

The Stanislaus Farm News

The *voice* of Stanislaus County Agriculture



For the *good* of your *food*.



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County Farm Bureau
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*"Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin.
Beginning makes the conditions perfect. ~ Alan Cohen*

Happy New Year!

Stanislaus Farm News

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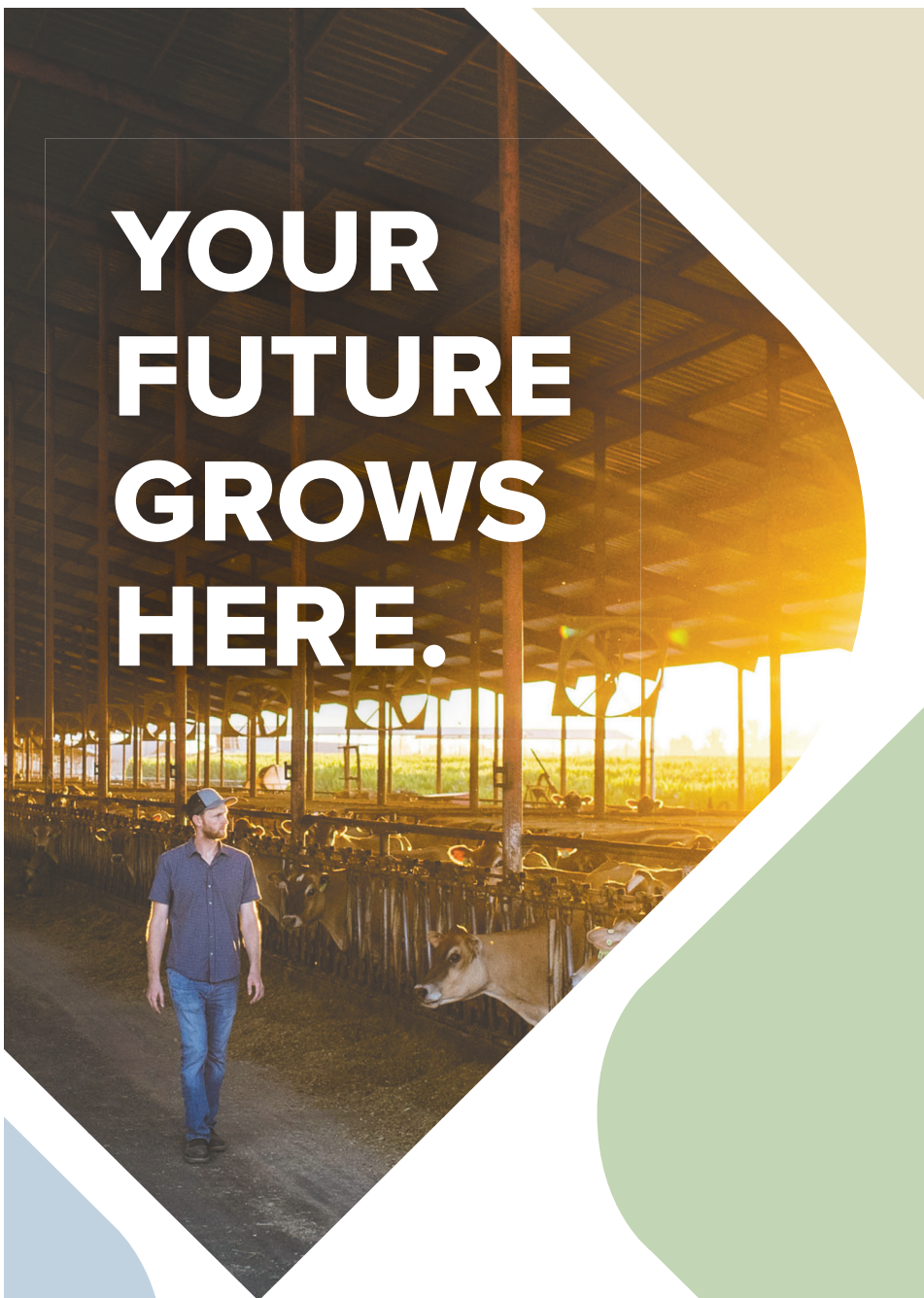
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To serve as the voice of Stanislaus County agriculture at all levels of
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Director's Message

Caitie Diemel - 2023 came rushing in with an atmospheric river bringing much needed water to our reservoirs and farmland, just what we have been praying for.

For our state, we hope for real movement towards much needed water storage in our scarcity stricken state, common sense policies that ease regulatory burdens, and for all to

see the true value in agriculture, good, healthy food and fiber for families.

For our farming communities, we hope for full water allocations, smooth sailing in our busiest times of the year and good commodity prices to carry us through another year.

For our families, we wish yours health, happiness and more time together doing what you love most. We hope 2023 brings all the best for you and yours. Cheers to 2023!



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California Farm Bureau is pleased to introduce more offerings for members under the umbrella of Farm Bureau Extension. Registration is now open for Health and Safety on the Farm and Ranch: Trainings Presented by Nationwide.

Health and Safety on the Farm and Ranch: Trainings Presented by Nationwide

California Farm Bureau is pleased to offer risk management training webinars presented by Nationwide in 2023. Select topics will be presented in both English and Spanish. Access to these trainings is FREE to Farm Bureau members. Two class dates are scheduled per month starting in February and continuing through December. For complete details of dates, times and topics and to register, <https://www.cfbf.com/>



Animal Health & Welfare

CDFA has issued a reminder of the upcoming Pork Distributer Registration deadline. Pork Distributors selling covered whole pork meat to an end-user in California need to register with CDFA's Animal Care Program by January 1, 2023. Applications for distributor registration will continue to be accepted into 2023. Farm Bureau members may remember that Animal Care is a new program within the Animal Health and Food Safety Services division of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Animal Care was formed after the passing of Proposition 12 (2018) to implement the law and its first task has been joint promulgation of regulations with Department of Public Health in addition to outreach and education of stakeholders. At the federal level, the National Pork Producers Council and American Farm Bureau Federation have filed a case against Prop 12 that has reached the supreme court. Arguments were heard in October, but the court has not made a final ruling. Arguments against the implementation of Prop 12 have been made based on the disruption of interstate commerce and the requirements that out-of-state farmers must make in order to sell their products into California. The ruling will most likely be released next year, the deadline is June 2023. Farm Bureau continues to monitor these proceedings. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Forestry

CalFIRE's Wood Products Team has posted updated Grant Guidelines for CalFIRE's Busi-

ness and Workforce Development Grants and are accepting proposals for the 2023 Q1 review deadline. CalFIRE anticipates up to \$7.5 million available for 2023 Quarter 1 Wood Products project awards. Additionally, up to \$5 million in grants are available for Biomass Transportation Subsidy projects. To maintain and enhance the forest-sector workforce and businesses of California to promote healthy resilient forests throughout the state, the grants support a diverse set of business development and workforce development projects.

- Eligible business development projects include facilities, operations, and professional services that support the restoration of healthy, resilient forests by offering improvements to the wood products industry.
- Eligible workforce development projects include universities, colleges, government and community organizations, and businesses that aim to increase workforce capacity in the fields of logging, fuels treatment, transportation, manufacturing, or other support services that bolster the development of a resilient forest sector workforce.
- Research and development projects related to both business and workforce development will also be considered.

Detailed information regarding the solicitation, application process, eligible activities and projects can be found in the Grant Guidelines available here. Grant applications can be submitted via the Business and Workforce Development 2023 Q1 Solicita-

tion by March 31, 2023 to be considered for the next round of awards - click here to apply. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Also, this week, CalFIRE shared that State Fire Marshal, Michael J. Richwine, announced his retirement from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Office of the State Fire Marshal, after a 42-year career, including 36 years with the Department. Chief Richwine was appointed State Fire Marshal by Governor Gavin Newsom on May 15, 2020, after serving as the Assistant State Fire Marshal from 2012 to 2018. As State Fire Marshal, Chief Richwine oversaw a staff of more than 220 employees.

Chief Richwine's total 42-year fire service career began with the Hanford Fire Department. He has since risen through the ranks and held a variety of fire prevention and training positions within the Office of the State Fire Marshal, including, Fire Service Training Specialist, Deputy State Fire Marshal within Fire and Life Safety, Hazardous Materials and Pipeline Safety Divisions, Chief of State Fire Training, and Chief of the Fire Engineering Division. Chief Richwine also served as a member on CalFIRE's Incident Management Teams for six years and holds numerous professional certifications. The mission of the State Fire Marshal is to protect life and property through the development and application of fire prevention engineering, education, and enforcement. The Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the mission of CalFIRE by focusing

on fire prevention and providing support through a wide variety of fire safety responsibilities through Code Development and Analysis, Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation, Fire and Life Safety, Fire Engineering and Investigations, Pipeline Safety and Certified Unified Program Agency, and State Fire Training. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Transportation

California Air Resources Board's (CARB) long anticipated Truck and Bus Rule will go into effect on January 1, 2023. CARB approved this regulation in December 2008 and has triggered many deadlines since then – with January 1st culminating in the final definitive cutoff date. The regulation specifically applies to nearly all diesel-fueled trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 pounds that are privately or federally owned. The rule requires that trucks must be replaced with a 2010 model year or newer engines meet the final requirements. PM filter retrofits cannot be used to comply with this option; however, owners that installed a PM filter retrofit on a lighter truck by January 1, 2014, and reported by January 31, 2015, can continue to operate the vehicle until January 1, 2023.

Members might be aware of the agricultural exemption that also ends on January 1st. If you registered your agricultural vehicle into the exemption program before January 31, 2015, users were allowed to report your annual mileage as long as it was below 10,000 miles/year. With

the sunset of this exemption, agricultural users will have to abide by the alternative Low-Use Exemption. This exemption allows for the continued use of any truck not meeting the 2010 model engine requirement for annual usage under 1,000 miles. Basically, current ag exemption users will drop from 10,000 miles annually to 1,000 miles annually under the new exemption.

Since this implementation of this rule, Farm Bureau has engaged CARB staff on industry concerns. Now, more than ever, they are widespread and intensified. The agricultural industry, along with many others, has been negatively affected by

the COVID 19 pandemic. Some of the issues directly facing farmers and ranchers are port congestion, lack of compliant vehicle availability, fuel prices, drought, new electric vehicle regulations, labor shortages, and inflation – to name a few. CARB released a memo earlier this year in response to these industry and stakeholder concerns. The memo cited many regulatory successes already accomplished by the program and responded to some of the more negative implications stating,

“CARB staff have developed and implemented aggressive efforts to alert vehicle owners they may be affected by the regulation, to provide them

training and compliance assistance to help them comply with the regulation, to provide them with financial assistance in purchasing newer vehicles ... Recently, stakeholders have raised concerns regarding meeting the final January 1, 2023, compliance deadline due to supply chain issues. CARB staff conducted research on the current availability of new and used diesel vehicles with 2010 model year or newer engines... For new trucks, staff contacted several dealers and confirmed that most have stopped taking orders for the 2022 model year, but several dealers are either already taking orders for the 2023 model year or will be taking orders soon. Under the regulation, truck owners that place orders for a new truck by September 1, will be able to keep using their existing trucks past the January 1, deadline until the replacement truck is delivered. Truck owners can also purchase used trucks with 2010 engines to comply with the regulation.”

Although CARB has acknowledged the limitations of the current marketplace, they have not offered many solutions. Farm Bureau continues conversations with staff as enforcement of the regulation begins.

Members may be aware of the many regulations that are coming from CARB due to the governor’s Executive Order to mandate electric vehicles in the coming years. As the Administration and state agencies move toward these goals, it is unlikely that any leniency in current regulations will be granted. An example of CARB’s dedication to moving forward on these goals can be seen in the closing paragraph of the memo:

“The [Truck and Bus] regulation has been one of CARB’s biggest successes in protecting public health not only across the state but particularly in our disadvantaged communities by reducing emissions through the replacement older diesel vehicles with newer/cleaner vehicles. We are committed to continue working collaboratively with all affected vehicle

owners to find the best available path forward to comply with the final January 1, 2023, deadline.”

Farm Bureau understand that hurdles this regulation will bring and the possible impacts on farms and ranches throughout the state. Staff continues to engage on all levels in order to find solutions. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

**ANNOUNCEMENTS
CDFA ANNOUNCES VACANCIES WITHIN THE SHELL EGG ADVISORY BOARD**

The California Department of Food and Agriculture, Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch (MPES) announces three vacancies within the Egg Safety and Quality Management’s (ESQM), Shell Egg Advisory Committee Board (SEAC). ESQM monitors egg quality at production, wholesale, and retail levels. The goal is to provide California consumers with eggs that are wholesome, properly labeled, refrigerated, and of established quality, while maintaining fair and equitable marketing standards in the California egg industry.

These vacancies, for four industry members and one alternate member, are being created because of upcoming term expirations. The membership terms for these vacancies will be for 36 months. Applicants for the industry and alternate members must be a registered egg handlers or representatives of registered egg handlers, in the state of California. Board members receive no compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for transportation to and from meetings and for per diem expenses for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Applicants interested in being considered for these three SEAC appointments, should submit resumes by January 13, 2023, to: Mrs. Penny Arana Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch 1220 N Street Sacramento, California 95814,

See Review on page 9



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

Classified Ad's \$4.40 per run.

COPY DEADLINE: MONDAY 12 NOON

RATES: Display rates on request. Terms are cash. Ads should be paid for at time of first insertion or immediately after receipt of bill if order is placed by telephone or mail.

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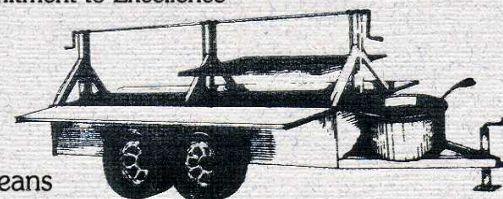
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Commentary: Supporting our farmers through research and data

By Amrith Gunasekara

The California Bountiful Foundation supports data-driven studies that analyze potential policies that could affect farming and ranching in California, America's largest agricultural economy.

The California Bountiful Foundation, the nonprofit research affiliate of the California Farm Bureau, recently commissioned economic studies on European Union agricultural policies that could be considered in California. The EU policies seek to increase organic farming to 30% of total agricultural production and reduce chemical pesticide use 50% by 2030.

Data from ERA Economics, a Davis-based consultancy specializing in the economics of agriculture and water resources, revealed that such 2030 benchmarks could spike the costs of California lettuce production and increase food prices. Similarly, the data revealed that processing tomato growers would suffer from substantial market disruptions.

Just as U.S. Department of Agriculture studies estimated that the EU strategy could have a negative global impact of up to \$1.1 trillion, research and data is critical for evaluating policy prescriptions to ensure that philosophical goals are supported by facts.

In California, farmers, ranchers and timber producers know well that assumptions do not fit well in agricultural systems. Real data drive their daily decision-making processes.

The goal of the California Bountiful Foundation is to enhance research and data collection and analysis that can evaluate solutions for California agriculture amid challenges of climate change. Unfortunately, there is often a lack of understanding by consumers and policymakers alike on what it takes to

grow food. That can lead to poorly conceived regulations that adversely impact our food costs and increase food insecurity.

Backed by the California Farm Bureau, the California Bountiful Foundation was recently realigned as a research clearinghouse for supporting studies on climate-smart agriculture, farming technology, forest management, and water and economic security with real data. The foundation fosters technical and scientific engagement with California academic institutions. It is dedicated to science and research to help keep our family farms viable and to sustain America's most bountiful—and critical—agricultural sector for the future.

The Bountiful Foundation seeks, obtains and implements grants supporting scientific research. Its work can inform policymakers and potential legislation, as well as educate the public on California farming, ranching and agricultural food production.

The Bountiful Foundation website, www.californiabountifulfoundation.com, includes research and studies. It also includes an introduction to the California Bountiful Foundation Science Data Working Group, which encourages participation of farmers, ranchers and timber producers who routinely gather information and data from working farms, ranches and forests.

This on-site data can have tremendous value to academia, consumers and policymakers as it represents real-world conditions for agriculture and forestry. With ever-increasing demands for transparency in our food-production system, compiling and sharing this data can serve agriculture and inform the public on food production in California and on protecting the state's environment and natural resources.

Sophisticated
See DATA on
page 17

Stanislaus Farm Supply Board of Directors Annual Meeting

Stanislaus County Farm Bureau
1201 L Street, Modesto, CA 95354
10:00 AM on Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Election of Directors:
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Greg Nunes - Incumbent
Dave Wheeler - Incumbent

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From Review on page 5

penny.arana@cdfa.ca.gov

CDFA ANNOUNCES NEW 2023 CUSP GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION PERIOD

The 2023 CUSP (California Underserved and Small Producers Program) grant program will provide critical drought relief technical assistance and direct financial assistance for small and medium scale producers or socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as assistance with business planning, marketing strategies, and other economic recovery activities. This program also supports organizations to act as “regional grant administrators” to provide direct grant assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers to aid in drought relief measures. In anticipation of the upcoming grant solicitation, the CDFA has published a summary of public comments re-

ceived on the 2023 CUSP Grant Program draft RFA, during the public comment period from November 4 to November 18, 2022. These public comments were collected to help inform the program’s components. A summary of the comments and draft RFA can be found on the program’s website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/CUSP/ CDFA will publish a final 2023 CUSP Grant Program RFA, with an anticipated application opening date of January 16, 2023. The application period will be open until March 16, 2023. The application will be available through the Amplifund platform. For this round of funding, the CUSP Program has \$2 million available under the Technical Assistance Grant Program for organizations supporting underserved farmers and ranchers, and \$20 million for direct drought relief assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers through the CUSP Drought Relief Direct

Farmer Grant Program.

The following entities are eligible to apply for technical assistance grants and/or administer block grant drought relief funds for farmers and ranchers: Non-profit organizations, tribal governments, county departments of agriculture, and resource conservation districts (RCDs). Technical assistance providers must have demonstrated expertise in assisting small-scale and medium-scale socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Eligible entities can apply for one or both of the 2023 CUSP Program components:

Technical Assistance to Support Underserved Farmers and Ranchers – Funding for technical assistance providers to support farmers and ranchers in applying for Federal and State drought relief grant programs and assistance with business planning, financial and

marketing strategies needed to be resilient and stay in business during the on-going drought in California. CUSP Drought Relief Direct Farmer Grant – Eligible entities are also able to apply as a “regional administrator” to distribute grant funds directly to individual farmers and ranchers to aid in addressing specific drought relief financial needs that have been experienced as a result of the on-going drought in California.



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How the LandFlex Incentive Program Can Assist Dairy Farmers

Brian German, Ag News Director, AgNet West

The LandFlex incentive program offers farmers financial support as part of the effort to address water availability. Producers in critically over drafted basins will have the opportunity to enroll in different incentive options. Chief Executive Officer of Western United Dairies, Anja Raudabaugh explained how the program would be beneficial for dairy farmers.

“If a farmer is double cropping wheat and corn, for example, you’re looking on average, depending on your basin, at about five acre-feet per acre of consumptive water use from the aquifer. If you wanted to transition to, for example, upcycling byproducts, nonhuman consumables like almond hulls, citrus pulp and peel, bakery waste,” Raudabaugh noted, “DWR will pay him by the acre approximately \$2,200, and depending on what you’re transitioning to, the transition payment goes up or down.”

Farmers have a high probability of being selected for an award

if they are in an over drafted basin and are located adjacent to domestic wells. The overall goal of the program is to reduce the demand for groundwater demand. Financial support is being made available for farmers to rotationally and temporarily fallow ground that relies on groundwater needed for domestic wells.

“If they were to enroll some acreage they would be paid immediately for that year of fallowing,” said Raudabaugh. “They would then be paid to transition per acre, so if they wanted to transition away from that double cropping to simply wheat or cover crop – cover cropping is a requirement as part of LandFlex, we want to make sure that we don’t create any nuisances – then they could also choose to either cap the amount of overdraft they wanted to enroll in these acres. But they will be required to give up some if not all of their transition water. We want to relieve pressure on that demand problem that we have within the groundwater system immediately.”

The grant solicitation period for the LandFlex incentive program is set to begin on January 17, with an applicant workshop scheduled for January 19. Final awards will be announced at the end of February.




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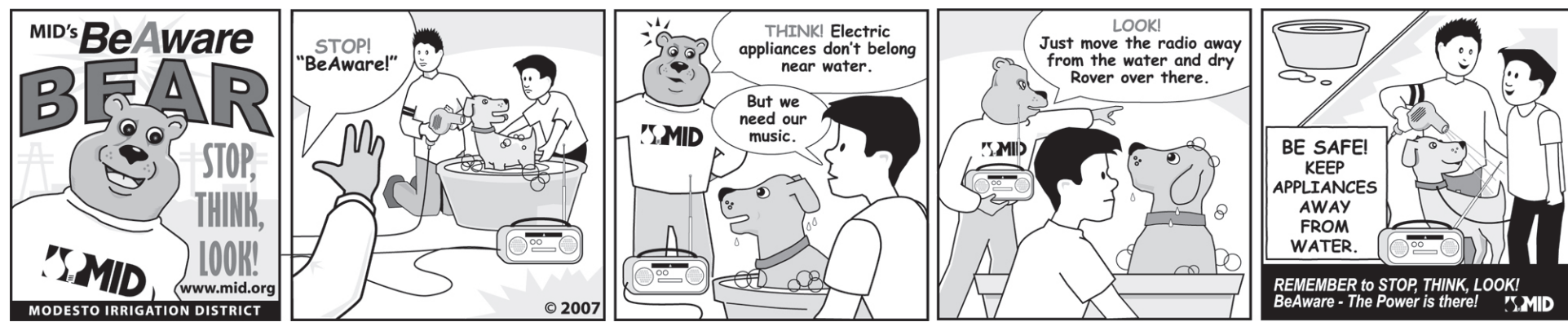
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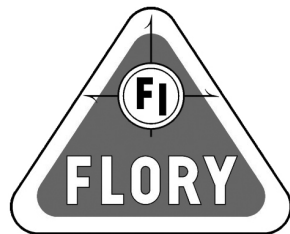
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Almond growers hope for a better 2023, after 'toughest' year

California's almond sector is hoping for a more prosperous 2023 after a year of drought, water shortages, supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures. Almond Board of California President and CEO Richard Waycott told the organization's 50th annual conference in Sacramento that this year was "probably the toughest we've had as an industry." California's almond acreage decreased in 2022 for the first time in more than 25 years, with some growers toppling trees due to the third year of drought.

Demand returning for dairy products, despite increased costs

Demand for California dairy products is increasing as normal for the holiday season, despite inflation that has spiked costs of many dairy offerings. While general inflation in 2022 reached a 40-year high of 8.5%, dairy products experienced far-higher price increases. Butter, for example, was up by more than 26% in October compared to a year ago. Despite higher prices, movement of dairy products has been picking up in recent months, as holiday-season baking boosts sales, according to the Dairy Institute of California.

Firms help farmers transition to organic production

California Certified Organic Farmers and other organic certifiers are helping growers with paperwork, inspections and logistics to transition to organic production. To be certified as organic growers, producers must go through a three-year transition in which they stop using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or other prohibited materials. During the transition, their crops can't command price premiums of organic products. The number of U.S. farms transitioning to organic has dropped 71% since 2008.

Researchers study light spectrum for pairing crops with solar panels

University of California, Davis, researchers are studying the efficiency of agrivoltaics, in which crops are grown in the shade of solar panels. In a study published in the journal *Earth's Future*, researchers found that certain parts of the light spectrum are better for growing plants, while other parts are best suited for solar production. Their analysis suggests that solar energy is produced more efficiently with the blue part of the light spectrum, while the red part is better for plants. The research could help improve solar and crop production systems.

Strawberry growers increase acreage to meet record demand

California strawberry growers are projected to plant record strawberry acreage in 2023. According to the California Strawberry Commission, farmers are planting more strawberries this year "to meet record consumer demand." To satisfy that demand, California growers are expected to plant 41,570 acres of strawberries this year. That would be up from 40,714 acres last year. Of the 2023

total, 31,852 acres are already in the ground. Fall strawberry plantings produce fruit during the winter, spring and summer months.

New laws may ease export fees, create farm workforce challenges

New California laws, which went into effect New Year's Day, are expected to impact farm operations and exports. Key legislation passed last year includes Assembly Bill 2406. That law is intended to keep international ocean carriers from imposing onerous cargo detention and demurrage charges on farm goods delayed at California ports. Meanwhile, AB 2183 will allow labor unions to organize agricultural employees by collecting signatures instead of holding secret-ballot elections. Agricultural groups say it may lead to union intimidation.

Research project seeks to sustain pistachio production in warmer climates

University researchers from California and other states are joining in a four-year research project that seeks to improve pistachio production as growers face warmer winters and water shortages. California grows 99% of America's pistachio crop and nearly 60% of the world's crop. Researchers at University of California, Davis, UC Merced, New Mexico State University and Purdue University are conducting research to aid pistachio pollination and to develop rootstocks that can thrive despite increasing water scarcity.

Report: Dairy farmers are on track to meet methane emission reduction goals

California dairy farmers are making progress in reducing methane emissions. According to a new report, the state's dairy industry is on track to meet a goal of reducing methane emissions by 40% by 2030. The report was produced by the California Dairy Research Foundation and the University of California, Davis, CLEAR Center. The report notes that dairies' use of feed additives is expected to have a positive impact in curbing enteric methane produced by livestock. Several new feed additives are expected to become commercially available soon.



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American Farm Bureau

By Joby Young, Executive Vice President at the American Farm Bureau Federation.

For many, 2022 was a year of change and transition. As we all thankfully watched the worst of the pandemic pass, new challenges arose, especially in farm country, as post-pandemic changes in consumer behavior, global supply chains, and monetary policy caused major shifts in the economy.

It was a year of transition for me personally, as I joined the American Farm Bureau as Executive Vice President. A priority for me once onboard was to get out and meet our members, so I traveled the country doing just that. I'm grateful to have been warmly welcomed into the Farm Bureau family and look forward to advocating for solutions in 2023.

While the last year will be remembered for issues such as sharply rising input costs, ag labor concerns, and overzealous regulatory proposals, many of these will carry into 2023 as well. On some, we'll look to build on great progress in 2022, while in others we'll be seeking solutions that were elusive last year.

Rising input costs

An issue at the forefront last year was the rising cost of everything. The high cost of fuel severely impacted farmers and ranchers, especially as they navigated the fall harvest season. The cost of fertilizer increased by more than 60% from 2021 to 2022. Thankfully, at our urging, the U.S. International Trade Commission rejected proposed tariffs on imports of a key fertilizer ingredient. Whether in fuel, fertilizer, or other supply costs—continued increases in 2023 are not sustainable. We will pursue every policy option possible to stabilize and lower supply costs.

Ag labor

The lack of farmworkers continues to be U.S. agriculture's most frustrating challenge. With rising wage rates and record usage of the H-2A visa program, labor shortages must be addressed. We spent a great deal of time trying to negotiate a bipartisan solution. Unfortunately, negotiators were unable to reach agreement. We are right back at the table with a new Congress as we work to make the H-2A program accessible and affordable.

Trade

We are very concerned about Mexico's push to phase out the importation of biotech corn and agriculture products. This import ban would hurt the people of Mexico as well as America's farmers, who are dedicated to growing safe and affordable food for families on both sides of the border. We appreciate Secretary Vilsack for standing firm in support of American agriculture—fair trade with Mexico is a must. With the U.S. falling behind other ag exporting countries, agricultural trade leaders have their work cut out for them to catch up with meaningful trade agreements.

Water regulation and rights

In 2023, water is going to continue to be a big issue. The new Waters of the U.S. rule gives government sweeping control over private property and doubles down on the old, confusing significant nexus test. Then there is the issue of limited water supplies, particularly in the west. Farmers

and ranchers want to conserve this resource, ensure its quality, and remain true partners in addressing water issues. We'll keep advocating for policy solutions that recognize this in 2023.

Farm bill

The farm bill will be front and center in 2023. It's a critical tool to ensure our nation's food and farm security but we need to modernize it to meet today's challenges. The farm safety net, including risk manage-

ment tools like crop insurance, must be strengthened. Farm bill conservation programs and research funding—pivotal to the sustainability advances we've achieved—must be appropriately targeted and focused on partnership with producers to achieve the goals of tomorrow. My hope is that the long tradition of bipartisan cooperation to pass farm bills continues in 2023. It's key to America's farmers and ranchers continuing to provide the safest, most affordable food supply in the world.

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Plowing through the past

Docent enjoys helping visitors understand agriculture's evolution

*Interview by Linda DuBois
Photos by Fred Greaves*

The estimated 40,000 visitors each year to the California Agriculture Museum in Woodland are greeted by friendly docents who offer tours, answer questions and explain the ins and outs of hundreds of antique tractors, exhibits and artifacts. These are also the folks who keep the museum clean and organized. The volunteer coordinator of the 10 dedicated regulars is 87-year-old Gene Muhlenkamp, who has faithfully served at the 45,000-square-foot Yolo County museum since it opened in 1997. Born on an Ohio farm, he had a long career with a commercial airline before retiring and staying busy with part-time jobs and volunteer commitments.

Describe your schedule and day-to-day duties.

Tuesday mornings, when the museum is closed, are our work-days. We work on landscaping, changing around displays, cleaning or repairing a few things. Then, I'm the docent on schedule the second and fourth Thursdays of every month, plus on call for any tours coming through. When a group comes in, normally I introduce them to the museum and ask if they want a docent to go with them. If so, I'll find out how long they have to spend and plan my tour accordingly. Sometimes they just want to walk through on their own. In that case, I just let them know I'm available to answer any questions.

Who are your typical tour groups and how large are they?

It varies. We may only get half a dozen and we've had as many as 120, but then we try to have other docents come in so we can split them up and keep each group down to 25. The biggest groups we're getting are homeschooled and private-school children and other (youth) organizations. We also get families and clubs. Last week we had a women's group come in. I've had people from all

different countries. I had a family here last week from the U.K. and their older son was quite involved in restoring antique equipment. He just could not quit looking at all this stuff and asking questions.

What are some of the most popular displays?

The (kids) are interested in the old barn where we have a lot of displays that show what our children had to do in the early days to help their parents on the farms. A lot of people are very interested in the equipment. We go into the early invention of tractors, the tractors built in the early 1900s, and we try to point out all the different types and the different styles, how they were made ... and how they led us up to what we have today. The big World War II crawler gets a lot of attention. Then there's the hillside combine and the snowmobile—a converted tractor used by the U.S. Postal Service to deliver mail in Truckee/Tahoe during the winter. The most common question we get is, "How in the heck did people make some of this stuff in the early 1900s with what they had to work with then?"

What do you hope visitors get out of their visit?

Visitors have a chance to see where we came from in farm-



Modesto, California, December 5th, 2022 – The United States Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship has announced it registering a new apprenticeship program. The new program is titled "Agriculture and Specialty Equipment Repair Technician Apprenticeship" or A-SERT for short. The program's purpose is to train future repair technicians with the skills and competencies required to be a professional heavy equipment/agriculture equipment repair technician. The apprentices will be paid employees of a sponsoring company and must complete at least 5,000 hours of paid on-the-job training and 900 hours of in-class training. The in-class training will be provided by the Modesto Junior College Agriculture Mechanics program and upon completion each apprentice will be awarded two Certificates of Achievement in Heavy Equipment Repair and a Certificate of Completion from the United States Department of Labor.

Those who successfully complete the program will finish a Journeyman in the high demand, high paying field of heavy equipment and agriculture equipment repair. Employers will provide each apprentice with thorough training, a professional mentor and progressively higher wages as skills and competencies increase. Candidates must be at least 18 years old, have earned a high school diploma or a GED equivalent and enjoy the outdoors, a challenging work environment and the ability to work alone as well as part of a team.

The heavy equipment and agriculture repair industry is expected to have an annual job growth of around 8% (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics) with an average salary of \$72,000 per year (Indeed.com) thus providing apprentices with ample career opportunities, advancement and higher than average salaries.

Those interested in learning more about the program should contact Todd Conrado at conradot@yosemite.edu (209) 575-6214 P.O. Box 3762 Modesto CA 95352

See PAST on page 19

DWR 'Cautiously Optimistic' After First 2023 Snow Survey

Brian German, Ag News Director, AgNet West

The first 2023 snow survey from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) demonstrated a strong start to the year. DWR reported that Phillips Station has a snow depth of 55.5 inches and a snow water content of 17.5 inches. The results represent 177 percent of the average to date and 72 percent of the April 1 average at that location.

"We're cautiously optimistic at this point, but we all know what could happen if the pattern turns dry, similar to what it did last year when we experienced the driest January through March on record," said Sean de Guzman, Manager of DWR's Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit.

During the first manual snow survey of the previous water year, California's overall snowpack was measured at 160 percent of the average. De Guzman noted that the state is off to an even better start in 2023. "Today's survey is actually in line with our automated snow sensor network which is currently reporting 174 percent of average to date," de Guzman explained. Another storm system is expected to bring more rain and snow to California through the rest of the week and into the weekend. DWR Director Karla Nemeth said they are expecting a colder storm system, which should bode well for continuing to bolster the current snowpack. Even with the encouraging readings from the first 2023 snow survey, DWR points out there is a long way to go before April 1.

"Our snowpack is actually off to one of its best starts in the past 40 years. However, that doesn't mean we're out of the woods quite yet," said de Guzman. "No single storm event will end the drought. We'll need consecutive storms month after month after month of above average rain, snow, and runoff to help really refill our reservoirs."



Stanislaus Farm Supply, Co.
624 E Service Rd.
Modesto, CA 95358
(209) 538-7070
www.FarmSupply.com

January 2023

Dear Valued Members,

Stanislaus Farm Supply is seeking potential nominees to run in the upcoming election(s) for the cooperative's Board of Directors. Currently, there are three (3) director's seats up for election in District #1 and one (1) director seat up for election in District #2. Directors are compensated.

District #1 – 2023 Director Election Expiring (3 Year, Regular Term)

- 1) Dave Wheeler - (Incumbent seeking re-election)
- 2) Greg Nunes - (Incumbent seeking re-election)
- 3) **OPEN SEAT** - Seeking Nominees

District #2 - 2023 Director Election (1 Year, Special Term)

- 1) **OPEN SEAT** – Seeking Nominees

District #1 – Principal residence residing in California Counties; San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Tuolumne, Calaveras, Mariposa, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Benito.

District #2 - Principal residence residing outside the physical boundaries of the California Counties listed under District #1.

If you are interested or know someone who may be interested, please contact the Nominating Committee Chair, John Barindelli at (209) 595-7395 or jbarindelli@gmail.com by the date below.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2023

TIME REQUIREMENTS: Board Meetings are held bi-monthly (every other month) with special meetings as agreed upon by the Board. The duration of meetings are typically four hours, but may vary. Board meetings may be held in Stanislaus County, Fresno County or virtually.

In recent years, the need for a farmer-owned supply company has shown itself to be invaluable both in maintaining a reliable supply of products and in allowing farmers to financially participate in a successful crop input supply company. Lastly, participation as a director provides valuable insights into the world of agrochemicals, global trade, supply chain and crop input commodities. If this interests you, we look forward to receiving your information.

Respectfully,

Nickolas J. Biscay
President & Chief Executive Officer



Mahindra



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8:30 am - 12:30 pm

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From DATA on page 8

collection is also a necessary antidote to avoid setting policy goals based on philosophies that may be lacking in facts.

To address climate change and work to protect and enhance our water resources, California policymakers need as much information as possible. The health of our air, water and soil requires science, research, facts and data. For agriculture, data is also key to understanding potential policy impacts for inflation, labor costs or the ability of growers to manage agricultural pests that can threaten our food supply.

However, one concern that farmers, ranchers and timber producers have is over how their data will be used and shared. Protecting private farm, ranch and forest information is crucial. This is where the role of the California Bountiful Foundation can be invaluable. As a nonprofit, the foundation will act as a credible entity that removes private information from data collection before any findings are shared for further research.

Ultimately, sharing data from our farms, ranches and forests with our academic institutions and research scholars can generate information that is accurate and thorough. The California Bountiful Foundation provides a unique opportunity for the agricultural community and academia to work together in furthering understanding of challenges affecting agriculture—while also developing solutions to guide our farming and ranching future.

In an era of modern technology, improving data collection is key for protecting our farms and enhancing our food production. Ultimately, scientific and technological solutions will help us address challenges of securing California's food production and protecting our environment as well as growing opportunities for our farmers, ranchers, foresters and agricultural businesses.

Supporting research, data and facts will educate the public and policymakers on California agriculture so that it may endure and prosper for generations to come.

(Amrith Gunasekara, Ph.D., is director of science and research for the California Bountiful Foundation, an affiliate 501(c)(3) of the California Farm Bureau. He may be reached at agunasekara@cbbf.com.)

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New Year's Eve

With the old year out an' the
New Year in

What have we gained, for our-
selves within

Or do we carry on the same old
way

We've learned there's time for
work and time to play

But stop right there my dear
kind friend

There's more to life, then just
wanting to end.

So let's turn over a brand new
leaf

An change most of our way in
our belief

There is only one God as we
learned from birth.

An' we know he's maker of
Heaven on earth.

So, let's awake an' get on the
beam

An' act our best like a human
being.

So let's live by the Good Book
an' ready to go

An' when called won't be left
but in the right row.

Not try an' be earthly saints,
with eyes fixed on the stains.

Just try an' be the fellows that
our Mothers think we are.

Now my dear friend is this
poem fits you

You know right well it's mostly
true.

Take it or leave it any way you
want.

Just be ready to go when the
Lord takes count.

By: Arby Hoobyar
SCFB Board Director

California Farm Bureau Reacts to 'Waters of U.S.' Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Dec. 30 released the revised definition of the "Waters of the United States" rule to redefine waters protected under the federal Clean Water Act. This new rule will replace the Navigable Waters Protection Rule.

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson expressed his concerns on behalf of farmers, ranchers and agricultural businesses in the state.

"This rule will have a substantial effect on our members and the ability of our farmers and ranchers in California to continue to utilize their land," Johansson said. "We are particularly concerned about small farms and ranches needing costly legal or consulting expertise to farm ground they have already thoughtfully and sustainably stewarded."

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.



DIRECTAPPLIANCE

209-238-3000

From PAST on page 15

ing and then compare that to what we have today. In a (tractor or other farm vehicle) from the early days, there was no GPS, no air conditioning, no cab. Most didn't even have a cushioned seat—just solid steel—and some you had to stand up all day to drive it. I'm just glad I'm able to maybe help them understand a little bit more about how our agriculture got started and how it led us up to what we have today.

What do you do to keep the children engaged?

We have a little scavenger hunt to try to keep their attention. Like, I'll tell them how on the farm there are certain little critters that are out with the farmers in the field. We tell them to find those critters and mark them down. So that keeps their attention as they go through the museum and look for the squirrel and the crow and

things like that. Then, for the little children, we have a play area here. Riding the little pedal tractors around seems to be a bit hit. What made you first decide to volunteer at the ag museum? Well, probably the biggest reason was my daughter was a very, very close friend with the Heidrick family ... and when she was an AAU swimmer, the Heidrick family was very supportive of her. They didn't want any recognition for it, but when they established the museum (originally called the Heidrick Ag History Center), I thought this could be a way I could pay them back a little bit.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering here?

I enjoy meeting the people and talking to them and seeing their excitement as they go through the museum. People who come through are very amazed by the size and diversity. And I just like being here. There's nothing in the world that is equal to this museum because of the diversity that we have. It's just world class as far as I'm concerned. We're very fortunate to have it here in Woodland and Yolo County.



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We wish you and your family a happy and healthy new year.

Export, farm labor bills top list of new laws affecting ag

By Caleb Hampton, AgAlert

Several new California laws, which went into effect New Year's Day, impact farm operations and agricultural production in the state. The new policies relate to a range of issues, including agricultural exports, pest control, water and irrigation, agricultural vehicles, labor unions and more.

As of Jan. 1, thanks to Assembly Bill 2406, international ocean carriers may no longer impose onerous fees, such as unfair cargo detention and demurrage charges, on agricultural exporters at overcrowded California ports.

In a letter supporting the law, agriculture and trucking industries said port fees are normally designed to encourage the efficient use of containers. But during the port congestion crisis, they wrote, "late charges have been imposed on California businesses by international ocean carriers even when containers cannot be returned due to circumstances not within the control of the importer, exporter or trucker."

According to the groups, ocean carriers at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports were charging fees as high as 10 times those imposed at other major ports, with the fees ultimately increasing the price of goods and services for Californians.

Meanwhile, the New Year begins with a new law that stands to dramatically change how labor unions can become certified to represent agricultural employees for collective bargaining purposes.

AB 2183, signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom in September, was strongly opposed by the California Farm Bureau and other agricultural groups, which argued that the bill was a recipe for union intimidation of farm employees. It will allow collection of signed ballot or authorization cards in lieu of holding traditional secret ballot elections.

The governor initially expressed misgivings about the bill. He signed it into law after pressure from United Farm Workers and top Democrats in Washington, including President Joe Biden. Newsom also reached a supplemental agreement, subject to approval in this year's legislation session. It would eliminate language in AB 2183 on voting by mail and instead allow the union organizing system known as "card-check."

Under another new law, Senate Bill 856, farmers and ranchers now face fewer barriers to controlling the state's wild pig population. There are an estimated 400,000 wild pigs, which do extensive damage to farm and ranch properties, spread across 56 of California's 58 counties.

The new law, which went into effect Jan. 1, removes limits on the number of wild pigs that can be taken under depredation permits and allows use of artificial lights to hunt the nocturnal animals at night. The law also prohibits people from intentionally releasing pigs into the wild.

Several new laws were passed relating to water and ir-

rigation.

Under AB 1164, irrigation districts can now construct and maintain water storage and deliver irrigation supplies under the same rules as private entities, which had faced fewer regulations. SB 1378 prohibits the Department of Water Resources from using the approval of a groundwater sustainability plan to determine the allocation of pumping rights.

Meanwhile, SB 880 extends the rights of agricultural irrigators that divert more than 100 acre-feet of water per year to take their own water-use measurements, provided they take a course through the University of California Cooperative Extension.

SB 489 fast-tracks for approval the Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project, a \$400 million effort to reduce flood risk from the lower Pajaro River and the Corralitos and Salsipuedes Creeks. Other new laws impact vehicles and transportation.

Assembly Bill 2415 extends exemptions for agricultural vehicles from the California Highway Patrol's Basic Inspection of Terminals program through Jan. 1, 2026.

Assembly Bill 2836 provides funding to reduce pollution and extends incentives to private businesses and public agencies to voluntarily clean up older vehicles and mobile off-road engines by retrofitting or replacing them.

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