe Patterson) and

two Democrats (Assemblymembers Bauer Kahan and Damon Connolly) abstaining because of the concerns expressed by the Farm Bureau regarding the lack of the bills' coordination with groundwater sustainability agencies and because the risk of losing open spaces and productive agriculture lands. Staff: Peter Ansel pansel@cbbf.com and Alex Biering abiering@cbbf.com

Transportation

Assembly Bill (AB) 2900 Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria (D Fresno) was heard in Assembly Transportation Committee on April 15. It passed out unanimously. The bill would establish a technical and financial assistance program under the Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) program. This bill is supported by California Farm Bureau. Staff: Steven Fenaroli, sfenaroli@cbbf.com

Water

TULARE LAKE SUBBASIN HEARING ON 4/16

The agenda included a staff presentation, two panels (Tulare Lake Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) reps and Tulare Groundwater Sustainability Agencies reps), public comments, Board member discussion, and a potential vote. About 75 people attended in person and there were roughly 50 public commenters; the meeting concluded when the Board voted to place the Tulare Lake Subbasin in probation at about 6:30 PM. The Board's discussion and deliberation lasted about an hour before they voted.

The probation "kicks in" on July 15, 2024. The Board's resolution requires reporting for anyone pumping more than 2 AF annually or who is pumping for purposes other than domestic use; meters on all wells for anyone who pumped more than 500 Axial Flow (AF) per year during Water Year 2023 or expects to during Water Year 2024. Before approving the resolution, the Board inserted a new subsection committing to consider "alternative compliance pathways" to measure and report estimate time and water use. Fees are \$300 per well annually and \$20 per AF pumped.

Staff: Alex Biering; abiering@cbbf.com

Tulare Lake Subbasin gets probation over inadequate plans to protect aquifers
 Farmers in the critically overdrafted Tulare Lake Subbasin in the San Joaquin Valley are bracing for escalating costs as state and local agencies assess fees on wells and groundwater pumped. The California State Water Resources Control Board last week placed the subbasin on probation as part of regulations under the state's landmark 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The board concluded that local agency sustainability plans failed to address overdraft by limiting groundwater pumping, land subsidence and impacts to drinking water.

Rainstorms help farms, hurt farmers markets
 Heavy rainstorms this spring have boosted the state's water supply for farming, but they have dampened farmers market attendance and crop selection in the immediate term. While grocery stores are already stocking imported summer fruits and vegetables, farmers market produce remains in transition, with many farms still selling cool-season offerings such as broccoli, cauliflower, hard squash, beets and navel oranges. More fragile crops such as strawberries have taken a beating from the wet weather.

Almond Board CEO stresses innovations, exports to help sector rebound
 Facing challenging times, California's almond industry is looking to expand foreign export markets and increase the diversity of almond products in domestic supermarkets.

That was the strategic roadmap outlined by Almond Board of California President and CEO Clarice Turner. In a recent media briefing, Turner said the state's almond sector hopes to grow its array of products, developing demand for innovations from oils to flours to perhaps even almond pastas. The Almond Board is also seeking to grow exports to India and other fast emerging markets.

Study: California pork prices rise under Proposition 12

Pork products subject to California's Proposition 12 animal welfare law have increased in price by an average of 20% since the law began to take effect, according to a new economic analysis. The findings in the University of California's Agricultural and Resource

Economics Update noted that pork prices in the state have risen more sharply than the rest of the nation under initiative requirements. Bacon, ribs and loin products had higher per-pound prices of \$1.04, 54 cents and \$1.42, respectively, than similar products in other states.

Land-use legislation could convert more farmland for solar, renewable energy projects

Proposed state legislation to modify California's longstanding farmland conservation law could pave the way for large swaths of farm acreage to be repurposed

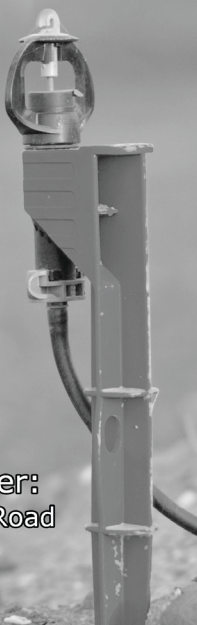
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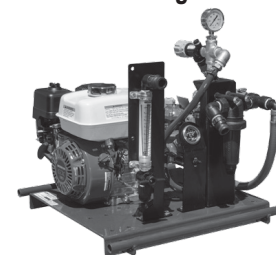
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as sites for renewable energy projects, including solar power. Assembly Bill 2528, introduced by Assembly Member Joaquin Arambula, D-Fresno, would allow owners of Williamson Act land that lacks sufficient water for farming to cancel their contracts—without paying mandated cancellation fees of 12.5% of land values. Farm advocates warn the proposed law could accelerate the loss of farmland and reduce food supply.

Klamath irrigators express frustration over water allocation for farms

Despite favorable conditions in the Klamath Basin, irrigators say the initial federal water allocation falls short of what farmers in the Klamath Water Project should receive this year. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which manages the project, announced this week that Klamath Basin

irrigators will receive an initial allocation of 230,000 acre-feet from the lake. That is 35% less than estimated needs, said Paul Simmons, executive director and counsel for the Klamath Water Users Association. He said the allocation is the fifth worst in the 120-year history of the Klamath Project.

State budget crisis could impact services in rural agricultural counties

California counties, key to delivering services for public safety, emergency response and protecting human health, are bracing for state revenue cuts as California faces a historic budget deficit. The fiscal crisis creates concerns in rural agricultural counties, as local governments look for ways to fund core needs such as fire services. Merced County is already struggling to fund public safety services, including fire, sheriff's department and ambulance services. Merced

County Assistant Fire Chief Mark Pimentel said the county is operating below state minimum staffing requirements.

As funds run out, state details compensation to ranchers for wolf impacts

With \$3 million in grant funding exhausted, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife is no longer accepting applications for the wolf-livestock compensation program, the agency announced last week. A total of 109 grants were awarded to 36 ranchers with livestock operations in four of the nine counties with known wolf activity: Siskiyou, Lassen, Plumas and Tulare. Established in 2021, the pilot program compensated livestock producers for verified loss of livestock. Direct livestock losses accounted for \$135,044. More than \$1.9 million went for wolf deterrent tools.

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2024 Continuing Education (CE) Schedule**



Classes will be offered both In-Person and Hybrid (Both In-Person & Online)

Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner's Office is happy to announce our continued partnership with the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau for the 2024 Continuing Education Series. With this partnership will come the ability for us to host a wide variety of other topics and increase your access to continuing education credits.

In-Person CE Workshop Schedule

Date	Time	Topics	CE Credits
May 28, 2024	5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Rodenticides, Reporting, and Carbon Monoxide	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Carbon Monoxide Equipment Demonstration	1 Hr.- Other
June 4, 2024	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Common Violations and Enforcement/ Compliance Solutions	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Calibration Demonstration Presentation	1 Hr.- Other

Hybrid Schedule (Both In-Person & Online)

Please visit our website <http://www.stanag.org> and click on continuing education to register for your spot at our continuing education class. Once you register for the class, you will receive an email confirming your spot has been saved.

Date	Time	Topics	CE Credits
May 14, 2024	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Telone and Notification Updates	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Telone Label Requirements	1 Hr.- Other
June 11, 2024	5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Contracted Employees: Determining the Responsible Employer and Requirements	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Pesticide Technology Presentation	1 Hr.- Other
November 1, 2024	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Permit Conditions Review	1 Hr. - Laws & Regs
	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Mating Disruption Presentation	1 Hr.- Other
November 15, 2024	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Worker Health and Safety Regulations	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Personal Protective Equipment Management and Training	1 Hr.- Other
November 15, 2024	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Personal Protective Equipment Management and Training (SPANISH ONLY)	1 Hr.- Other
	2:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Worker Health and Safety Regulations (SPANISH ONLY)	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
December 3, 2024	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	School Notifications and Application Requirements	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	New Beetle Carpophilus Truncatus	1 Hr.- Other
December 17, 2024	5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Bee Notifications, Registrations, and Use of Pesticides Toxic to Bees	1 Hr.- Laws & Regs
	6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Best Management Practices with Bees in the Field	1 Hr.- Other

All classes are still pending approval from CDPR. For verification of CE hours and category approval, please call (209) 525-4730 one week prior to the class or workshop. If you need Spanish translation of any of our scheduled classes, please contact our office one week prior and we will make arrangements. Si desea una traducción al español de una de nuestras clases programadas, comuníquese una semana antes de la fecha de la clase, para intentar hacer acomodacion .

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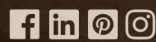
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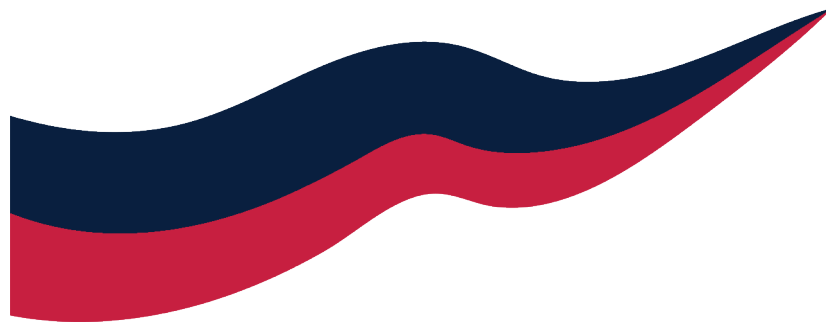
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GA Rep. Scott on Farm Bill Progress

*Source: Sabrina Halvorson
National Correspondent /
AgNet Media, Inc.*

There may be some progress on the farm bill. Georgia republican Congressman Austin Scott hopes Farm bill language will be ready for release in the next couple of weeks.

“We want to have a five-year farm bill, but that five-year Farm Bill has got to take into account the increased cost of operations for the American farmer. So, it’s been a difficult time with the Congressional Budget Office. Right now, we’re putting, according to their stores, less than 10% of what we call the ‘Farm Bill’ into production agriculture

and risk mitigation for our producers. And that’s simply not enough for them to be able to have the stop losses that they need to keep their operations going forward in the case of bad commodity collapses,” Scott said.

There has also long been a debate over if the nutrition title and production titles should be in the same bill. Scott thinks they should be separate.

“I’ve advocated for separating them for the last several years. I do think that the partnership has worked over the course of the last several decades. In today’s in time it doesn’t seem to be working for the producer. It’s not an equitable split when you have gone down to less than ten percent going to production agriculture, if we’re just honest about things,” he said.

Scott pointed to the changing landscape of the nation’s population as well.

“The population growth in the country has been in the metropolitan areas, and so there are fewer and fewer of us that actually represent farm country, and there are fewer and fewer Democrats that represent farm country. And so, I’m fortunate to be from a state where I have Sanford Bishop and David Scott, both good pro -ag Democrats... but a lot of states don’t have pro-ag Democrats. I mean, people from the metropolitan area don’t understand what it takes to operate the farm,” he said. “And I shouldn’t point that finger at Democrats when there are a lot of metro area Republicans that won’t support the farm bill either.” Opponents of the idea say it would be harder to pass either bill if there were separate nutrition and farm bills.

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TUOLUMNE COUNTY FARM NEWS

A View From the Field

by Tom McCall, Georgia Farm Bureau

We've had a cold winter across a lot of our state, and I am enjoying spring and all the opportunities the new season brings for family fun and good food. There's nothing like spending more time outdoors. Especially after we all had to "spring forward" with the time adjustment.

The longer days of spring and planting seed for summer always give me hope and an optimistic spirit that we as farmers need to keep going forward.

Some of my favorite memories from this time of year include our grandkids, Winn, Wilkes and McCall, fishing from the pond on our family's farm.

Anyone who has heard me speak at a Farm Bureau event most likely has heard me say, "I don't own that property in the small community of Fortsonia, I'm just borrowing it from my grandkids."

Like most farmers, I've done what I can to protect that farmland for my family and future generations.

As our state's Agriculture Commissioner Tyler Harper has said repeatedly, "You may not think about it every day, but agricultural products and the security of our food supply are the most important elements when it comes to our national security."

Agriculture is Georgia's number one economic sector and employs over 323,300 Georgians. Across the nation, the

direct impact of the food supply chain from farm to retail is about 24 million jobs, according to the most recent Feeding the Economy Report. Clearly, what we do as food producers is very important, and everyone depends on us whether they realize it or not.

As my fellow farmers and I experience the change of seasons, perhaps planting summer crops or raking that first cutting of hay, I hope we can all take a minute to enjoy the beauty of nature and realize how fortunate we are to have the privilege of farming to feed and clothe the world. And we'll also take time to be thankful for friends, being connected to the land, and what organi-

zations like Farm Bureau provide. We're blessed our families get to share in this rewarding experience of farming, enjoying the outdoors and taking care of God's creation for future generations.

Just as spring's arrival on the farm makes me optimistic for another year of farming, I believe the outlook of our organization is bright, and I am optimistic about Farm Bureau and the future.

Tom McCall is president of Georgia Farm Bureau. This column was originally published in GFB News Magazine and is republished with permission.

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Modesto Junior College's Poultry Science

By Vicky Boyd

Off the beaten path on the West Campus, Modesto Junior College's Poultry Science unit gives students a firsthand education in commercial poultry production, just on a smaller scale.

"We focus on hands-on opportunities," said Sienna Davis, an MJC sophomore and student intern.

Everything from broiler production and processing to the laying house and egg handling is student run. They also sell cartons and flats of eggs at the country store on the MJC main campus as well as Thursday mornings at the downtown Modesto Farmer's Market. The brown eggs have proven to be popular, and Davis said they frequently sell out.

Broilers are vacuum-packed in plastic after processing and also sold at the country store. In addition, students raise pheasants and quail to sell live to hunting clubs. All proceeds go back into the poultry science program.

A new addition will be a 600-pair squab facility, expected to be completed in late 2025 or summer 2026, said Tim Truax, MJC animal science instructor. The facility will be funded by a \$120,000 grant, and the Modesto-based farmer-owned co-op — the Squab Producers of California — has agreed to bring MJC on as producers.

Entryway to a poultry industry career

During the semester-long introduction to poultry science lecture and lab class, MJC students learn everything from biosecurity and egg production to broiler management and processing. Many enroll in the

class with no prior knowledge of poultry production but do so to satisfy an animal science degree requirement. But they often come away with a new-found respect for poultry.

"They end up enjoying the birds so much they want to take them home," Davis said.

Bill Mattos, president of the Modesto-based California Poultry Federation, said he couldn't say enough good things about the MJC program and how it prepares students for future careers in the poultry industry.

"I think the program at MJC is very important because students learn all of the issues related to poultry," he said. "They educate students on how to grow and take care of chickens and how to do it safely."



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See "Poultry" on page 16

From "Poultry" on page 15

He pointed to the numerous employees, managers and even owners of area poultry operations who had gone through the junior college's poultry science program. Some went directly from MJC into their roles while others went onto a four-year school before venturing out into the workforce.

MJC is the only community college in the western United States that has a poultry science associated science degree program, Truax said. As far as he knows, it also is the only community college with as large an on-site laying hen facility and the only one in the state with a state-inspected poultry processing facility.

Community college enrollment statewide hasn't fully rebounded from the COVID pandemic. Before the shutdown, MJC's poultry science degree program averaged 20 to 30 students annually, and Truax said they're making a few curriculum changes to entice more students to enroll.

Neither Davis nor Aubrey Swift, a freshman and student intern, came from poultry backgrounds although Davis had shown chickens while in FFA. But after they were named interns and began working in the college's poultry unit, both said they fell in love with it. "It's a gorgeous, gorgeous unit," Davis said. "I just thought it was amazing."

She plans to attend California State University, Fresno when she finishes at MJC, and eventually become an avian veterinarian or work on small ruminant reproductive health.

Swift had shown sheep and goats while in Mariposa FFA and knew Truax from when he judged goats at the Mariposa Livestock Show. After Davis was accepted as an intern, Swift decided to apply.

"I didn't really think about poultry — it wasn't on my radar," said Swift, who plans to attend CSU Fresno and become an ag teacher. "I knew nothing about poultry."

But she said she feels fortunate to have had the exposure to the winged livestock and can only hope that wherever she ends up teaching will have a poultry program.

Biosecurity 101

Like most other commercial poultry facilities, MJC has adhered to strong biosecurity measures for years. Even before highly pathogenic avian influenza was a major issue, there were other highly contagious poultry diseases, such as virulent Newcastle disease.

College workers have dedicated boots that are only worn in one house and never leave the premise. Any worker who has previously been on a poultry operation must also wear disposable coveralls.

Visitors are given disposal boots, and all entrants must first dip their feet in a tray filled with antimicrobial liquid.

Keeping hens happy

MJC's egg program is built around Lohmann brown hens, a hybrid with Rhode Island red parentage that is relatively small for layers. But they have big personalities, Davis said. The college receives birds when they're about 17 weeks old, and she said they begin laying about two to three weeks later.

Initially the eggs are small, referred to as peewees in the industry. As the young pullets mature, they begin to lay larger eggs — at least Grade A large — and will continue to do so for more than a year and a half until production tails off. When the birds are about 2 years old, the college adopts them out to community members.

Afterward, the layer house is cleaned and sanitized and allowed to rest while new birds are brought into a sister building. This ensures continuous production and allows for lecture and related lab activities throughout the semesters.

Like other commercial poultry facilities, MJC must comply with Proposition 12, which requires at least 0.8 square feet of room for each hen. But Davis said the college's birds have more than the required space to stretch, move



Aubrey Davis candles eggs, or runs them over a bright light to check for deformities, before they enter the washer.



Student interns Sienna Davis (left) and Aubrey Davis hold one of the college's 350-plus laying hens.

around, perch and socialize.

They've also hung plastic strips throughout the hen house as sort of privacy screens. In the summer, a central cooling system akin to a giant swamp cooler keeps down temperatures in the hen house.

"We do so many things to ensure our hens are happy," Davis said.

In late March, the laying barn housed 376 birds, and students collected up to 360 eggs daily, or an average of about one egg per bird per day.

Automatic feeders provide the birds with a balanced ration three times per day, and they have access to water round the clock from automatic waterers. The birds are also fed crushed oyster shell, a natural source of cal-

cium, to enhance eggshell thickness. But they never receive any hormones or antibiotics, which are illegal in California.

Once the eggs are collected, the students take them to a nearby processing building, where they candle them or shine a bright light through the eggs to look for shell or internal defects. They then run the eggs through a washer, which is similar to a miniature car wash where two brushes gently clean their exterior. Once the eggs exit on a conveyor belt, a student wipes off any moisture, packs them in cartons or flats, and puts them in a large walk-in cooler. All of the cartons or flats are labeled with the calendar date they were packed as well as the Julian date, which is based on the number of days after Jan. 1.

Broiler production and processing

Once each semester, day-old chicks are

brought into MJC's broiler house to be grown out for seven weeks. They usually use a Plymouth-Cornish cross.

In the broiler house, the birds have free range of the facility floor and access to hanging feeders and waterers. Wood shavings help absorb the manure.

Once the birds reach a weight of about 6 pounds, students harvest and process them, using an assembly line that is a much smaller version of ones used in large-scale commercial operations. The finished broilers are vacuum packed in plastic for sale.

All of the poultry manure and litter collected from the boiler and laying houses are composted and applied to the campus' forage fields.



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California Poultry Federation

By: Bill Mattos, President

The California Poultry Federation (CPF) opened its doors with a new name and mission statement in 1991. Before then, the organization prospered for many years as the California Turkey Industry Board, a marketing order promoting turkeys, which California ranked third in the nation.

When state rules and regulations started to affect agriculture, and particularly poultry, the board of directors voted to form a new trade association that would fight bad regulations and pass legislation that helped processors and growers. And since every turkey company featured its own market-

ing, that board was no longer needed.

Thus, the CPF was born, representing chickens, turkeys, ducks, squab, layers, game birds and more.

Mission Statement: Through united work and action, promote the California Poultry Industry and its ability to responsibly produce and market the highest quality poultry food products in a competitive manner.

Since then, industry and the legislature have seen many changes. The CPF immediately worked to eliminate taxes and regulations that had a negative impact on our members. The 90s were the perfect time to make changes since both Democrats and Republicans worked better together, and we still featured some farmers in both the Senate and Assembly.



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- Supported new state and federal "fresh" poultry standards. Changed the definition of "fresh" poultry in Washington DC after a two-year battle.

- Abolished state sales taxes on poultry litter, medications in water, farm equipment, and poultry houses. \$15 million plus savings for industry each year.

- Sponsor research on poultry blood and carcass composting!
- Sponsored research on poultry emissions, the only one of its kind in the West and still used today by the California Air and Regional Air districts.
- Develop biosecurity program with assistance from USDA Rural Development Grant.
- Founded and managed statewide poultry task force to monitor health of industry throughout California.
- Quality Assurance Program offers certification by the California Poultry Federation and the California Department of Food and Agriculture

- Animal Welfare committee to enforce and monitor standards in California.
- Produced and published a poultry and egg curriculum kit for high school agriculture educators, distributing more than 500 kits throughout the state in the first month.
- Manage the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) program, one of the few states where NPIP is run by the State Association.
- Developed NPIP surveillance program with 100% participation by chickens, turkeys, duck and squab; and 90% participation by layer industry.
- Foster and continue support of quality programs where industry, California Dept. of Food and Agriculture and the USDA work together on biosecurity, NPIP, outreach and surveillance programs throughout the state.

For more information on the California Poultry Federation, visit <https://cpif.org/>

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Tulare Lake Subbasin First to Receive Probationary Status from Water Board

Source: Brian German
Ag News Director / AgNet West

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has made a significant decision regarding the Tulare Lake Subbasin. After a lengthy meeting, the SWRCB placed the subbasin on probationary status over concerns with subsidence linked to groundwater pumping. It marks the first instance of such state intervention under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The decision comes after a hearing and public comments, aiming to address the critical overdraft issue in the basin.

The probationary status brings in new requirements like reporting and fees for those who extract water from the area. The fees include a \$300 annual fee per well and a \$20 fee per acre-foot of water. Extractors us-

ing over 500 acre-feet annually must install certified meters to measure water usage. Groundwater pumpers in the region must report usage within 90 days. Some exemptions apply for small domestic users and disadvantaged communities.

Despite objections from some farmers and officials, the board unanimously voted for the probationary status, acknowledging the need to address groundwater overuse. Local water agencies have some time to improve their sustainability plan to get off probation. The Tulare Lake Subbasin has one year to develop a more sustainable groundwater plan.

“If deficiencies are not addressed within a year, the board could move into the second phase of the state intervention process, called an interim plan,” SWRCB noted in

a press release. “Only during this second phase, after another public hearing, could the board impose pumping restrictions on basins or issue fines for exceeding water allotments.”

During the hearing, farmers expressed several concerns about the potential impact on their livelihoods, highlighting the need for more time and alternatives to address water management issues. Meanwhile, advocates emphasized the importance of protecting groundwater for drinking water and environmental justice.



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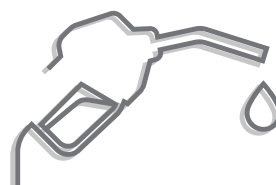


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Flocking Together ~ Leveraging Digital Marketing to Address Poultry Challenges in Stanislaus County, Central Valley

By: Kathryn Kim Ramos, Sisbro Innovation Website and Digital Marketing Consultant

Poultry farming stands as a vital pillar of agriculture in Stanislaus County, situated within California's fertile Central Valley and encompassing the bustling city of Modesto. Yet, the poultry industry faces its share of hurdles, from disease management to market fluctuations. In navigating these obstacles, the adoption of digital marketing strategies emerges as a beacon of hope, offering innovative solutions to support the poultry community and ensure its resilience in the face of adversity.

Within Stanislaus County and the broader Central Valley, disease management is a top priority for poultry farmers. Outbreaks of illnesses like avian influenza or Newcastle disease can devastate poultry populations and pose significant economic risks. To combat this threat, farmers must implement stringent biosecurity protocols and stay updated on the latest advancements in veterinary science. Digital marketing, in this context, is not just a tool but a lifeline. It is crucial in disseminating vital information about disease prevention and management strategies to poultry farmers. Through targeted email campaigns, social media outreach, and online resources, farmers can access invaluable insights and resources to protect their flocks and effectively mitigate disease risks.

Market volatility presents another formidable challenge for poultry farmers in Stanislaus County and the broader Central Valley. Fluctuations in consumer demand, input costs, and global trade policies can exert pressure on poultry prices and profitability. Farmers must embrace a proactive approach to market analysis and diversify their marketing channels to navigate this uncertainty. Digital marketing offers a plethora of avenues for poultry farmers to bolster their market presence and reach a broader customer

base. By leveraging social media platforms, e-commerce websites, and targeted advertising campaigns, farmers can forge direct connections with consumers and set their products apart in the marketplace. Moreover, online marketplaces and farm-to-table initiatives empower farmers to sell poultry products directly to consumers, reducing dependence on traditional distribution channels and enhancing profitability.

Sustainability is a pressing issue in the poultry industry, with consumers increasingly seeking ethically sourced and environmentally friendly products. Poultry farmers in Stanislaus County and the Central Valley must adopt sustainable farming practices to align with evolving consumer preferences and ensure the long-term viability of their operations. In this context, digital marketing is not just a tool but a megaphone. It serves as a powerful tool for communicating farmers' sustainability initiatives and environmental stewardship efforts to consumers. Through compelling storytelling, multimedia content, and educational campaigns, farmers can showcase their commitment to sustainable practices and build trust with environmentally con-

scious consumers.

The poultry industry faces multifaceted challenges in Stanislaus County, Central Valley, and beyond. However, poultry farmers can overcome obstacles and thrive in an ever-evolving agricultural landscape by harnessing online technology and embracing innovative approaches to disease management, market analysis, and sustainability. Through collaboration, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to excellence, poultry farmers in Stanislaus County and the Central Valley can continue to provide high-quality poultry products that nourish their communities and sustainably support their livelihoods.

To enhance your company's online presence, whether it's creating a new website, updating an existing one, needing assistance with Online Reputation Management or seeking a virtual assistant for social media posting or phone support, visit www.sisbroinnovation.com. You can also contact Sisbro Innovation directly at (800) 291-9102 for further assistance or call Kathryn Ramos directly to schedule a FREE consultation at (719) 237-9155.



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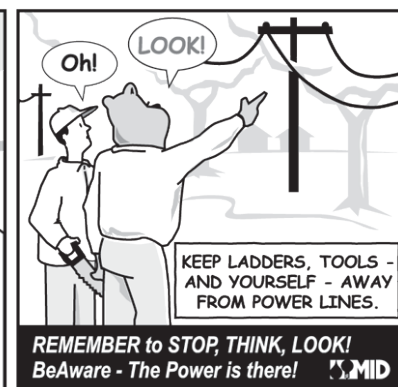
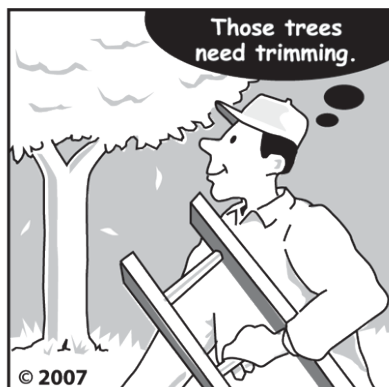
By: Zippy Duvall,
 American Farm Bureau President

We just celebrated Earth Day. But there's not a day that goes by, when farmers aren't thinking about how to leave the land better than we found it. Sustainability is just what we do on the farm, as we like to say. Each sustainable practice—no matter how big or small—adds up in a big way across agriculture. Farmers and ranchers understand that if we consistently do right by the land, it'll be there for generations to come. And that's why U.S. agriculture continues to lead the way in climate-smart practices.

You don't have to take my word for it, either. Just this week the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. Not only does agriculture continue to make up a relatively small slice of emissions, but we are reducing our impact. Overall, agriculture makes up less than 10% of GHG emissions in the U.S. compared to other sectors. But that number is only a fraction of all that farmers and ranchers are achieving together as we care for our land, air and water.

Thanks to innovative practices and technology, we are increasingly producing more with less. We are growing more crops with fewer inputs like water, fertilizer and pesticides. That doesn't mean those tools to grow and protect crops are any less essential. With precision agriculture technology, we can pinpoint what is needed down to

See "AFBF" on page 25



Commodity Fact Sheet

Poultry

Information compiled by the California Poultry Federation

How Produced – Turkeys and chickens are raised on ranches throughout the state. Turkeys are the result of 18 months of careful effort. First, eggs are purchased from a “primary breeder” who specializes in producing superior genetic stock. In 28 days, they hatch into potential breeders. Those that pass a rigorous selection process are placed in a breeding program that produces market turkeys. After hatching, the turkeys are ready for market in four to five months.

Raising chickens for market is much faster. Incubation takes only 21 days. Eggs are placed in an incubator, located in a chick hatchery. After hatching, they are counted and graded before delivery to the customer’s farm. There are two types of egg laying chickens: the meat-type breeder and the egg-type breeder. Chicks raised for meat are ready in 40 to 45 days. Hens kept for egg laying are kept in production for 44 to 60 weeks before being sold to market.

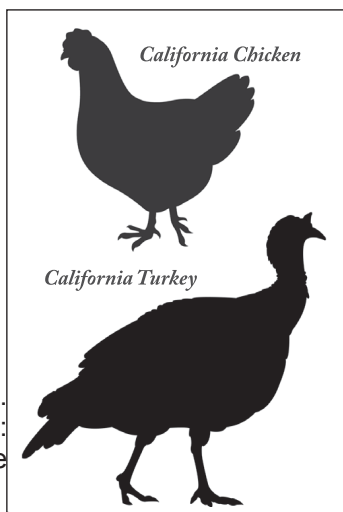
History – The first known domesticated poultry are believed to be the red jungle fowl, a member of the pheasant family, which lives in the forests and bamboo jungles of India and Southeast Asia. Jungle fowl were captured and kept for their eggs and for meat by about 2000 B.C. in Asia. It is thought that all domestic poultry in the world today are descended from this one species.

Over the past 100 years, poultry production has grown from backyard flocks and small, local businesses into highly efficient businesses. In the 1800s and early 1900s many families had backyard flocks for eggs and for meat. By the 20s and 30s, the broiler chicken evolved, and was raised specifically for its meat. In the 40s, 50s, and 60s, feed mills, hatcheries, farms, and processors were still all separately run businesses. Vertical integration began in the mid-1960s, meaning poultry businesses operated all aspects from growing chicks to transporting the finished product. In the late 60s and early 70s, television and media began to market chicken under brand names. Today, most California poultry is sold under a few family-owned farms.

Varieties/Breeds – More than 300 breeds of chickens exist but only a few are appropriate for meat-type commercial production. Common breeds include New Hampshire, White Plymouth Rock, Cornish, or hybrid strains developed by combining breeds to meet producers’ needs.

Turkeys have roamed North and South America for 10 million years. Wild turkeys still exist but they are not very similar to

the tender, broad-breasted bird seen in the market. These birds weigh three and a half times as much as the wild turkeys eaten by the Pilgrims. Today’s turkey consumes 30% less feed and requires one month less growing time to reach market weight than turkeys did 40 years ago. The most common commercial turkey comes from strains developed over the years to produce a white, broad-breasted turkey.



Commodity Value – The U.S. poultry industry produced chickens, turkeys, eggs, squab, and game birds for a combined value of more than \$100 billion. In California, this industry is valued at \$8 billion. In 2019, California chicken producers raised more than 275 million birds, which ranks California among the top 10 chicken producing states. California turkey producers raised more than 14

million birds ranking turkey within the top eight states. California is the top squab producing state. California chicken companies process more than 800,000 chickens per day and more than 760 different California chicken products are sold in supermarkets and grocery stores throughout the West.

Top Producing Counties – The Central Valley is the primary poultry producing area. Fresno, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Sonoma are top producing counties for chicken. Stanislaus, Fresno, Merced, Kings, and San Joaquin are top producing counties for turkey. These rural areas allow room for ranches while allowing access to quick and economical transportation to market.

Nutritional Value – Poultry is in the protein food group and provides nutrients that are important for your body. Nutrients include B-vitamins (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, and B-6), vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium. Turkey and chicken are low in fat and calories while providing a high-protein meat source.

For Additional Information:
 California Poultry Federation
 (209) 576-6355
 cpif.org
 nationalchickencouncil.org
 eatturkey.com



From "AFBF" on page 23

each plant, conserving resources, saving money and reducing our carbon footprint. Being so precise also helps us increase yields. How far have we come in increasing production? Well, just 30 years ago, farmers would have needed 100 million more acres to match what we're growing today.

Farmers have also led the way in embracing and growing renewable energy. Over the last decade, we have seen a 167% increase in farms and ranches using renewable energy producing systems, which includes geothermal, solar panels, windmills, hydro systems and methane digesters – that's nearly 100,000 additional farms. Farmers are also at the forefront of growing renewable energy, such as ethanol and biodiesel. Last year alone, the reduction

in GHGs from the use of renewable fuels in place of gasoline was equal to taking 30 million cars off the road.

Farmers are not just focused on reducing when it comes to sustainability either. We are also enriching—enriching the soil on our farms and enriching the forests and wildlife habitats surrounding our land. In fact, farmers' and ranchers' intentional efforts to provide habitat for wildlife have contributed to population increases in native wildlife such as deer, moose and certain species of birds. Proper use of livestock grazing even maintains distinctive plant communities and soil structure necessary to support threatened and endangered species on both public and private lands. When we look at the full scope of sustainability on the farm, nearly 300

million acres are voluntarily dedicated to climate smart practices, according to the latest USDA Census of Agriculture. That adds up to one-third of U.S. farmland!

I hope that this Earth Day, and every day, we will recognize the dedication and careful stewardship of farmers and ranchers across the country. Sustainability often starts on the farm, but it doesn't stop there. At Farm Bureau, we believe that sustainability takes partnership—across agriculture and the supply chain—to ensure farmers and ranchers have the tools they need to farm today and for generations to come. Together, we can ensure that we build a sustainable future for our farms and ranches and our families as we grow food, fiber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world.



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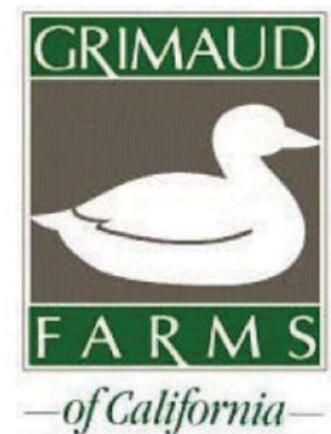
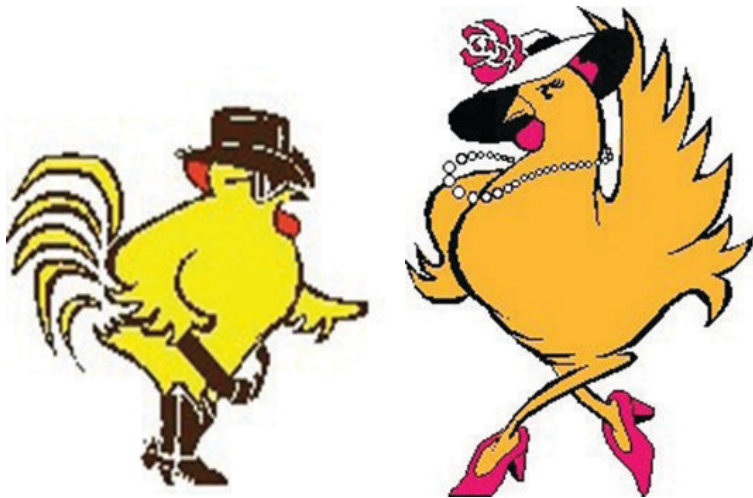
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