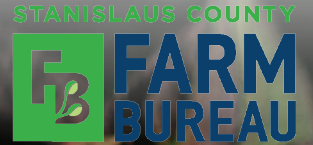


The Stanislaus Farm News

The *voice* of Stanislaus County Agriculture



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Official Publication of Stanislaus
County Farm Bureau
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Happy Valentines Day

In 2022, U.S. consumers spent a total of approximately 2.3 billion dollars on flowers for Valentine's Day, an increase compared to the previous year.

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FROM TID & TO ELECT YOUR EASTSIDE BOARD MEMBERS

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PESTICIDES

On Thursday, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) released the following statement to accompany their release of the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for California. The Farm Bureau agreed to participate so that our voice was heard but we in no way endorse this report, its findings or recommendations. Public comments are due by March 13th and Farm Bureau will be submitting comments. We would encourage others to do so, as well. We will be sending information about opportunities to comment as they arise. We will also continue discussions with DPR, legislators and the Governor's office.

CALIFORNIA UNVEILS BOLD PLAN TO SUSTAINABLY MANAGE PESTS AND ELIMINATE HIGH-RISK PESTICIDES

Today, the state joined leaders from a diverse range of backgrounds to unveil a roadmap of ambitious goals and actions to accelerate California's system-wide transition to sustainable pest management and eliminate prioritized high-risk pesticides by 2050 to better protect the health of our communities and environment, while supporting agriculture, food systems and community well-being. The Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for California – released by the Department of Pesticide Regulation, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture – charts a course for the state's transition to sustainable pest management in agricul-

tural and urban settings. The roadmap was developed over nearly two years by a diverse, cross-sector group of stakeholders representing conventional and organic agriculture, urban environments, community and environmental groups, tribes, researchers, and government. "For decades, California has used pesticides to protect our crops, our cities, our homes, and our businesses from pests," said Yana Garcia, California's Secretary for Environmental Protection. "Exposure to harmful pesticides carries risks – to our health and to our environment – and these risks are disproportionately borne by communities already overburdened by pollution. If we truly want to build a healthy and safe California for all, we must phase out and replace the highest-risk pesticides, and the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is a bold, new plan to get us there." Sustainable pest management is a holistic, systemwide approach that builds on the practice of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by incorporating essential elements of human health and social equity, environmental protection, and economic vitality. IPM uses the least toxic, effective method to solve pest problems. While IPM has been practiced to varying degrees for decades, it hasn't been adopted at scale, across the board, in agriculture or in urban or wildland settings, which is why the holistic, systemwide approach recommended through the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is a necessary evolution.

"The Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap recognizes

how the management of pest pressures is strongly interconnected with resilient farms and ecosystems, and the health of farmworkers and communities." said CDFA Secretary, Karen Ross. "We have a lot of work ahead to implement the approaches outlined in the roadmap. However, the implementation of these recommendations will ensure an abundant and healthful food supply, protect our natural resources, and create healthy, resilient communities."

The Sustainable Pest Management Work Group was formed in response to both a recommendation from the state's Chlorpyrifos Alternatives Work Group, and the Governor's, CalEPA's and DPR's recognition of the need to accelerate a holistic, systemwide approach to safer, more sustainable pest management. The Work Group was comprised of 25 members representing diverse interests to address sustainable pest management in agricultural settings, and an additional eight members formed an urban subgroup to address urban pest pressures specifically.

"Successfully transitioning to sustainable pest management requires collective action," said DPR Director Julie Henderson. "The critical actions outlined in the roadmap include prioritizing prevention, coordinating state-level leadership, investing in building knowledge about sustainable pest management, improving the state's registration and evaluation process to bring more sustainable alternatives to market and enhancing

monitoring and statewide data collection to better inform actions."

DPR opened a public comment period on the prioritization and implementation of next steps outlined in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap. The comment period opened today and will close at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2023. Comments can be sent to alternatives@cdpr.ca.gov or by mail to 1001 I Street, P.O. Box 4015, Sacramento, CA 95812. Comments received will be considered as part of the state-level coordination on implementing the recommendations in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap. DPR and partner agencies will additionally host a series of webinars to discuss the recommendations and actions outlined in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for both agricultural and urban landscapes.

Please review the Sustainable Pest Management Overview that describes the focus of this roadmap by clicking [HERE](#). Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

WATER GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLANS APPROVED

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced the approval of groundwater sustainability plans for four groundwater basins – Napa Valley Subbasin in Napa County, as well as Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin, Petaluma Valley Basin, and Sonoma Valley Sub-

basin in Sonoma County. Local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) are implementing plans consistent with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), California's landmark groundwater management law enacted in 2014. SGMA requires local GSAs to achieve their groundwater basin sustainability goals within a 20-year timeframe. The plans approved for the four Northern California basins are among 65 plans submitted to DWR in January 2022. DWR has until January 2024 to review the remaining plans. Results of the evaluations will be made available throughout 2023. GSAs implement the plans while DWR completes its review.

Once plans are submitted, SGMA lays out a process for local GSAs to gather information to fill data gaps, update plans, and promote science-based adaptation. Plans will be updated over time as new data

and information becomes available and as conditions change in groundwater basins. DWR will review annual reports from GSAs and assess each plan every five years to determine whether GSAs are on track to meet their basin's sustainability goal. DWR anticipates releasing plan assessments for remaining GSAs throughout 2023. Projects and programs to enhance groundwater conditions are actively being planned and put into place in many basins throughout the State. In the four basins in Sonoma and Napa counties with newly approved plans, agencies have been working on alternative water supply projects such as stormwater capture and water use efficiency programs while their plans were evaluated.

In addition to and aligned with plan evaluation, DWR continues to support GSAs by providing planning, technical, and financial assistance. In May 2022, DWR awarded \$150 million in

grant funding for projects to improve water supply security, water quality and groundwater supply reliability. Last month, DWR also closed the application period for more than \$200 million in additional grant funding for SGMA implementation. These efforts align with the Newsom Administration's goal to provide significant additional funding for projects to improve groundwater conditions and advance safe drinking water efforts for groundwater-dependent communities identified in the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio.

Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

STATE WATER PROJECT ALLOCATIONS INCREASED

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced that recent storms will allow the State Water Project (SWP) to boost deliveries to 29 public water agencies serving 27 million Californians. Based on the amount of water captured and stored in recent weeks, DWR now expects to deliver 30 percent of requested water supplies -- or 1.27 million acre-feet -- in 2023, up from the initial 5 percent announced on December 1. The allocation increase is the direct result of extreme weather in late December and nine atmospheric rivers in early January that helped fill reservoirs and dramatically increase the Sierra Nevada snowpack. The SWP's two largest reservoirs (Oroville and San Luis) have gained a combined 1.62 million acre-feet of water in storage -- roughly enough to provide water to 5.6 million households for a year. While Water Year 2023 began with below average precipitation, conditions shifted to extreme above average conditions.

conduct snow surveys on February 1, March 1, April 1, and May 1 and may further update the allocation as the water supply outlook becomes clearer with the new data. In addition to on the ground surveys, DWR will gather data from its Airborne Snow Observatory (ASO) surveys. For the second year in a row, DWR is broadening the deployment of these more sophisticated technologies, such as ASO surveys, that can collect snow measurements farther upslope of the Sierra Nevada. The data from these flights, which use LiDAR and spectrometer technology to measure snowpack across broad swaths of key watersheds, will be used by DWR to get a more accurate account of California's snowpack and to update water supply runoff forecasts. Since the storms California experienced this month saw variable snow elevations, the data from ASO flights will help DWR verify snow course and snow sensor data and understand how snow has been distributed across the Sierra Nevada.

DWR cautioned that while recent storms have been impressive, two months remain in the wet season and California could see a return to warm and dry conditions prior to April 1. The SWP pumps currently are operating at maximum capacity of 9,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) and will continue to be adjusted as needed to meet State and federal requirements. California traditionally receives half its rain and snow by the end of January. Water managers will reassess conditions monthly throughout the winter and spring. Starting in February, the assessments will incorporate snowpack data and runoff forecasts.

Each year, DWR provides the initial SWP allocation by December 1 based on available water storage, projected water supply, and water demands. Allocations are updated monthly as snowpack and runoff information is assessed, with a final

See Review on page 19

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The updated SWP delivery forecast takes into account current reservoir storage and is based on a conservative runoff forecast. It does not take into account the current Sierra Nevada snowpack. DWR will

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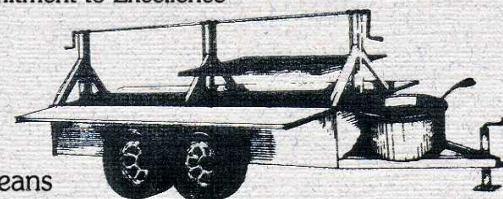
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Good locations for the Elide Fire Extinguishing Ball

The Fire Ball can be used for active or passive fire mitigation and prevention. Actively, the user can throw the ball toward flames, engaging the release of fire suppression material. For passive fire mitigation, each Elide Fire Extinguishing Ball includes a mounting bracket and can be mounted anywhere from the wall of a building to the engine compartment of a piece of machinery. Large farm machinery like farm combines and cotton gins are ideal applications for an Elide Fire Extinguishing Ball. Mounting one inside a combine’s engine compartment can help prevent combine fires and give peace of mind that you’ll have an early warning if something like an overheated bearing or crop residue ignites.

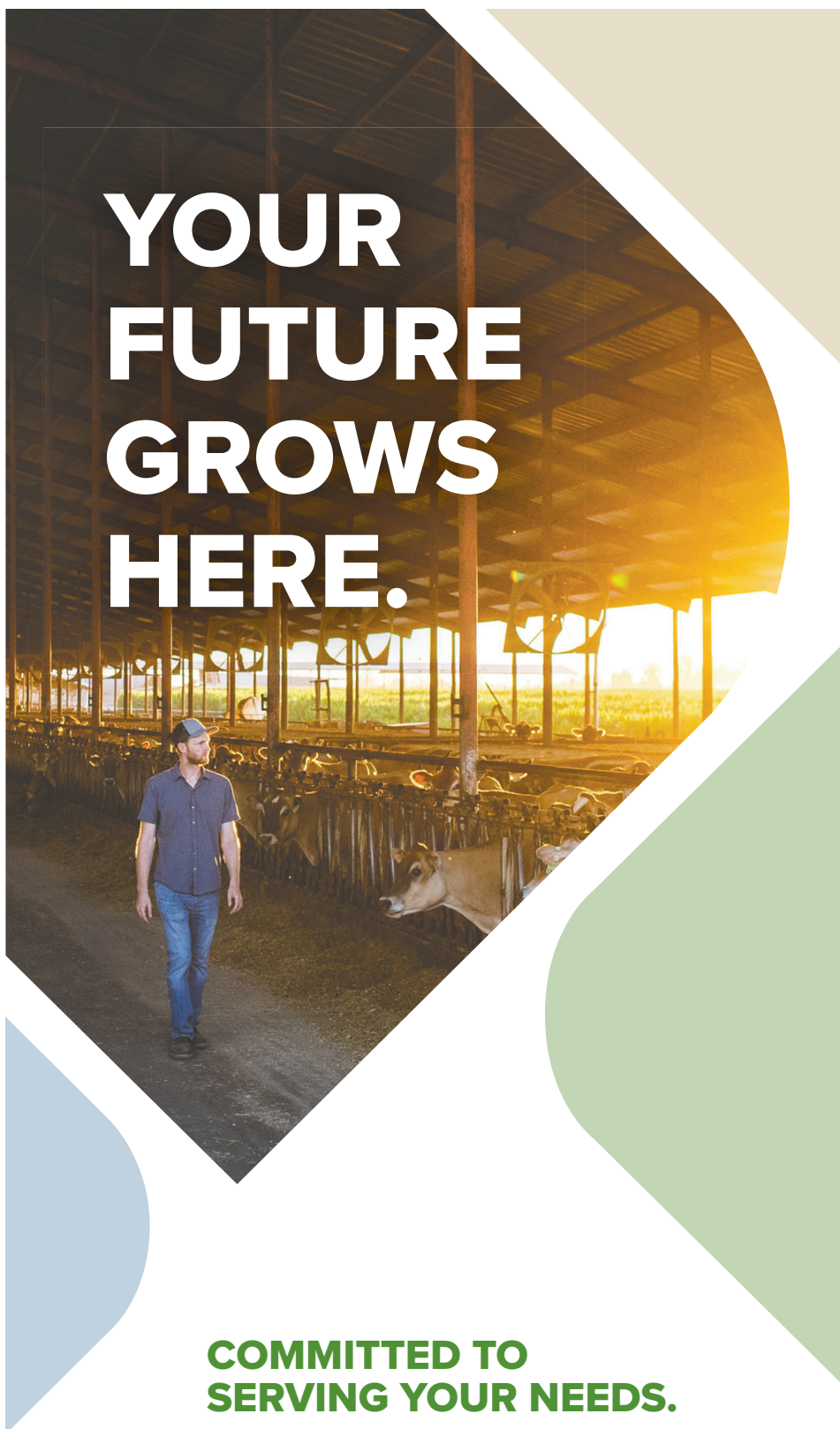
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[1] *A.M. Best Market Share Report 2021.



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Food and Farm News

Salinas Valley farmers recovering from flooding, assessing toll

Farmers in the Salinas Valley are still calculating crop damages from a series of atmospheric storms that caused the Salinas River to overflow its banks, flooding 20,000 acres of agricultural land. The Monterey County Farm Bureau estimated that farmers suffered \$40 million to \$50 million in losses. Total damages were difficult to access with storm waters slow to recede. While much of the flooded acreage was dormant, thousands of acres contained

newly planted vegetables and strawberries. Farmers say there may be production shortages in April and May.

After deluge, hopes rise for agricultural water supply

While many farmers suffered crop losses, the deluge of storms has stirred hopes for a better water-supply year for agriculture after three years of severe drought and water delivery cuts. In the Sacramento Valley, David Guy, president of the Northern California Water Association, says growers are feeling encouraged with snow piled high in the Sierra Nevada and long-depleted reservoirs

recovering. Agricultural income plummeted in the Sacramento Valley last year as vast acreage of rice fields was fallowed due to a lack of water.

Processing tomato growers expecting improved contract prices amid rising costs

Canneries are expected to offer processing tomato growers higher contract prices this year to encourage increased plantings. However, the two sides have yet to agree on a final price. That could impact planting decisions as farmers weigh crop options and water budgets. Merced County farmer Aaron Barcellos, first vice chairman of the California

Tomato Growers Association, said he is hoping contract prices compensate for soaring production costs that have made processing tomatoes less profitable to grow.

Agricultural, business groups sue over new 'waters of U.S.' rule

The American Farm Bureau Federation and other agricultural and business groups are suing federal agencies over the new "waters of the United States" rule. The lawsuit argues that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers overreached in finalizing the rule in December. Plaintiffs say the new rule could subject farmers to onerous requirements under the Clean Water Act. AFBF President Zippy Duvall said, "Farmers and ranchers should not have to hire a team of lawyers and consultants to determine how we can farm our land."

Walnut growers are hard hit by crop damage, plummeting prices

California walnut farmers are tearing out older trees and less desirable varieties as walnut prices have plummeted well below costs of production. The California Walnut Commission estimates that the 2022 crop suffered \$1 billion in damages after a devastating heat wave in September cooked walnuts on trees in a critical time in the growing cycle. Later, ill-timed rains led to mold problems. As much as 30% to 40% of the walnut volume was impacted—resulting in disaster declarations for growers in several counties.

State upgrades water delivery expectations after January storm deluge

California's January storms may be paying their first dividends for farmers. The California Department of Water Resources announced that the State Water Project may deliver 30% of requested supplies this year. That allocation is up from an initial projection of 5% in December. The final water allocation for 2022 was 5%, plus limited supplies for unmet

human and safety needs. A 30% allotment would allow the state to deliver 1.27 million acre-feet of water to 29 public water agencies.

Surging natural gas costs causing greenhouse operations to hike prices

Skyrocketing natural gas prices are created challenges for California nursery operations, which use the fuel to heat greenhouses. Some are facing utility bills as much as five times higher than in previous years. As a result, nursery operators say they must raise prices to customers, including farmers who buy transplants and seedlings for planting. Some nursery businesses are adding fuel surcharges to their plants. The West Coast, which relies on natural gas imports, has seen reduced deliveries from Canada and the Rocky Mountains.

Wine sector seeks to connect with younger consumers amid declining demand

California winegrape growers and wine professionals say they have been facing sliding demand for wine over the past two years. At the recent 2023 United Wine & Grape Symposium in Sacramento, speakers said the wine sector needs to win over younger consumers and market to a more diverse customer base. Wine sales saw roughly two decades of sustained growth before the recent decline in demand. It has been attributed to a broad shift away from alcohol in general. Last year, people over 60 were the only demographic with higher wine consumption.

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SWP Allocation Increased to 30 Percent After Weeks of Storms

Brian German
Ag News Director, AgNet West

In response to improved hydrological conditions, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) has updated State Water Project (SWP) deliveries. The SWP allocation has now been increased to 30 percent, after previously being set at just five percent back in December. DWR is now expecting to deliver nearly 1.3 million acre-feet of water in 2023.

“We are pleased that we can increase the allocation now and provide more water to local water agencies,” DWR Director Karla Nemeth said in a press release. “These storms made clear the importance of our efforts to modernize our existing water infrastructure for an era of intensified drought and flood. Given these dramatic swings, these storm flows are badly needed to refill groundwater basins and support recycled water plants.”

SWP contractors have not been allocated more than 30 percent since 2019 and it has been nearly 20 years since a 100 percent allocation was issued. The SWP allocation may be updated as assessments of California’s water supplies will incorporate snowpack data beginning in February. So far, the California snowpack is well above 200 percent of normal for this time of year and is a positive sign for water storage moving forward. During a media briefing on January 26, DWR’s Deputy Director of the SWP, Ted Craddock explained that the recent storms already brought significant improvements to the state’s largest two reservoirs.

“At Lake Oroville, we have 2.2 million acre-feet of storage. We have 1.1 million acre-feet of storage combined – State Water Project and Central Valley Project – at San Luis Reservoir,” Craddock explained. “We’re continuing to operate our pumping operations in the Delta where we deliver water to San Luis Reservoir to the maximum extent possible. Today and over the last few days, we’ve been at our maximum pumping from those facilities, which is welcome also for water supply.”

DWR will be conducting a manual snow survey on February 1 and will be reassessing hydrological conditions each month with additional surveys through the spring.



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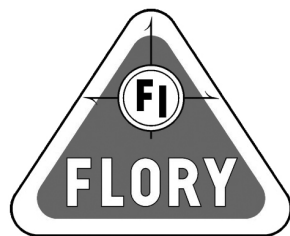
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From the Farm

Source: CFBF

We in farming are used to power. We see the power of the sun to grow crops, the power of hard work to achieve success, and in recent weeks, the power of wind and rain to fell trees, wash out roads and change the landscape around us in one storm. While the power of nature may often bring challenges, the power of yes can bring new opportunities for solutions.

This week I had the distinct honor of welcoming Congressman John Duarte to Washington, D.C., with a meet-and-greet event hosted by California Farm Bureau to help the congressman get acquainted with other agricultural groups in our nation's capital. It was a proud moment as president of California Farm Bureau to watch a Farm Bureau member from Stanislaus County shake hands with his colleagues in government and friends in agriculture across the country as he stepped into his role as a decision maker and leader in the United States

government.

This moment was made possible because John Duarte, a farmer just like you and me, harnessed the power of yes and turned challenges into an opportunity for solutions. Congressman Duarte comes from a background many of us can relate to. He is a fourth-generation Valley farmer growing almonds, pistachios and grapes. He's had his share of challenges in farming and business like all of us have over the years, including a very public and drawn-out fight with the federal government over Clean Water Act provisions. Successfully ending that challenge could have been the final resolution for the Duarte family; however, Congressman Duarte said yes to an opportunity to run for Congress and keep fighting for solutions for the California farm and ranch community.

Earlier this month at the Annual Meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation in Puerto Rico, I had the honor of being re-elected to the AFBF Board of Directors. In that capacity,

I, along with three other state Farm Bureau presidents, was also elected to serve alongside AFBF President Zippy Duval on the Executive Committee. This election is a testament to the men and women of Farm Bureau and the reputation of California Farm Bureau and California as the No. 1 agriculture state in the nation. I can tell you firsthand that any of the fine men and women serving as their state's Farm Bureau president would have served our organization exceptionally as a board member or member of the Executive Committee. To be chosen by my peers is an honor and a responsibility I don't take lightly. I've said yes to this opportunity to serve my state and nation, and it's just the latest in a series of yeses born from challenges facing all of us in agriculture.

As I seek solutions, I'll be challenging our elected officials to say yes to more water storage and water solutions in 2023. The focus for the last several years has been water storage for drought conditions, but this month has brought to the fore-

front the need for water storage as a measure of flood control. In the coming months, I will be using these newsletters to share the solutions Farm Bureau is advocating for, and the solutions-based opportunities our farmers and ranchers can say yes to being a part of.

I hope you'll join me in this new year by looking for opportunities to say yes. Say yes to membership in your local county Farm Bureau or an opportunity to run for office at the local level. Say yes when asked to visit Sacramento and meet with elected officials in March or when a challenge arises and you can be part of the solution. There is no question, and history has proven, that when we farmers and ranchers roll up our sleeves and work together, we can accomplish great things.

Let's say yes to the future of California agriculture in 2023.

Jamie Johansson
President, California Farm Bureau

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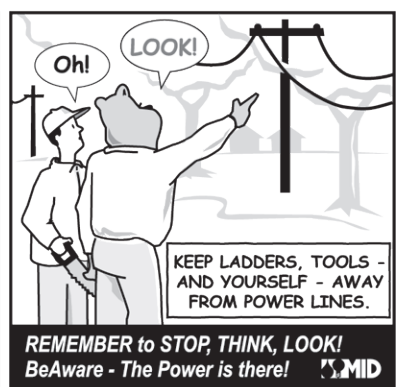
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High heat, low demand hurt walnut crop

California farmers are tearing out walnut orchards, such as at this farm near Winters, in response to quality concerns due to a September heat wave, lower demand and prices, and other market issues. The California Walnut Commission estimates \$1 billion in damages to the 2022 crop.

By Christine Souza
AgAlert

Walnut farmers are tearing out older trees and less desirable varieties as the price for the nut has plummeted well below the cost of production, causing some growers to rethink walnuts and look for alternative crops.

“I’ve seen several younger orchards that have come out already in Fresno, Merced and Madera counties,” said Kings County farmer Brian Medeiros of Hanford, who farms walnuts, almonds and row crops. “My neighbor had a walnut orchard that was about six years old, and he tore the whole thing out. He just said, ‘I’m losing money hand over fist. I’m not going to keep doing it.’”

A heat wave last September cooked the walnuts on the trees during a critical time of the growing cycle. High temperatures were followed by rain that led to mold problems.

“We had extremely high temperatures—up to 117 degrees for three to four days in some areas—and this occurred when walnuts were at their most

sensitive stage in growth,” said Robert Verloop, president and chief executive officer of the California Walnut Board and California Walnut Commission. “We conducted our own informal survey of about 75% of the industry and documented pretty clearly that the range is anywhere from 30% to 40% of the (walnut) volume that was impacted. That means if the handler opens up 100 pounds of walnuts, 30 to 40 pounds is absolutely not usable.”

Walnut growers in Stanislaus County demonstrated to the county agricultural commissioner that there was 36% loss in crop volume, Verloop said. The growers provided damage

information within the required 60 days, which led to a federal disaster declaration.

On Jan. 13, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack designated a disaster declaration for Stanislaus County and contiguous counties of Alameda, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Santa Clara and Tuolumne for walnut losses due to the heat wave last September. Farmers in qualifying counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loans through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency. The California Walnut Commission is working with federal lawmakers on additional aid,

including walnut purchases by USDA for food banks and tree-pull programs.

With the price to growers for the 2022 walnut crop at about 40 cents per pound or less—and well below last year’s breakeven price of between 70 and 90 cents per pound—walnuts were the obvious choice for removal for Medeiros, he said. He pulled out 16 acres of walnut trees to scale down his water use to comply with groundwater regulations and manage his allotment.

“Our orchard is only 15 years old, so when I was pulling out those 16 acres, it literally broke my heart because I’m pulling



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out beautiful trees that look gorgeous, and I'm bulldozing them over," Medeiros said. "The (walnut) price is making it much easier, much quicker for us to move ahead because—unless this price changes dramatically in the coming year or we have some outstanding support from USDA—we're probably pulling the rest of them out next year."

Stanislaus County farmer Gordon Heinrich of Modesto, who farms walnuts and operates a huller and dehydrator, said the price of walnuts is at a 30-year low, and input costs have gone up substantially.

"We're actually operating below the cost of production right now, and everybody's scratching their heads trying to figure out where you can cut back on your inputs to survive this market situation," Heinrich said. "There's not a lot of places you can cut," he added.

Handlers are advising walnut growers to remove older, darker-kernel varieties such as Vina, Serr and Hartley, to maintain

the supply of light walnuts, Chandler, Tulare and Howard, that global buyers demand.

"Growers are starting to realize that all those older varieties need to be taken out and replanted with a more modern variety, such as a Chandler," Heinrich said. "The quicker that we can change our market strategy as far as being able to put a better product on the market, the longer this is going to last. It is going to right itself in time, but there's a lot of farmers out there who are going to have a real tough time."

Verloop said handlers reported 20% to 50% of the 2022 walnut crop was substandard in quality and is better suited for cattle feed. He said the commission estimates the farm-gate loss to growers is \$1 billion.

Aside from quality problems, Verloop said many different factors affect the market for California walnuts, much of which are exported to Europe, Turkey, India, Spain, Japan, Korea and the Middle East.

"The problem is the pipeline to the consumer has a lot of walnuts in it already," Verloop said. The carryover from the 2021 crop of about 135,000 tons, he said, and the 2022 crop is expected to be between 750,000 tons to 780,000 tons and much larger than the 720,000-ton crop forecast last September.

Retaliatory trade tariffs and the COVID-19 pandemic added to the walnut supply-demand imbalance and led to trucking and transportation challenges, congestion at the ports and a slowing of consumer demand. Inflation, the higher value of the dollar and the war in the Ukraine also are affecting customer confidence and buying power, Verloop said.

"We're in the middle of that perfect storm," Heinrich said of the global and economic stressors impacting the walnut market. "We're hoping that we can just hang on. We're lucky with our operation that we're somewhat diversified, but even almonds are struggling with some of the same problems."

Bill Carriere, president of Carriere Family Farms—a grower, processor and marketer of walnuts in Glenn County—said it is a very nervous time for growers and handlers.

"Sales were slow in general, and you had quality concerns that doubled the problem. That really hurt storage, so our storage is full. There are wal-

nuts in warehouses that are not normally in warehouses," said Carriere, who added that 20% of the 2022 walnut crop he received is not salable. "In our operation, we're losing much more money as a grower than we are as a handler, but we're losing in both."

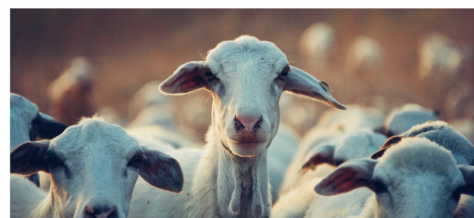
To recover from this year's challenges, Verloop said, "the goal right now is to remove all of the substandard quality product off the market and let the good quality product price start to come up a little bit."

For the next year or two, Verloop said he expects a downsizing of the walnut sector as growers remove less productive acres and less desirable heritage walnut varieties.

"We're working with all of our trade agencies around the world to take a look at what can we do to recover from this year," Verloop said. "We think there's a lot of trust and confidence long term in our product from California because it's been the gold standard. We're working hard on several different fronts to make sure that we're better positioned in the future."

Growers seeking more information about disaster assistance and other program relief are encouraged to contact their local Farm Service Agency.

(Christine Souza is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at csouza@cbbf.com.)

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New Year, New Congress

Source: AFBF, Zippy Duwall, President

Recently, the 118th Congress was sworn in. These elected officials, chosen by the American people in November, will spend the next two years debating the issues that matter most to all of us. Voters sent 81 people to Congress for the first time. They'll have to learn the ropes and put in extra time to understand the issues.

Part of our responsibility as Farm Bureau, and as farmers and ranchers, is to reach out and engage with these new members about the work happening on farms and ranches in their districts, their states, and across the country. We have our work cut out for us. There are fewer people representing rural America than ever before, making it more important than ever before to reach out to new members representing urban districts, too.

Our work in every Congress is important, and it's even more important when it's time to renew the farm bill. Programs in this legislation are critical to American agriculture. One of our greatest challenges this year is ensuring members understand these programs and why they are essential. Almost half of Congress, 260 members, were not in Congress when the 2018 farm bill was passed. We have to put in the extra work to ensure they understand the importance of farm bill programs that help farmers and ranchers manage risk, why conservation programs are and should continue to be voluntary and science-based, and why it's critical that farm policy and nutrition policy remain united in the farm bill, among many other priorities.

One of the greatest limiting factors American agriculture faces is the lack of workers. Across farm country and in the windows of



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businesses large and small, you'll see help wanted signs. Farmers need Congress to fix the H-2A visa program to provide more accessibility and affordability. We also need a new year-round farm-worker program for jobs that are done every day – like milking cows. As with any other issue, and especially with this Congress, a meaningful and bipartisan policy solution must be the outcome that we strive to achieve sooner rather than later.

There are many other important issues farmers and ranchers are counting on Congress and the executive branch to advance this year. Broadband must be expanded and access improved in rural communities. Programs to advance climate-smart farming practices must be science-based and market-driven. And Congress and the Administration must understand that the only way to meet big goals related to sustainability and addressing hunger is by ensuring farmers continue to have a variety of crop protection tools. The Administration must also step up in a bigger way to pursue trade deals that will open markets to U.S. farmers and ranchers. And we'll hold the Administration's feet to the fire when it comes to enforcing trade deals like the USMCA.

We're looking forward to working with this Congress to deliver solutions to the challenges farmers and ranchers face. I hope that our elected officials will come together, set politics aside, and engage in meaningful discussions about these issues. We need them to do just that - because the challenges we face now, and the ones that lay ahead, will take buy-in from both parties to solve in a manner that will stand the test of time.



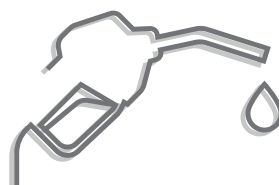
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January 18, 2023

Julie Henderson, Director
Department of Pesticide Regulation
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: 1,3-Dichloropropene (1,3-D) Proposed Rulemaking

Dear Director Henderson:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed regulatory action (DPR 22-005) regarding the use of 1,3-Dichloropropene (1,3-D) in California. Stanislaus County Farm Bureau represents around 1600 farmers and industry professionals within Stanislaus County who service farm operations and grow fruits, nuts, vegetables, and other crops that are critical to the state's agricultural economy and communities. In Stanislaus County, our biggest commodities are fruit and nut trees. Our growers depend on 1,3-D to fumigate their fields before replanting an orchard. Buffer zones and township caps already limit its use, however it is a critical tool that enables our growers to produce higher yields more efficiently. California farmers and ranchers have been so innovative and work tirelessly to produce food with less water and tools, but desperately need to retain this irreplaceable product.

Soil fumigation is an integral part of farming operations throughout California and a fundamental practice used to protect farm fields from soil borne pests and diseases, such as nematodes, fungi, and others that damage plant root structures. 1,3-D has been confirmed to improve crop yields, allow for more efficient use of farm inputs (like water and fertilizers) and reduce reliance on other pesticidal products. The distribution, sale and use of products containing 1,3-D are highly regulated at the federal, state, and local level and may only be utilized by certified applicators, permitted under County Agricultural Commissioner oversight and approval, after considering field-level conditions.

Therefore, we appreciate the effort the Department of Pesticide Regulation (Department) has taken to generate additional field data from the series of pilot projects initiated in 2022. The utilization of empirical data grounds policy proposals in practicality and considers important measures such as how product efficacy is impacted by proposed mitigation measures. While the current regulatory proposal makes significant progress from previous iterations, we respectfully offer comments on the following items: scientific basis of the mitigation measures, the new soil moisture requirements, seasonal restrictions, and setbacks.

fertigation timelines, or be significantly constrained by the other mitigation measures obligated by this rulemaking.

This soil moisture requirement is more challenging to achieve when compounded by the expanded seasonal restrictions. Extending the seasonal restriction from December to November through February means infrequent natural precipitation events are not likely able to be utilized to meet the soil moisture requirement. Even more importantly, it may not allow for responsiveness to pest issues (anticipated or actual), complicates application management with lower application blocks and lead to applications at inopportune times when conditions are not ideal agronomically. Some crops, such as tree nuts, are best planted in late fall (November) with relatively mild weather, after typically late October rain events have subsided and soil is appropriately drained. Therefore, as an alternative, the Department could expand their seasonal allowances, allowing soil moisture requirements to be better met by natural precipitation times, and allow growers to work with irrigation specialists to determine the appropriate soil moisture content within a more practical moisture range.

Soil moisture requirements have been an area of concern for Stanislaus County growers. Calls placed to local University of California, Cooperative Extension Farm Advisors have given no indication of efficacy of product with the proposed soil moisture requirements. Without solid data suggesting that 1,3-D is still effective at both the proposed depth and moisture requirements, what will growers use to mitigate nematodes? There is no viable alternative product.

Setback Distances

We would like to offer our appreciation to the Department for clarifying that "non-residential agricultural buildings, including barns, livestock facilities, sheds and outhouses," are not by default considered an occupied structure and therefore subject to the specified setback requirements. As you are aware, these types of agricultural structures are rarely occupied and if so, for very short time periods.

However, we would like to respectfully offer concern regarding the setback distances, which as proposed, will prove very impactful to farm operations. As is the case with setbacks or buffer zone requirements, depending upon the severity of the required distance, implementing them will lead to untreated rows resulting in production loss or crop quality issues. It may also allow soil borne pests to move freely in expanded setbacks and migrate to new areas or parcels requiring greater applications than otherwise anticipated. At a time when many California farms are at a watershed financial moment (managing input costs, lack of availability, resource scarcity, and supply chain challenges), these restrictive conditions will contribute more pressure, pushing some to the brink. This is especially true for small or mid-sized farms, those urban adjacent, or for cropping systems and crop types particular sensitive to pest pressures for which there are no alternatives to 1,3-D.

Moreover, we would like to provide comment on multiple application circumstances. The current methodology used to establish setback distances from single application blocks appears grounded in risk-based principles and applies available localized data to models capable of accounting for important variables that can influence emission rates (e.g., chemical properties, soil characteristics and application methods) and dispersion of emissions to predict airborne concentrations of 1,3-D at adjacent occupied structures. We generally support this science-based approach and agree that it yields defensible results for single application blocks.

However, we do not support the Department's proposed regulations which forego this approach in instances where two or more applications would occur at different locations within 36 hours and the buffer zones for individual application blocks overlap or touch. In these instances, the Department is

Science Based Considerations

As leading organizations representing California agriculture, we have a strong interest in ensuring that the proposed regulations are developed through a consistent, comprehensive, and robust analysis of all available science.

To that end, we are concerned that the concentration limits for non-occupational bystanders cited as the basis for the Department's proposed mitigation measures – 0.56 ppb (70-year average) for cancer risk and 55 ppb (72-hour average) for acute effects – are predicated on an outdated risk assessment that does not consider more recent scientific evidence and data. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is conducting a pesticide registration review for 1,3-D using a weight of evidence (WOE) analysis peer reviewed by a panel of subject matter experts. This analysis concludes that the currently manufactured form of 1,3-D is not mutagenic or carcinogenic below certain doses.¹ This finding challenges the validity of previous risk assessments used to establish health protective exposure levels, including the Department's risk assessment last updated in 2016 of which is the basis for this proposed regulation. We request that the Department update its 1,3-D risk assessment using a current WOE analysis before completing this rulemaking. This will ensure that the proposed mitigation measures, while still conservative in the context of toxicological endpoints, would deliver public health benefits commensurate with the economic harm they would impose on the agricultural sector. It would also allow for conformity in regulatory outcomes that don't put California farmers at a competitive disadvantage and thereby impact food supply and consumer prices.

Stanislaus County have had three incidents during a 1,3-D application during the last five years. Two incidents were considered moderate (Class B) and one minor (Class C). NO Level A violations. In all three incidents, the violations were found concerning worker health and safety requirements and not bystanders.

For some context, the most recent incident was due to the sealer being an employee of the grower not wearing required PPE and not having been trained, for an application under supervision by a PCB. Stanislaus County Ag Commissioner's Office performed compliance interviews, the Pest Control Business understood they were supervising the application and therefore responsible for all compliance elements and going forward would provide their own sealers. All of these were resolved via a Decision Report to DPR.

Seasonal Restrictions and Soil Moisture Requirements

In the regulations, the Department proposes to increase soil moisture requirements from 25% to 50% of field capacity and offer three options to comply: (1) irrigate with three inches of water 48 to 72 hours prior to fumigation, (2) determine the soil moisture content using the feel and appearance method, or (3) determine the soil moisture using a soil moisture sensor.

We would like to offer our concern that this increased saturation requirement will result in an inefficient use of scarce water supplies. Confronting the impacts of the current extreme drought conditions and implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the proposed regulation would further constrain farmers' decision making and may, require them to choose between proper and appropriate pest management or irrigation. Should they choose not to reallocate water supplies for this requirement and wait for natural precipitation events, they may be ineligible for application, disrupt

¹ Hayes, Nelson and Kirman, Peer review of a cancer weight of evidence assessment based on updated toxicokinetics, genotoxicity, and carcinogenicity data for 1,3-dichloropropene using a blinded, virtual panel of experts. Critical Reviews in Toxicology, February 2021.

applying excessively conservative or worst-case assumptions² for the data driven inputs and modeling used to establish the setback distances for single application blocks. In most cases, applying these assumptions to the setback tables in the proposed regulation will either result in the maximum setback distance (500 feet) or impose de facto use prohibitions for all affected application blocks. We share in the Department's desire to be health protective, but actions must be based on scientifically valid standards, especially when it has data and modeling tools that are capable of predicting the impact of contemporaneous applications at off-site receptor locations. Therefore, we request the Department apply the same methodology it proposes for determining setbacks from single application blocks to determine setbacks from overlapping application blocks.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on the proposed 1,3-D regulation. We look forward to continued discussion on this proposed regulatory package and a practical evaluation of its components. We would be happy to host a roundtable here at Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, bringing together growers, applicators, and regulatory agents.

Sincerely,

Eric Heinrich
President,
Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

The letter printed above, was sent to the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) from Stanislaus County Farm Bureau (SCFB) in regards to proposed regulatory changes to the use of 1,3-Dichloropropene (Telone). Telone soil fumigant is a pre-plant soil fumigant for control of all major species of nematodes, including root-knot, lesion, stubby-root, dagger, ring and cyst. Telone is injected into the soil as a liquid and immediately converted to a gas, creating a zone of protection around developing roots.

Telone is an important tool in our growers' toolbox. SCFB opposes the proposed regulatory changes. If passed, the regulatory changes would increase buffer zones, the depth of application and require high soil moisture content. In the letter, we addressed the concerns of efficacy and the ability to even use the product with the proposed moisture content and depth requirements.

This is just one of the many examples of SCFB continuing to advocate on behalf of our members. Your membership matters, thank you for supporting the efforts of Stanislaus County Farm Bureau.

Another USMCA Dispute Panel Sought Due to Canadian Dairy Policies

Brian German
Ag News Director, AgNet West

The U.S. is establishing another dispute panel in relation to Canadian dairy policies, according to U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai. At issue is Canada's dairy tariff-rate quota (TRQ) allocation measures running contrary to parameters set forth in the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). The U.S. won a previous dairy dispute with Canada, however, efforts to remedy the issue have not fixed the problem.

"With this panel request, we are utilizing our available tools to enforce our trade agreements and ensure that U.S. workers, farmers, processors, and exporters receive the full benefits of the USMCA," Ambassador Katherine Tai said in a news release. "Canada made commitments to the United States in the USMCA, and the Biden-Harris Administration is ensuring that they honor those commitments."

The claim is that Canada's TRQs are essentially excluding retailers and other importers from using the allocations and purchasing American dairy products. Canada's TRQs have been a consistent issue, with a dispute panel finding Canada to be in violation of USMCA obligations back in December of 2021. Several lawmakers also recently weighed in on the issue, encouraging action to make certain that the USMCA was being fulfilled.

"International trade is critical to economic growth and stability for American producers," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "This panel request is necessary to ensure Canada honors their commitments as they relate to dairy, and so American producers have greater export opportunities as intended."

While U.S. organizations such as the National Milk Producers Federation and

U.S. Dairy Export Council expressed support for the action, Canadian officials appear resolved in defending their TRQs. Canadian Trade Minister Mary Ng said, "we will stand firm against attempts to re-negotiate during this dispute-settlement-panel process." The U.S. would have the right to impose retaliatory duties if the dispute panel rules that Canada has been violating terms of the USMCA and there is nothing done to fix the issue.



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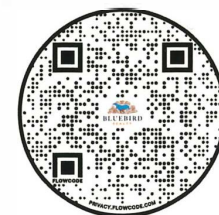
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From Review on page 5

allocation typically determined in May or June. The lowest initial SWP allocation was zero percent on December 1, 2021, with limited water designated only for any unmet human health and safety needs. Last year's final allocation was 5 percent plus unmet human health and safety needs. Four of the 29 State Water Contractors ultimately requested and received additional human health and safety water supply. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

WATER LEGISLATION STARTING TO MOVE

Introduced water bills supported by California Farm Bureau in the Assembly are moving to policy committees.

- Referred to the Assembly's Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife:
 - o Assembly Bill 30 from Assembly member Chris Ward (D-78). AB 30 would require the Department of Water Resources to research, develop, and implement new observations, prediction models, novel forecasting methods, and tailored decision support systems to improve predictions

of atmospheric rivers and their impacts on water supply, flooding, post-wildfire debris flows, and environmental conditions.

- o Assembly Bill 62 from Assembly member Devin Mathis (R-33). AB 62 would establish a statewide goal to increase above- and below-ground water storage capacity by a total of 3,700,000 acre-feet by the year 2030 and a total of 4,000,000 acre-feet by the year 2040. The bill would require the State Water Resources Control Board, in consultation with the Department of Water Resources, to de-

sign and implement measures to increase statewide water storage to achieve the statewide goal.

A Senate bill being watched by Farm Bureau has moved to Senate Rules Committee, and awaits assignment to a policy committee. Senate Bill 23 from Senator Caballero (D-14) would streamline permitting for water storage and flood protection projects. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com



Farm Bureau President Re-Elected to National Leadership Post

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson has been re-elected to a two-year term as one of six executive board members for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Johansson, who will represent 13 western U.S. states on the executive board for the national agricultural organization, was elected during the AFBF's 104th Convention in Puerto Rico this month.

"It is an honor to continue to serve during this critical chapter for America's farmers and ranchers," Johansson said. "We are working to pass a new Farm Bill in Congress to secure our food supply and to help our family farmers at a time when more than 50% are reporting negative earnings. I am also committed to ensuring that construction begins on long-overdue federal and state water storage and conveyance projects.

"For too long, our farmers have endured devastating water supply cuts during dry years. And now, after historic storms in California, we are watching uncaptured water simply flow into the ocean due to our state's lack of resolve for completing projects voters approved years ago. We can no longer accept inaction."

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.



DIRECT APPLIANCE

209-238-3000

California Unveils Bold Plan to Sustainably Manage Pests and Eliminate High-risk Pesticides by 2050

Leaders representing diverse interests reach consensus on a path to move the state to sustainable practices in urban and agricultural settings

SACRAMENTO – Today, the state joined leaders from a diverse range of backgrounds to unveil a roadmap of ambitious goals and actions to accelerate California’s systemwide transition to sustainable pest management and eliminate prioritized high-risk pesticides by 2050 to better protect the health of our communities and environment, while supporting agriculture, food systems and community well-being.

The Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for California – released by the Department of Pesticide Regulation, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture – charts a course for the state’s transition to sustainable pest management in agricultural and urban settings. The roadmap was developed over nearly two years by a diverse, cross-sector group of stakeholders representing conventional and organic agriculture, urban environments, community and environmental groups, tribes, researchers, and government.

“For decades, California has used pesticides to protect our crops, our cities, our homes, and our businesses from pests,” said Yana Garcia, California’s

Secretary for Environmental Protection. “Exposure to harmful pesticides carries risks – to our health and to our environment – and these risks are disproportionately borne by communities already overburdened by pollution. If we truly want to build a healthy and safe California for all, we must phase out and replace the highest-risk pesticides, and the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is a bold, new plan to get us there.” Sustainable pest management is a holistic, systemwide approach that builds on the practice of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by incorporating essential elements of human health and social equity, environmental protection, and economic vitality. IPM uses the least toxic, effective method to solve pest problems. While IPM has been practiced to varying degrees for decades, it hasn’t been adopted at scale, across the board, in agriculture or in urban or wildland settings, which is why the holistic, systemwide approach recommended through the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is a necessary evolution.

“The Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap recognizes how the management of pest pressures is strongly interconnected with resilient farms and ecosystems, and the health of farmworkers and communities.” said CDFA Secretary, Karen Ross. “We have a lot of work ahead to implement the approaches outlined in the roadmap. However, the implementation of these recommendations will ensure an abundant and healthful food supply, protect our natural resources, and create healthy, resilient communities.”

The Sustainable Pest Manage-

ment Work Group was formed in response to both a recommendation from the state’s Chlorpyrifos Alternatives Work Group, and the Governor’s, CalEPA’s and DPR’s recognition of the need to accelerate a holistic, systemwide approach to safer, more sustainable pest management. The Work Group was comprised of 25 members representing diverse interests to address sustainable pest management in agricultural settings, and an additional eight members formed an urban subgroup to address urban pest pressures specifically.

“Successfully transitioning to sustainable pest management requires collective action,” said DPR Director Julie Henderson. “The critical actions outlined in the roadmap include prioritizing prevention, coordinating state-level leadership, investing in building knowledge about sustainable pest management, improving the state’s registration and evaluation process to bring more sustainable alternatives to market and enhancing monitoring and statewide data collection to better inform actions.”

DPR opened a public comment period on the prioritization and implementation of next steps outlined in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap. The comment period opened today and will close at 5 p.m. on March 13, 2023. Comments can be sent to alternatives@cdpr.ca.gov or by mail to 1001 I Street, P.O. Box 4015, Sacramento, CA 95812. Comments received will be considered as part of the state-level coordination on implementing the recommendations in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap.

DPR and partner agencies will additionally host a series of webinars to discuss the recommendations and actions outlined in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for both agricultural and urban landscapes. The webinars are planned for February 2023 and more information will be available on DPR’s website.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation protects human health and the environment by fostering safer and sustainable pest management practices, and by operating a robust regulatory system. The department evaluates and registers pesticides and monitors, regulates and oversees enforcement of their sale and use in California.

DPR’s work includes conducting scientific evaluations of pesticides to assess and mitigate potential harm to human health and the environment. These evaluations are conducted prior to and following registration. Pesticides must be registered before they can be sold or used in California. DPR also monitors air and water for the presence of pesticides and enforces pesticide laws and regulations in coordination with the 55 County Agricultural Commissioners and their combined 500 field inspectors across the state’s 58 counties. DPR invests in innovative research, outreach, and education to encourage the development and adoption of safer, integrated pest management tools and practices. DPR conducts outreach to ensure pesticide workers, farmworkers and local communities have access to pesticide safety information.



Livestock Marketing Association Announces New Scholarship Program

Source: California Ag Network

The Livestock Marketing Association (LMA) is pleased to announce the release of a new scholarship program. With the goal of investing in the next generation, the program is designed to award five (5), \$2500 scholarships to individuals that are interested in or display knowledge of the importance of the agriculture industry and its supporting entities, with plans to use their career to advocate for or advance the livestock marketing industry.

“We are excited to launch this new scholarship program to encourage and recognize the next generation of leaders in our industry,” said LMA President Mark Barnett. “We are always looking for ways to get the younger generation involved, and I believe this is a step in the right direction.”

Applicants must be a graduating high school senior and/or currently enrolled at an accredited, postsecondary institution and maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher. A letter of recommendation from an active LMA member must accompany the application at the time of submission. LMA members may not recommend more than two (2) applicants for the LMA scholarship in the same academic year.

Applications will remain open until March 31, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. Following the deadline, scholarship applications will be reviewed by a panel of LMA leadership, LMA membership and allied-industry relations.

For more information on the LMA Scholarship Program, visit <https://lmaweb.vercel.app/About/scholarships> or contact LMA at lmainfo@lmaweb.com.

About the Livestock Marketing Association
The Livestock Marketing Association (LMA), headquartered in Overland Park, Kan., is North America’s leading, national trade association dedicated to serving its members in the open and competitive auction method of marketing livestock. Founded in 1947, LMA has more than 800 member businesses across the U.S. and Canada and remains invested in both the livestock and livestock marketing industries through support, representation and communication efforts. For more information, visit www.LMAWeb.com.

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