

The Stanislaus Farm News

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Three Hundred Farm Bureau Members Enjoyed a Night out
with the Modesto Nuts, see page 8

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Heat wave impacts supply of California table grapes

The recent prolonged heat wave has slowed the supply of California table grapes, with vines shutting down and picking crews working fewer hours just as the state's main growing region ramps up harvest. San Joaquin Valley growers, who produce most of the nation's fresh-market grapes, say the excessive heat has begun to damage some varieties while inhibiting growth of others. Kern County grower Mark Hall said the extended heat spell has affected quality. Some fruit that didn't get picked on time turned mushy. But less fruit on the market has helped prices.

Cling peach harvest crews rise early to beat heat, protect fruit

California clingstone peach growers are working to harvest the season's crop before high temperatures lead to overripe fruit and bruising. Trying to beat a prolonged heat wave, Merced County farmer Mark Cederlind said he started crews at daybreak last week to pick his extra-early Carson variety, which is among dozens of clings planted to ripen throughout the season for the canning and frozen markets. California cling peach growers are expected to produce 242,074 tons of peaches for canned and frozen fruit markets this year, up 10% from 2023.

Planned state pesticide notification program stirs debate

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation moved closer this month to finalizing a new regulation that would

provide advance public notice of restricted-use pesticide applications on farms. The new regulation would create an online map of planned applications, drawing the data from the notices of intent farmers submit to county agricultural commissioners before they are permitted to apply restricted-use pesticides. Growers and farm advocates have complained the rule unfairly targets agriculture while exempting other sectors that use pesticides.



California researchers honored with 2024 Wolf Prize in Agriculture

Venkatesan Sundaresan, a plant biology and plant science professor at the University of California, Davis, has been awarded a 2024 Wolf Prize in Agriculture for key discoveries on plant developmental biology of relevance to crop improvement. The

Wolf Prize in Agriculture, considered by many the Nobel Prize for agriculture, has been awarded annually since 1978 and carries a monetary award of \$100,000. Sundaresan shares the award with Joanne Chory of the Salk In

Reduced plantings, heat affect 2024 processing tomato crop

With searing heat waves impacting pollination for some plantings and harvest for others, California processing tomato growers said they were anticipating average yields at best. As farmers began harvesting across the Central Valley during the past few weeks, the crop was already set to be a light one. Tomato processors contracted 40,000 fewer acres from farmers this year due to bolstered inventory from last year's

SCFB MISSION STATEMENT

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.

bumper crop, aiming to process about 10% less tonnage, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Water projects review seeks to balance farm, environmental needs

State and federal agencies face a challenge to balance the beneficial uses of water needed by farmers with needs of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem amid challenges of climate change. A new draft environmental impact statement for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation seeks to influence operations for California's two primary water-delivery systems, which guide pumping of water through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, sending water south to tens of millions of people and to millions of

acres of farmland. Comments on the report are due by Sept. 9.

New report says water supplies will shrink without infrastructure improvements

Delivery capability and reliability of the State Water Project, a 700-mile network of reservoirs and canals, could be reduced by 23% in 20 years due to changing flow patterns and extreme weather shifts, according to a new report from the California Department of Water Resources. DWR Director Karla Nemeth said the analysis "underscores the need to modernize and upgrade our aging infrastructure so we can capture water supplies when it's wet." She said, "Modernizing the State Water Project is critical to delivering on the human right

to water in California."

Project studies specialty-crop production in urban areas and on vacant lots

Researchers from University of California Cooperative Extension in San Diego County are investigating the economic feasibility of growing high-value specialty crops in urban settings such as vacant lots. In Carlsbad, researchers have created the Small-Scale Urban Ag Demonstration Site. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the farm is designed to evaluate containerized production both outdoors and under hoop houses. In the trial, researchers are growing turmeric, ginger and blueberries.

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Agenda includes: Pesticide continuing education, marketing, Cal OSHA insights, networking, human resources and more. Farm Bureau will be featured in the Resources Center. Learn more at <https://cvbexpo.com/>

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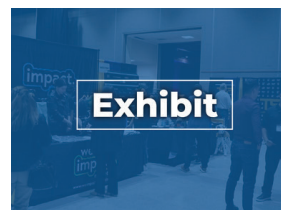


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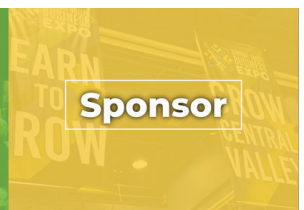
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Kansas.

“We didn’t have farms in our lives. This gives us exposure to a lifestyle we haven’t experienced,” Dougherty said.

In the last two years, the couple has visited 18 Harvest Host sites in Arizona, New Mexico, Kansas, Wisconsin and several in Illinois, now their home state.

“We’re batting 1,000. We’ve never had a mediocre experience,” Dougherty said.

“Along the way, we discovered we enjoy wine,” Dougherty said of looking for more wineries to stay at as they travel north to get out of the heat. With no air conditioning this time of year, they avoid 90-degree weather and note many people are using generators for cooling.

“It’s not for everyone,” he said. Some people can’t downsize enough to enjoy an RV life. The couple lives in a small home when they aren’t on the road exploring or visiting relatives.

“Social media is part of it,” he said. They use it to discover some of the best places to visit and share stories on their YouTube channel.

Some RVers are also relatively new to Harvest Hosts including Rosemarie Barnes of Peterborough, Ontario, who has children to visit on the west coast in Whitehorse, Yukon, and has found the hosts along the way

‘City People’ Get New Appreciation of Ag While RVing

By Phyllis Coulter

A program that gives RVers, often urban-oriented, a chance to experience farms and rural businesses is just the ticket for Lynn Crafts and Dan Dougherty.

They pay a membership fee of about \$85 annually to belong to Harvest Hosts, which provides an interactive map and information about more than 5,000 host farms, wineries and other businesses to help plan their trips. In return for staying free at some spots they might not find otherwise, they shop at the host’s business.

“We are kind of city people,” said Crafts, an animal lover. Some of their favorite stops included interacting with “gentle and curious alpacas” at Heartland “Criations” Alpacas LLC in Knox County, Illinois; visiting “adorable doll sheep” in Shelbyville, Illinois; meeting regal, 18-hand-high draught horses in Kentucky and watching “Oreo cows” (Belted Galloway) frolicking in




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really make the trip.

The Grey Mill, a working mill on a farm in Montana, and Kathy Albert's alpaca farm in Rio were among her favorites. "It was a really nice experience. We'd definitely go back," said Barnes, who bought her granddaughter alpaca socks.

Bob Roat and Holly Grote left their home in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Memorial Day, driving to the Pacific Northwest and are out adventuring all summer.

"We use Harvest Hosts as our overnight stops on the way to our general destination," Roat said.

"We keep coming back, not just for the experiences. It's the people we meet," said Roat of 30 Harvest Hosts stops they visited so far. They liked some so much, they stayed three times.

The couple usually travels six to eight weeks, three times a year, then returns home to Ohio to connect with their kids and grandkids.

They map their routes carefully. "Deciding factors for us are convenience to our main route, and ease of parking our rig for the night," said Roat. "We support the local economies. Probably we support them a little too much sometimes," he added with a chuckle.

Phyllis Coulter is a general assignment editor with FarmWeek and FarmWeekNow.com at the Illinois Farm Bureau, which published the original version of this column.



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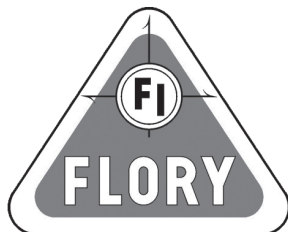
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NIGHT OUT AT THE *Modesto Nuts!*



Stanislaus County Holstein Club

By: *Kate Teixeira*

Four Stanislaus County Holstein Club youth members were among the delegation representing California at the recent Holstein USA National Convention. After qualifying at the CA State Holstein Convention contests in February and preparing all spring, they travelled to Salt Lake City, Utah June 23-27 to meet up with dairy industry enthusiasts from around the nation. Holstein USA offers a variety of programs and competitions for students- encouraging communications, knowledge and professional skills; along with promotion of Holstein genetics.

Jon Chapman and Teresa Sousa, both of Turlock, were part of California's Senior division (ages 17-21) 'Dairy Bowl' team. Participants' knowledge of dairy husbandry and current events was tested, as well as their speed while answering on a buzzer. Jon placed 3rd in the Written Exam portion.

Emma Mast from Denair earned the National Champion title in the Junior division (ages 9-12) of 'Dairy Jeopardy'. This knowledge contest is structured similarly to the classic television show. Livia Morris of Modesto also competed.

Jon Chapman was elected to serve on Holstein USA's Junior Advisory Committee, representing the western states. The JAC is the governing body of the organization which oversees all youth programs and activities.

Chloe Chapman, from Turlock, was recognized as 2nd place in

the Junior division of Holstein USA's 'Virtual Interview Contest' held in the spring. Participants applied for a mock scenario- then were evaluated on their resume, cover letter and interview with a panel via video conference.

These outstanding young agriculturalists enjoyed the opportunity to network with peers and professionals from around the country during game nights, dances, and socials. They also got to tour historic Heritage Park and hear from motivational speaker Ty Bennett before trying the courses at Impact Ninja Gym.

To make the trip possible, these youth received incredible support from California Holstein Association allies throughout the state and extend their gratitude!

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We Cannot Afford Congressional Inaction on the Farm Bill

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

Time is running out for Congress to pass a modernized farm bill this year. Families—on and off the farm—cannot afford a delay. As members of Congress return home for the August recess, we all need to share with them how important this legislation is for our country. Americans in every region, every state, every small town and every big city are counting on our farmers and ranchers to keep our nation's food supply secure—and we're counting on Congress to deliver a farm bill so that we can do just that.

In May of this year, Chairman G.T. Thompson and members of the House Agriculture Committee successfully marked up a bipartisan farm bill that modernizes risk management tools for farmers. Unfortunately, the Senate has been incapable of building on this progress. The American Farm Bureau recently rallied more than 500 groups representing a wide range of agricultural interests and beyond. Together, we sent a unified message to House and Senate leadership with a letter calling on Congress to pass a farm bill this year. Many of the groups that signed this letter have differing farm bill priorities, but we came together and spoke with one voice to

demonstrate the urgency and importance of passing a new farm bill.

As I have said many times now, the farm bill is more accurately a food and farm bill, and it impacts all Americans. A new, modernized farm bill was urgent when we began calling for it early last year, and that urgency has only intensified as costs continue to rise for everyone. Inflation and food affordability are top of mind for most voters right now, according to our latest research. More than 80% of adults, across urban, suburban and rural areas, are concerned about these rising costs.

As we know across farm country, higher food costs don't mean a higher return on the farm. Most farmers continue to face slim margins at best. While costs are up, farm bill programs and risk management tools have not kept up to ensure farmers can weather the storms, which threaten to drive them out of business. In the last five years, 141,000 family farms have gone under due to economic pressures, changing circumstances and regulatory burdens. The time is now, not next year, to renew and improve risk management programs.

A lot can change in a short time, and a lot has. Since the last farm bill was passed and signed in 2018, we have seen a dramatic shift in the economy—both at home and abroad. From a pandemic to major conflicts overseas, our supply chain is stretched, and costs have gone up for everything from seeds to fuel to labor. Leaving the farm bill outdated places American farms at risk. And with 7% fewer farms in the U.S. since the last time a farm bill was passed, that's a risk none of us can afford take.

The shrinking landscape of American agriculture should concern everyone—and our research shows that it does. An overwhelming majority (80%) agree that farmers should have access to critical risk management tools to ensure the stability of our food supply. Urban, suburban and rural adults alike want lawmakers to support and promote the economic sustainability of farms and ranches. Add to that, the majority of adults (76%) believe that ensuring our nation has reliable access to domestically grown food should be a matter of national security in light of current global unrest.

We may have our differences, but we can all agree that the farm bill matters for our country. It's time for Congress to listen to what voters in every region are saying. Stop delaying. Families in cities, suburbs, and rural towns across the country are counting on lawmakers to deliver a modernized farm bill to keep our food supply secure and sustainable.

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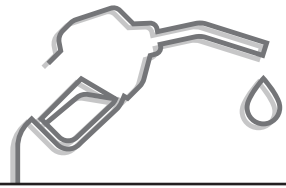


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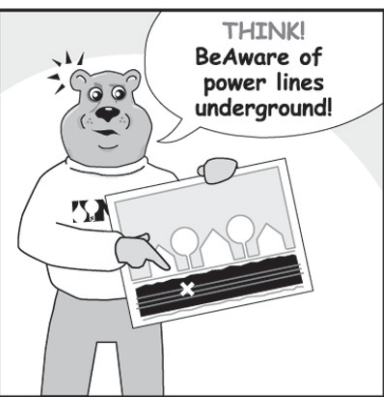
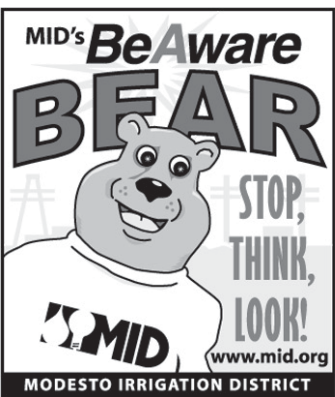
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FAIR Plan Update to 'Provide Much-Needed Security' for Farmers

Source: Brian German, Ag News Director / AgNet West

California Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara has introduced changes to the state's FAIR Plan, which serves as a fallback for those struggling to get insurance. This update is part of a broader plan to improve the insurance market, tackling issues that have not been addressed in decades.

The expansion of the FAIR Plan has unintentionally pushed traditional insurers out of certain areas, creating a cycle of dependency on the backup plan. Lara's new agreement aims to offer better insurance options, like higher coverage limits for commercial properties and improved financial safeguards for policyholders.

These reforms are intended to help a variety of groups, including homeowners, condo associations, farms, and businesses, by providing more robust insurance options and reducing reliance on the FAIR Plan. The ultimate goal is to make the insurance market more stable and reliable.

The changes have received strong support from various organizations, including the California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) and the California Association of Winegrape Growers. This initiative aims to ensure better insurance availability while

strengthening the overall market.

"Our farmers and ranchers have been disproportionately affected by the limitations of the current system, especially in high-risk wild-fire areas," CFBF President Shannon Douglass said in a press release. "The increased coverage limits and enhanced financial stability measures will provide much-needed security for our agricultural community, ensuring that farms can recover and thrive after disasters."



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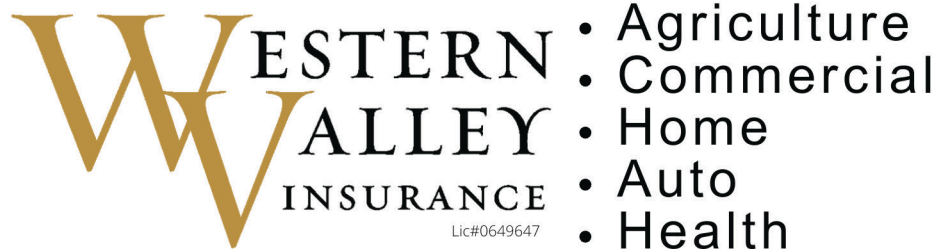
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Fresno State Expands Farm Credit Multicultural Scholars Program

Student Ambassadors reach out to high school students, encourage careers in agriculture

After some 40 years, the Farm Credit Multicultural Scholars Program at California State University, Fresno, is continuing to grow and expand its mission. In fact, the program is now reaching even more students and urging them to consider earning a college degree and pursuing a career in agriculture.

During the recently concluded school year, Fresno State completed the first year of an ambitious outreach program to visit Central Valley high schools to educate traditionally underrepresented students about the benefits of attending the university and pursuing a career in an agriculture-related field.

"We made 33 presentations and 14 farm tours during the school year," said Amy Suarez, a graduate student leading the outreach effort. "The 60 ambassadors gave presentations about Fresno State as well as our ag programs. And they answered questions from the students about campus life, what it's like to live in the dorms and about our majors. It was also important to show that all students can be accepted at Fresno State and that we thrive on diversity."

The expanded high school program adds to a long list of nearly 80 outreach efforts held each year by the Jordan College of Agricultural Science and Technology. These include career fairs, community college presentations and workshops at the FFA Leadership Conference. During the year, the ambassadors reached 10,675 high school and community college students in the Central Valley and Central Coast. That's up from around 6,000 in 2022-23 and just 620 in 2021-22, said Dr. Sharon Freeman, the program coordinator.


"For example, we had three of our ambassadors spend all day at a high school in Salinas, where they presented to eight groups of students in the ag teacher's classrooms," Freeman said. "We've found that students are receptive to

learn about our six departments and the teachers are very appreciative as well."


The student ambassador program has been strongly supported by Farm Credit since 2013, said Keith Hesterberg, President and CEO with Fresno Madera Farm Credit.

"During the past 11 years, Farm Credit has contributed over \$765,000 to fund stipends each year for five ambassadors who serve as leaders of the program," Hesterberg said. "Diversity has been part of Central Valley agriculture from the beginning as people from around the world migrated here to become farmers. That diversity is more important now than ever as we work


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to ensure that California agriculture reflects California's rich diversity."

Kevin Ralph, California State President for AgWest Farm Credit, said he was extremely pleased to see the expanded outreach to high school students.

"Our sponsorship has allowed the major expansion of the program to high school students while the program continues its outreach efforts to older students as well," Ralph said. "It's also a plus that this year the sponsorship is helping to reimburse the scholars for some of their travel expenses. Since the presentations take place from Modesto to Tulare, those stipends can really help these college students."

Farm Credit organizations supporting the program are AgWest Farm Credit, American AgCredit, CoBank and Fresno Madera Farm Credit. These organizations are part

of the nationwide Farm Credit System – the largest provider of credit to U.S. agriculture.

Freeman meets weekly with the ambassador leaders to go through the list of what's coming up next and making sure enough people are in place for all of them, and Suarez keeps in touch throughout the week as well to orchestrate all the moving parts. Ambassadors can sign up for any activity that fits their schedules and student participation has been amazing.

"I couldn't be more proud of the effort and energy going into this outreach effort," she said.

Besides promoting careers in agriculture, the ambassadors also get a lot out of the program, Freeman said. They improve their communication, teamwork and time management skills, which improves their pros-

pects for future employability.

Suarez is a good example of that.

"Being a part of the ambassadors has really helped me grow professionally," Suarez said. "Managing the program has helped build my time management and management skills and I can see how it will help me pursue a career in the future. And just being able to develop relationships with other ambassadors has been a tremendous opportunity."

Suarez has an ag background and participated in 4H and FFA growing up. In high school, she raised and sold Boer goats to students to show at county fairs. She joined the ambassador program as a sophomore and became one of the agricultural scholars after entering grad school. She expects to begin student teaching this fall and to become a full-fledged ag teacher by May 2025 – and looks forward to continuing her outreach to students.

"It's very important to have ag teachers," Suarez said. "They can spark students' passion to be part of the industry, help them become more aware of what is going on in ag and how food ends up

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From "FRESNO" on page 15

on their tables."

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About Farm Credit:

AgWest Farm Credit, American AgCredit, CoBank and Fresno Madera Farm Credit are cooperatively owned lending institutions providing agriculture and rural communities with a dependable source of credit. For more than 100 years, the Farm Credit System has specialized in financing farmers, ranchers, farmer-owned cooperatives, rural utilities and agribusinesses. Farm Credit offers a broad range of loan products and financial services, including long-term real estate loans, operating lines of credit, equipment and facility loans, cash management and appraisal and leasing services...everything a "growing" business needs. For more information, visit www.farmcreditalliance.com

About the Multicultural Ambassadors Program:

The Multicultural Ambassadors program is made up of agricultural students attending California State University, Fresno. Their mission is to conduct recruitment activities to encourage underrepresented students to further their education, consider agricultural careers, and to learn about the opportunities available at the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. Recruitment activities include career fairs, high school presentations, farm tours, and leadership conferences. Through participation in these recruitment activities, the Multicultural Ambassadors develop soft skills, leadership, and career-readiness practices



that prepare them for leadership positions in the agricultural industry.

Pictured Above: A high school student goes face-to-face with a dairy cow during a Multicultural Scholars Program farm tour at California State University, Fresno, as outreach leader Amy Suarez (in red) looks on. (Photo courtesy of CSU Fresno.)

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