

# The Stanislaus Farm News

The *voice* of Stanislaus County Agriculture



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



Official Publication of Stanislaus  
County Farm Bureau  
Vol.74 No.6 March 17, 2023

#### **Bee Facts**

*Bees are insects, so they have 6 legs.*

*Male bees in the hive are called drones.*

*Bees fly about 20 mph.*

*Female bees in the hive (except the queen) are called worker bees.*

*Number of eggs laid by queen: 2,000 per day is the high.*

## Stanislaus Farm News

Published Fridays by the  
Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

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BUREAU**

### EVENT DETAILS

Thurs. April 13th, 2023

Stanislaus County Fair: 900 N Broadway, Turlock

5:30 Social Hour, Silent Auction & Tradeshow

6:30 Steak Dinner

7:15 Short Business Meeting, Program,

Guest Speakers



### TICKETS \$50.00 PER PERSON

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## SCFB MISSION STATEMENT

To serve as the voice of Stanislaus County agriculture at all levels of  
government, while providing programs to assist its farms and family  
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Agricultural Employment  
California Farm Bureau has taken support positions on three bills that can, if passed, be helpful to California agricultural employers:

SB-375 introduced by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gill, allows an employer to claim a state tax credit partially defraying the costs of compliance with state-imposed COVID-19 workplace mandates.

SB-592 introduced by Senator Josh Newman, allows employers to rely in good faith on interpretations wage-and-hour laws offered by the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) through a published opinion letter or guidance published to the agency's website without fear of punishment or liability.

AB-703 introduced by Senator Roger Niello. The California Workplace Flexibility Act of 2023 allows nonexempt employees to individually request a flexible workweek schedule consisting of up to 10 hours per day in a 40 hour workweek with no daily overtime liability for the employee's employer. Staff: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

CA Department of Food & Agriculture [CDFA]  
AB 404 by Assemblymember Damon Connolly, will be heard in the Assembly Agriculture Committee this coming week. This bill would require the department to evaluate duplicative reporting requirements that affect small and mid-scale farmers and farming operations. AB 404 would

require the department, on or before January 1, 2025, to submit a report to the Legislature, including suggestions to amend or remove unnecessary reporting requirements in order to relieve regulatory burdens on small and mid-scale farmers and farming operations. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Farm Bill  
California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson and Napa County President Peter Nissen provided testimony Tuesday, March 7th at the California State Senate's Agriculture Committee informational hearing on Farm Bill. Although this is legislation handled at the federal level, the Committee was interested in learning more about its impacts here in the state and of some of the priorities from key stakeholders. Both highlighted some of the challenges growers in the state have faced in recent years, but also shared areas where Farm Bill-supported programs have been beneficial to farmers and ranchers, such as with disaster aid and crop insurance.

In addition to their testimony, US Rep. Jim Costa, Secretary Karen Ross of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and several other industry experts provided remarks as well. Many noted the importance of crop insurance and other risk management tools to agriculture in the state. It is expected that crop insurance will be a key area of focus for the Farm Bill. CAFB helped shape the American Farm Bureau Federation's priorities

to include expanding access to currently uncovered commodities. With less than a quarter of our 400 commodities covered by a direct program, Californians understand very well just how disastrous recovery can be when support tools are not put in place. Ad hoc programs such as the Emergency Relief Program have taken years to provide financial assistance to impacted farmers.

President Johansson shared some of these exact thoughts, as did others on the panel. While the California state legislature is not necessarily directly involved with the crafting of the Farm Bill, any support for our industry is certainly welcome if it can help encourage our federal Congressional delegation on these priorities. Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

Food Safety  
AB-865, as introduced by Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia. Current law requires all California state-owned or state-run institutions, except segments of public postsecondary education or local educational agencies, that purchases agricultural food products to implement necessary practices to achieve a goal of ensuring that at least 60% of the agricultural food products that it purchases in a calendar year are grown or produced in the state by December 31, 2025. Existing law establishes within the Department of Food and Agriculture a public and private collaboration known as the "Buy California Program" to encourage consumer nutritional and food awareness and

to foster purchases of high-quality California agricultural products.

AB-865 would require a grower or producer that sells an agricultural product to a distributor, to attest to the distributor under penalty of perjury, using a self-attestation form developed by the department, whether the agricultural product was produced in compliance with specified California health and environmental protection laws and specified California labor laws. By expanding the crime of perjury, this bill would create a state-mandated local program. The bill would require a distributor that sells an agricultural product to a retailer to provide to the retailer the self-attestation form received from a grower or producer.

This bill would require the department to adopt regulations, to administer and enforce these requirements, to prohibit the department from imposing additional fees on growers or producers, to meet the requirements of this bill. The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

Insurance  
The Assembly Committee on Insurance held an informational hearing regarding the FAIR Plan this week.

Last week, we reported about

Peter Nissen, Napa County Farm Bureau President, providing testimony to the Senate Insurance Committee on this topic. The Assembly hearing was similar to the Senate in the topics it explored, however it did not include real world testimony from policyholders. Instead, the hearing started with testimony from Commission Ricardo Lara and a recap of work that the Department of Insurance is conducting to help to control climate related risks through the insurance markets.

Assemblymembers asked the Department about how FAIR Plan rates are set, and why so many new policies are moving into the FAIR Plan. The Commissioner was asked about catastrophic modeling, too, if the issue with the admitted market is that California wildfires are pushing policies out of the admitted market and into the FAIR Plan. The Department noted that there is insufficient modeling data on how wildfire prediction occurs, especially where the algorithms in that modeling are not transparently shared, so that its premature for California to adopt this

data into existing rating plans. Next, the FAIR Plan shared that it carries \$220 billion of exposure (272,000 policies) and is currently undercapitalized by billions of dollars. The FAIR Plan points out that all insurers are going to pay the coverage of those policies in the FAIR Plan if it has to conduct an assessment against the normal market to make up its under capitalization. The FAIR Plan said that because its rates are not actuarially sound, and do not reflect the high risk market they serve, that combined with being undercapitalized, the FAIR plan is tenuously positioned to accomplish its mission. Over fifty percent of FAIR Plan risk is attributed to wildfire risk and its growing at 12% annually. Assemblymembers pointed out that because the FAIR Plan is not a comprehensive offering or covers up to the full value of properties, that the properties are worth much more than \$220 billion of FAIR Plan exposure. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

**Pest Management**  
The comment period for the Department of Pesticide Regu-

lation's Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is ending at 5:00 on Monday, March 13, 2023. The Department completed its public listening sessions last week for both ag and non ag stakeholders and we expect numerous comments to be submitted by a cross section of impacted industries and that includes the California Farm Bureau and our local county Farm Bureau's as well. Next steps will be to review how DPR prioritizes the implementation of the roadmap's recommendations. Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

**Rural Broadband**  
In Assembly Committee on Emergency Management - AB-415 by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez would enact the Emergency Fairgrounds Communications Grant Act and would require the Office of Emergency Services to establish a grant program to provide fairgrounds with grant funding for the purpose of building and upgrading communication and internet infrastructure on fairgrounds. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

**Transportation**  
AB 552, introduced by Assemblymember Steve Bennet, was amended this week. The bill now incorporates language which would establish the Regional Farmer Equipment and Cooperative Resources Assistance Program in the Department of Conservation. The bill would require the department provide technical assistance and grants in order to support regional farm equipment sharing and enhance cooperative benefits for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and limited resource farmers and ranchers. This bill would also limit applicants to farms and ranches of 500 acres or less. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

**Water**  
In Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife - AB-30 by Assemblymember Christopher Ward would require the Department of Water Resources to make investments in data modeling and forecasting for atmospheric river incidents. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

**Wildfire**  
In Assembly Committee on Natural Resources - AB-397 by Assemblymember Bill Essayli would require the state air board to include greenhouse gas emissions from wildlands and forest fires in the scoping plan. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

In Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation - AB-294 by Assemblymember Petrie Norris would provide an exclusion from gross income for any qualified taxpayer, as defined, for amounts received for costs and losses associated with wildfires or natural disaster. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

DEPARTMENT OF

See Review on page 8

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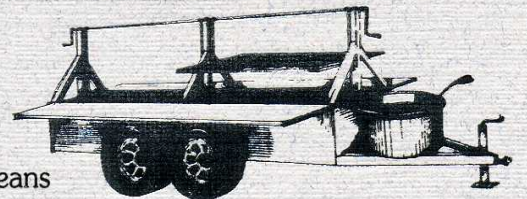
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**Natural Resource Fact Sheet****Agricultural Water***Information compiled by the California Farm Water Coalition*

**Sources** – California’s annual water supply averages about 200 million acre-feet from rain, snowfall and the Colorado and Klamath rivers. The majority is consumed by natural vegetation, leaving approximately 77.2 million acre-feet for dedicated use. An acre-foot is 325,851 gallons and covers an area about the size of a football field one-foot deep. Half of California’s water supply is used to protect the environment. Farms account for about 40%, and 10% goes to domestic and industrial water needs in cities and towns.

The major projects that have been the primary sources of stored water include the Central Valley Project (CVP), State Water Project (SWP), Coachella Canal, All-American Canal, and the Klamath Basin. Construction of the CVP began in 1937 and for the SWP in 1957, with full SWP funding approved in 1960. The delivery of water originating in northern California from the CVP and SWP has been reduced in recent years due to environmental regulations that govern the delivery of water through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

**Distribution** – Water is available through natural precipitation such as rain and snow. It is then transported throughout the state’s numerous waterways, including creeks, streams, lakes, and rivers. Other water is stored underground in porous rock and soil (also called aquifers) and brought to the surface by wells and pumps. Approximately 30 to 50 percent of the water supply for farms, homes, and businesses comes from groundwater depending on the water-year type. More groundwater is used during dry years or in times of drought because less surface water is available.

Two-thirds of the demand for water comes from the Southern one-third of the state, while two-thirds of the precipitation and water storage are in the Northern one-third, creating significant challenges for water distribution.

**History** – The history of California agriculture and water development are intertwined. The first California agricultural water delivery system was built at Mission San Diego Acala. With the Gold Rush, the state’s demand for food grew with its population. As early as 1865, private companies began constructing canals in the Central Valley to irrigate crops. In 1877, the State Legislature passed the Wright Act, authorizing the formation of public irrigation

districts. These agencies, formed by local citizens, are responsible for providing a steady, reliable supply of water for irrigation, flood control, recreation, human consumption, and other uses. In the twentieth century, the California

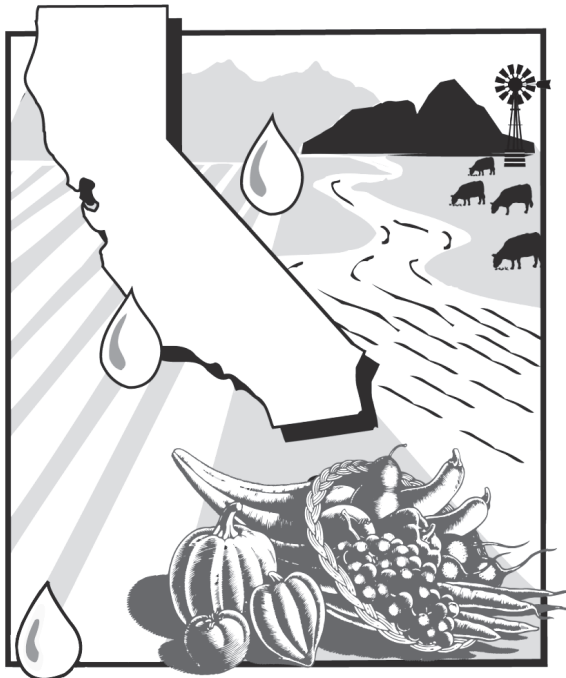
Department of Water Resources and the United States Bureau of Reclamation also began storing water and delivering it to farms and cities. This large-scale development of water has allowed California to become a national and world leader in agriculture.

**Irrigation Techniques** – Simply stated, the term “irrigation” is the process of putting water into the soil to make plants grow. There are three basic ways to irrigate: surface, micro-irrigation, and sprinkler. Surface irrigation includes methods such as border-strip and furrow, where water flows on top of the soil. Micro-irrigation techniques, such as drip, bubbler, spray, and subsurface drip,

deliver a measured amount of water through an emitter located near each plant. Micro-irrigation techniques can be located above or below ground. Sprinkler irrigation includes the use of a mechanical device which sprinkles water over the crops and simulates rain.

The method of irrigation used depends on many factors including geographical location, crop type, soil type, climate, and economics. Farmers often use laser-leveling of fields, computers, remote sensors, and GPS to improve the efficient use of their water supplies.

**Economic Value** – Water is an essential component to life and the economy of California. It is vital to the success of California’s \$50 billion agricultural industry. California farms grow two-thirds of the fruit, one-third of the vegetables, and almost one out of every five gallons of milk produced in the United States. Each of the more than 400 commodities grown in California depends upon the availability of water—from the fruits, vegetables and meats people eat, to the cotton and wool clothing people wear, and the forest and floral products people use and enjoy.



**For additional information:**  
California Farm Water Coalition  
(916) 391-5030  
Website: [www.farmwater.org](http://www.farmwater.org)



From Review on page 5

**PESTICIDE REGULATION**  
The Department of Pesticide Regulation's Pesticide Registration and Evaluation Committee (PREC) is meeting on Friday, March 17, 2023, and here is that meeting Agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
**CDFA AWARDS \$12.25 MILLION FOR THE POLLINATOR HABITAT PROGRAM**  
CDFA's Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) has selected 10 organizations to receive \$12.25 million in funding through a new competitive grant program, the Pollinator Habitat Program (PHP). The PHP was established by the Budget Act of 2021 (SB-170, Nancy Skinner) in which CDFA was appropriated \$15 million to provide grant funding for the establishment of pollinator habitat on agricultural lands throughout California. CDFA was directed to administer the Pollinator Habitat Program and to prioritize the planning of native habitats for the benefit of native

biodiversity and the use of locally appropriate native plant seed mixes when feasible.


"CDFA is pleased to make this investment in pollinator habitat on California farms and ranches. Pollinators are not only vital to our ecosystems, they are essential to over a third of our crops, helping to produce a wide variety of California-grown fruits, nuts, and vegetables," said Secretary Karen Ross. "The Pollinator Habitat Program demonstrates how working lands can help safeguard California's diverse ecosystems." CDFA accepted applications from September 2022 through November 23, 2022. Resource Conservation Districts, non-profit organizations, the University of California, California State Universities, California community colleges, and California and federally recognized Tribes were eligible to apply for up to \$2,000,000 in funding to work directly with farmers and ranchers to install habitat and

implement management practices that support pollinators.


**CDFA RELEASES MANURE RECYCLING AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS TASK FORCE REPORT**  
The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has released the final report from the Manure Recycling and Innovative Products Task Force (MRIP). CDFA convened the task force in late 2021 with the goal of developing recommendations on how to recapture and enhance the nutrient value of dairy manure while supporting healthy soils, protecting water quality, and reducing agriculture's carbon footprint in California. The workgroup was comprised of dairy farmers and other members of the dairy industry, representatives of academia, state and federal government agencies, and non-governmental organizations with interests in sustainable farming, water quality protection, and environmental justice. Recom-

mendations for addressing nitrogen surplus are grouped into conventional strategies, compost strategies, denitrification and treatment, and nitrogen capture. In close alignment with this effort, CDFA funded research conducted by the California Biomass Collaborative (CBC) at the University of California, Davis. The findings provide an overview of the amount and location of surplus nutrients within California's dairy sector and evaluate selected manure treatment technologies capable of recovering manure nutrients in useful form or otherwise safely reducing surpluses. The CBC's completed report, Manure Nutrient Recovery, Removal, and Reuse on California Dairies includes topics for additional research and development needed and suggestions for quantitative assessment of technologies.

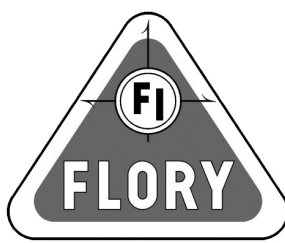
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**Press Release**

**Contact:** Sonya Severo  
Public Relations and Communications Director  
(209) 652-1177

**For Immediate Release:**  
March 14, 2023

**Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors Appoints  
Linda Pinfold to Agricultural Commissioner Post**

**Stanislaus County, CA, March 14, 2023-** The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors appointed Linda Pinfold to the position of Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer of Weights and Measures for a four-year term.

Pinfold was identified as the top candidate to lead one of the top innovative agriculture counties in California. She was listed on the California department of Food and Agriculture's list of persons who are licensed and eligible for this position. Pinfold brings significant management experience to Stanislaus County and will be tasked with being a visionary leader responsible for balancing successful commerce and enforcing regulations. She is coming to Stanislaus County from San Joaquin County where she served as the Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer.

With over 24 years of experience in Agriculture, Pinfold will plan, organize, and direct Stanislaus County enforcement of the California Food and Agriculture code and the California Business and Professions Code relating to the County Department of Agriculture and Weights and Measures.

As the new Agricultural Commissioner, Pinfold is focused on promoting and protecting the agricultural industries, environments, and public health of Stanislaus County while ensuring equity in the marketplace for good sold by weights and measures.

"I take the mission to protect and promote to heart; agriculture is just not a business, this is a livelihood, and a culture that transcends generations," said Pinfold.

According to the most recent Stanislaus County Agriculture Report, the county has an annual crop value over \$3.5 billion. Pinfold believes Stanislaus County is a powerhouse in agriculture and she is beyond excited for this opportunity to move the county towards the future.

###



## Celebrating National Ag Day

By: Zippy Duwall, AFBF President

National Ag Day is quickly approaching, and I can think of no better way to kick off the spring season than by celebrating the hard work and commitment of America's farm and ranch families.

We are proud to grow the safe and sustainable food, fiber and renewable fuel we all rely on. In the 50 years of National Ag Day, American agriculture has seen tremendous growth in innovation and sustainability. I am proud to be part of that story.

As a third-generation farmer, I am committed to restoring the land passed on to me by my father. I

don't farm the way my grandfather did, and I don't expect my grandchildren will farm the way I do, if they return to the farm. I have access to new tools and practices that allow me to turn the soil over less and conserve more water. Thanks to years of careful research and testing, the next decade of innovation—whether that be new technology or better seeds—is being developed today. I am confident that the next generation will have an even greater sustainability story to tell.

Sustainability isn't a sprint, it's a marathon. We need tools that work for both the environmental and economic sustainability of our farms if we're going to continue to meet the demands of a growing population. We are farming on less land than ever before all while producing more. Just 30 years ago, it would have taken 100 million more acres to produce the same amount of food, feed and fuel that farmers are growing

today. This is only possible because of new technologies like precision ag equipment, conservation practices that renew the soil and products like pesticides and herbicides. All of these tools work together to help farmers be more precise in how we use water, target pests and diseases before they wipe out a crop, and keep nutrients in the soil and not running off into nearby water. We also have voluntarily placed millions of acres into conservation and forestry programs through the farm bill.

Farmers are not at the finish line when it comes to sustainability, we're at the forefront. We want to keep doing better because we know first-hand how important our natural resources are. What's

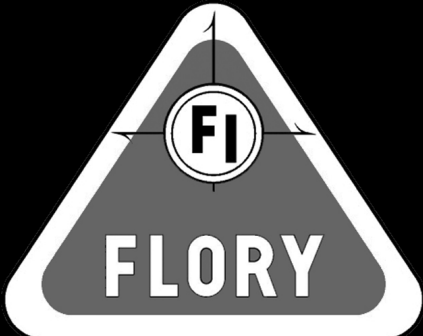
more, we can see immediately the impact that weather and climate have on our crops and land because we have our boots in the soil tending our crops, trees and animals every day. As I like to remind folks, sustainability isn't a buzzword to us. It's just what we do. That's part of the reason it took us so long to share our sustainability stories. It doesn't feel like news when you've been doing something for

decades. But the public simply isn't familiar with what modern farming looks like or the climate-smart practices that have become second nature to us.

The good news is that the American public trusts farmers and ranchers—9 out of 10 adults trust us. And we don't take that trust lightly either. On Nation-

al Ag Day, and on the remaining 364 days of the year, America's farmers and ranchers are proud to rise and answer the call to keep our nation's pantries full and grow the products that we rely on. You'd be hard pressed to find a product that didn't begin on a farm—from the paper on your desk to the compostable straw in your lemonade. I am proud of the work our farm and ranch families put in every day, and I am honored to serve and represent them as we grow the products that sustain life and make our lives and world better.

*"In the 50 years of National Ag Day, American agriculture has seen tremendous growth in innovation and sustainability."*



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March 13, 2023

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

For the good of your food.

Re: Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap (SPM)

Dear Director Henderson:

On behalf of the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, we have written the following comments related to the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap (SPM) recently released by the Department of Pesticide Regulation on January 26, 2023.

The purpose of the Farm Bureau is to protect and promote agricultural interests throughout California and to find solutions to the problems facing agricultural businesses and rural communities. Here in Stanislaus County, we represent roughly 1,600 farmers, ranchers and dairymen. Farmers across this state have been increasingly innovative to produce more with less. As an organization that supports and advocates for farmers and ranchers, we have serious concerns regarding the Roadmap proposal and the valuable tools that will be taken away from the California agricultural industry.

California already has the most comprehensive pesticide regulatory structure in the world, often exceeding US EPA standards. DPR employs 400 people with a budget of \$100 million dollars, as well as providing funding that supports California Agricultural Commissioners for Pesticide Use Enforcement. In Stanislaus County, the Ag Commissioner's Department employs roughly 60 people, with a majority of those dedicated to working on Pesticide Use Enforcement.

By every measure, we have made tremendous progress in the last 20 years related to reductions in highly toxic pesticides (Carbamates, Organophosphates) in this state. Based on DPR's own pesticide use reporting, growers continue to make great strides in implementing IPM techniques, however many pests require management tools in the form of safe and highly regulated pesticides.

There has been a long history of regulatory protection on the use of pesticides including buffer zones, increased worker and bystander protection, greater penalties, air and water monitoring and increased protection around schools and sensitive sites. Our county hosts several Continuing Education courses

and safety programs each year to ensure the utmost education regarding safety and use of these products. More than 500 people attend our Spray Safe Event each November to earn four hours of education around safe use of pesticides and have the opportunity to bring employees who also receive pesticide handler training. This has been a very successful event in bringing together great speakers, often even employees of DPR, to give updates and discuss topics related to safety or regulatory change in regards to pesticide use.

It is important to note that all these potential roadmap discussions have serious economic consequences that have not been fully explored. When we are facing increased food costs, discussion of food deserts and food insecurity. We need to be careful that all these are addressed before we fundamentally change our pesticide process. Families across the nation and world are struggling and costs at the grocery stores have increased dramatically, but growers are not making more on what they produce. Margins are especially tight on family farms in California. Implementation of the proposed roadmap would mean less productive farms at higher costs, and we have serious concerns about the economic consequences of this on family farms, those employed in agriculture and families who depend on the hard work of farmers.

We think the idea of investing in alternatives and preventing new invasive pests makes sense because it could help reduce the pest pressures on the California crops. We need to ensure that as we look at alternatives, we still have material that meets the pest control challenges that we're sure will confront us. Agriculture has been implementing new technology and creative solutions at every turn. This industry will continue to create and solve new issues as they arise, but taking tools out of their toolbox, as proposed in the roadmap, will have serious impacts on families across the world.

The Stanislaus County Ag Commissioner produced an Economic Contributions of Stanislaus County Agriculture Report in 2018. Their estimates state Stanislaus County Agriculture's total contribution to the local economy in 2017 was \$7.148 billion, or \$19.58 million per day. Additionally, 34,425 jobs or One in Eight jobs was directly attributable to agriculture. These numbers have only increased since the 2018 crop report was released and Stanislaus County is just one of fifty eight counties in California, whose ag industries contribute significantly to the California economy. California grows the safest and best quality food in the world, feeding the world.

Finally, we hope science will be the foundation to this roadmap. We hope this newly created Advisory Panel will reflect a cross section of experts, including growers from around the state. There also needs to be a better understanding of what a priority pesticide is since this committee could not agree on the set of criteria.

Sincerely,

Eric Heinrich  
President, Stanislaus County Farm Bureau

Above you will find the letter sent to the Department of Pesticide Regulations from Stanislaus County Farm Bureau (SCFB) in response to the Sustainable Pest Management: A Roadmap for California (SPM).

SPM outlines goals of eliminating priority pesticides by 2050. As outlined in the above letter, SCFB is in favor of exploring new and sustainable tools, but does not agree with removing effective tools from our current toolbox.

This letter was submitted during the formal public comment period and serves as another example of SCFB advocacy efforts. Thank you for your membership!

### California Farm Bureau reacts to groundwater decisions

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson today responded to the California Department of Water Resources announcement on sustainability plans for the state's groundwater basins.

The agency recommended approval of plans for six California groundwater subbasins. It declared six other plans to be "inadequate," which will result in a review by the State Water Resources Control Board.

"This action will trigger a process before the water board that will afford local agencies additional opportunities to address identified problems, regain control of their basins and, hopefully, avoid formal probationary status or the imposition of eventual state interim plans," Johansson said.

"Passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in the 2014 drought year was a seismic shift in California water," he said. "It was never going to be easy to transition on a timeline of just 20

years to eliminate an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of overdraft a year in our most impacted areas of the state. Historic droughts in recent years have also shown us that we can't simply continue as we have been—and that California must also invest in a more resilient, 21st-century water system."

Johansson added, "California Farm Bureau will work with state and local agencies, our county Farm Bureaus and our agricultural groundwater users on workable solutions to sustain healthy aquifers. Our groundwater supplies are critical for California farmers, including vegetable, fruit, nut and dairy producers who account for much of America's food supply. It is important that California carefully consider solutions that protect both our aquifers and our food production."

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

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**Depleted Colorado River threatens farming in the Imperial Valley**

The Colorado River crisis is challenging farmers in California's Imperial Valley, the irrigated desert region that produces the lion's share of America's winter vegetables. As described in a special report in the Ag Alert newspaper, the valley is wholly dependent on water from the depleted river. California is offering to markedly curtail the amount it takes from the Colorado, which would significantly impact agriculture. Meanwhile, as multiple states battle over meager river supplies, the federal government threatens to intervene.

**Growers step up conservation efforts to protect river and their way of life**

Over the past two decades, Imperial Valley farmers and the region's Imperial Irrigation District have spent over \$500 million in on-farm conservation projects as growers steadily added water-efficient infrastructure. Now those efforts are accelerating in hopes of reducing stress on the Colorado River while keeping farmland in production. The federal Inflation Reduction Act includes \$4 billion for drought relief, including water conservation infrastructure as well as paying farmers to fallow fields due to water shortages.

**California producers continuing to produce seeds for farmers in Ukraine, Russia**

Despite continuing war between Russia and Ukraine, major seed producers in California are not turning their backs on farmers in the Black Sea region. Both countries remain destinations for California-grown seeds, even as Ukrainian growers face considerable difficulty amid the conflict. That means state farmers are continuing to produce seeds for growers there, including sunflowers, which remain a major crop in both Ukraine and Russia. Nearly all sunflowers grown commercially in California are harvested as certified seed used by other farmers.

**California Senate panel calls attention to state's needs for 2023 Farm Bill**

California farmers and government leaders are weighing in on how members of Congress should shape the 2023 Farm Bill. At a recent California Senate Agriculture Committee session, agricultural groups highlighted challenges facing America's largest agricultural economy. California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson called for strengthening crop insurance and disaster programs in the farm bill. He said less than one-quarter of California's 400 commodities are covered by crop insurance programs.

**State finds six groundwater basins out of compliance for sustainability**

California water officials have delivered a mixed report card on local plans to curb overpumping of groundwater to protect the state's aquifers. State law requires plans for bringing groundwater supplies into balance within 20 years. The California Department of Water Resources recommended six San Joaquin Valley sustainability plans for approval but rejected six others as inadequate. An inadequate determination triggers a state intervention process, which authorizes the California State Water Resources Control Board to step in and manage the basin.

**Water officials: Challenges persist despite storms, heavy snowfall**

As still more storms dumped new snow onto California's burgeoning snowpack, water managers, farmers and environmentalists gathered in Sacramento last week to discuss long-term challenges to secure a more certain water

future. Various speakers called for partnerships among different water interests in the quest for statewide solutions. Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources, said the state's water supply is much improved. But she said California's "hotter, drier new normal" requires new thinking in water management.

**California pistachio growers eye record crop**

These are bullish times for California pistachio growers. With more pistachio trees coming online this year, growers appear on pace to produce a record crop that could top 1.2 billion pounds, according to American Pistachio Growers. That would top 2021's record crop of more than 1.15 billion pounds. At the trade group's recent conference in Carlsbad, American Pistachio Growers President Richard Matoian also said port congestion that stranded or delayed nut exports during the pandemic has largely been resolved.

**New fertilizer management rules begin for Central Coast growers**

New fertilizer management rules took effect this month for vegetable growers in California's Central Coast region. Beginning March 1, growers must record and report fertilizer applications under rules imposed by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The regulations will initially allow growers to apply up to 500 pounds of nitrogen per acre above what is removed with the crop. The rules will grow steadily stricter until 2051, when the standard tightens to a maximum of 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre.

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## MJC Ag Students Bring Home a Flock of Success from 2023 PEPA Convention

Five MJC Ag students attended the 2023 Pacific Egg & Poultry Association (PEPA) Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. The PEPA Conference, in its 99 years, annually hosts industry members, supporters, and students, in an effort to network and learn about key issues facing the egg and broiler industries. The PEPA board of directors, in conjunction with the Western Poultry Scholarship Foundation (WPSF), also host student activities as well as a poster presentation and a poultry club scrapbook contest. The MJC students in attendance were Julyessa Struckmeyer (Ag Business), Sienna Davies (Animal Science), Emma Sporleder (Animal Science), Cadence DeCoite (Ag Science), Alyssa Hodak (Animal Science) and advisor Tim Truax. MJC Ag was well-represented, taking home many awards:

WPSF Scholarship Winners: Julyessa Struckmeyer (\$3,500), Cadence DeCoite (\$3,500) & Sienna Davies (\$2,000)

Student of Merit Award Winner: Julyessa Struckmeyer

First Place Undergraduate Poster Presentation: Julyessa Struckmeyer, Sienna Davies &

Alyssa Hodak (presenter)

Second Place Poultry Club Scrapbook:

Julyessa Struckmeyer, Sienna Davies & Emma Sporleder



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# TUOLUMNE COUNTY FARM NEWS

## Tuolumne OES Seeking Info On Storm Damage

Sonora, CA — Officials in Tuolumne County are seeking information from the public about damages witnessed during last week's various storm systems. There was heavy rain last week, snow, and even a tornado.

The information could help determine if the county is eligible for federal disaster declarations. You can submit a form online that can be found here, or by calling 209-533-6395.

Anyone who was displaced by flooding or other storm impacts can call the American Red Cross at 1-844-236-0153 for help and assistance. The Tuolumne Resilience Center on Bay Avenue is no longer operating as an

intake point for people impacted.

There are still a limited number of already-filled sandbags available. Should those supplies run out, please bring your own shovel and bags.

- Columbia – Airport parking lot @ 10723 Airport Rd (please look for the orange cones)
- Tuolumne – Filled bags available at Tuolumne City Fire Station on Main Street and  
Tuolumne – Sand available 18870 Birch Street or at Parkview Ln and Chestnut Ave
- Jamestown – On the corner of 7th Ave and 8th St
- Big Oak Flat / Groveland area – 11242 Wards Ferry Rd

Public places that will be open this week to provide a place to go during the day:

- Sonora Main Library  
Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM  
Saturday, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM  
480 Greenley Road Sonora, CA 95370  
Ph: 209-533-5507
- Tuolumne and Twain Harte Library  
Tues-Thur, 2pm-6pm  
Fri-Sat, 10am-2pm
- Groveland Library  
Tues-Thur, 11am-5pm  
Fri-Sat, 10am-2pm
- Behavioral Health Enrichment Center  
Mon-Fri 8am-12pm  
101 Hospital Rd. Sonora, CA 95370  
Lambert Community Center  
Mon-Fri 11 a.m. – 2 pm  
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*Written by BJ Hansen, mymotherlode.com*

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- **Benton Roberson CPAs LLP**
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- **Blue Mountain Minerals**
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- **California Reforestation Inc**
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  - Sonora, (209) 984-1146
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## From the Farm

America's pastime has kicked off a new season. Spring Training is taking place, Little League fields are holding tryouts and softball and baseball players around the country are preparing for their first games. In my family, we love baseball. My sons participate in a travel ball league and my softball loving daughter was proud to show off her arm in a very competitive showing at the FarmPAC cornhole tournament at Annual Meeting. For my kids, spring means time on the ball field, but for farmers and ranchers we know Spring means the start of a very busy season

where our focus is on the farm and our free time is limited.

While farmers and ranchers take to the fields during the day, and for some of you, maybe the Little League park after hours, Farm Bureau takes the watch and maintains the constant vigilance on policy and regulatory issues that are the core value of your membership. Staff members assigned to local, state and federal government issues, legal proceedings and agency actions are working diligently to track, analyze, and respond to those time sensitive issues with your perspective and best interest in mind.

agencies additional opportunities to address identified problems, regain control of their basins and, hopefully, avoid formal probationary status or the imposition of eventual state interim plans.

Here at CAFB our team will be working closely with state and local agencies, our county Farm Bureaus and our agricultural groundwater users on workable solutions to sustain healthy aquifers. It's critical these solutions protect both the aquifers and our food production.

Following the news from DWR, I spent time earlier this week speaking to the Senate Agriculture Committee and outlining additional details and components needed in the upcoming Farm Bill. I'm pleased the committee recognizes California Farm Bureau as a key stakeholder in these proceedings and as President, I'm proud to take the opportunity to share our guidance and input into this process. This is just the start of drafting this year's Farm Bill and CAFB will work hand in hand with committee staff and legislators towards solutions and key inclusions that benefit California.

From groundwater to the Farm Bill, it was then on to immigration reform which took center stage the last couple of days as I wrapped up meetings in Arizona representing California's interests on the American Farm Bureau Board of Directors. While at the U.S.-Mexico Border, I spent time with my fellow state Farm Bureau presidents, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, and key immigration specialists discussing the intricacies of the border crossing process. California Farm Bureau worked with the US Senate late last year to pass the Farm Worker Modernization Act that would have given needed relief to the guest worker program in California and across the country. While the bill didn't get a vote, it remains a top priority to see some meaningful reform and CAFB will continue pushing for solutions related to immigration.

The issues facing California agriculture are vast and the opposing teams are tough, but I'm confident in California Farm Bureau and I'm proud to lead the largest general agriculture organization in our state, and one that is uniquely positioned to meet these cross commodity challenges, represent your interests, and do as a collective what none of us can do alone. That's the value of membership and that's the value of Farm Bureau.

*Jamie Johansson  
President, California Farm Bureau*

Late last week the California Department of Water Resources made an announcement regarding sustainability plans for the state's groundwater basins. The agency recommended approval of plans for six California groundwater sub-basins. It declared six other plans to be "inadequate," which will result in a review by the State Water Resources Control Board.

This action will trigger a process before the water board that will afford local



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## Newsom to Allow Easier Floodwater Capture for Groundwater Recharge

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

Governor Gavin Newsom is taking action to put the abundance of floodwater in California to better use through an executive order. In response to the substantial storm systems that have come through California, the order seeks to facilitate more groundwater recharge efforts. The order temporarily suspends regulatory barriers for collecting rain and snowmelt to help recharge groundwater basins. The order sets parameters for diverting water without permits and capturing it for groundwater storage.

“California is seeing extreme rain and snow, so we’re making it simple to redirect water to recharge groundwater basins,” Newsom said in a press release. “This order helps us take advantage of expected intense storms and increases state support for local stormwater capture efforts.”

The order is intended to mitigate the risk of significant snowmelt runoff, while simultaneously addressing the need to replenish groundwater basins. Local water agencies and agricultural districts will now be able to capture water from the latest round of storms with fewer restrictions. Parameters of the order include having to divert flood flows between March 10 and June 1. Water must be diverted in relation to flood management and groundwater recharge. The suspension of certain permitting requirements will allow for more groundwater recharge on agricultural lands. However, there are certain limitations to capturing floodwater on agricultural lands.

Land that has not been in production for three years is ineligible for diversion under the order. Floodwater capture on agricultural land where pesticide or fertilizer applications have been made within the last 30 days is also prohibited. Overall, there is significant potential for farming operations to engage in the streamlined process of diverting stormwater. “This is a practical approach to solving long term water supply uncertainty and will go a long way in providing our underserved communities the groundwater they need to thrive far into the future,” said Western United Dairies President, David Koolhaas.

More on this topic from California Farm Bureau:  
Farm Bureau praises governor’s action to recharge aquifers

The California Farm Bureau praised Gov. Gavin Newsom for signing an executive order to use floodwaters from recent storms to recharge and store groundwater.

“Our groundwater basins are critical for supplying drinking water for our communities as well as helping our farmers produce the food supply for Californians,” said California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson. “We applaud Gov. Newsom’s courageous decision to divert floodwaters from this year’s storms to replenish our depleted groundwater basins. This can help protect life and property during our continuing storms. It is an important step for helping bring our aquifers into balance and sustaining them for future generations. We strongly support efforts to enhance California’s long-term water supplies during wet years, including recharging our groundwater and capturing and storing surface water for our reservoirs.”

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



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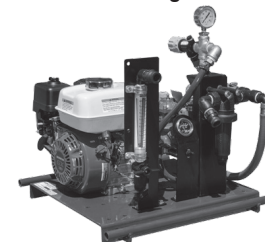
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## A farm's best friend

Canine contest winners devoted to their jobs and their people

Story by Linda DuBois  
Photos by Henry Barrios  
California Bountiful Magazine

They greet their human companions with wagging tails and eager-to-please enthusiasm as they provide indispensable assistance around farms and ranches. Then, when the workday is done, they can't wait to play or just cuddle on the couch.

Such are the attributes of farm dogs—and the winners of the California Farm Bureau's third annual Farm Dog Contest are among the best of them.

Open to Farm Bureau members, with support from Nationwide, the contest had entrants submit photos and write narratives about their dogs. It drew 41 entries from throughout the state, representing a variety of breeds and roles. The Grand Prize winner earned \$1,000 and was recognized at an awards ceremony at the California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in December. The runners-up also received cash prizes: first, \$500, second, \$250 and third, \$100.

The following is the story of the Grand Prize winner: Rip, a goat herder from Kern County.

Border collie has winning ways  
Life is pretty busy for Romi and Michael Poncetta. With help

from their son Branson and a few employees, they run two separate businesses at Poncetta Farms, their 75-acre family ranch in Bakersfield. They also hold down three other jobs. Michael Poncetta works full time for Orchard Machinery Corp. and manages the long-time family farm, now mostly doing custom hay work and raising cattle.

Romi Poncetta works part time as a FARMS Leadership coordinator for the Center for Land Based Learning and full time teaching livestock management to high school juniors and seniors for Bakersfield's Regional Occupational Center—on top of running Maggenti Show Goats at the ranch. This business breeds Boer goats and sells them to 4-H and FFA youths across the country who raise them for livestock shows. So, it stands to reason, they need all the help around the ranch they can get.

Romi Poncetta's right-hand man is Rip, a young border collie whose job is to herd the 200 to 300 goats.

She got him in the fall of 2020 from a sheep-herding family when their dog had a litter. She picked him out because she "liked his coloring, his markings and his cute little face," she says.

When the puppies were weaned and she went to pick him up, they "bonded instantly," she says. "Right away, he was my forever dog, my little baby."

Takes his job seriously  
She and Rip start their workday about 6 a.m.

While the family also has two great Pyrenees, who stay outside to protect the livestock from predators, Rip gets to come in at night.

"He sleeps in our bed. He's very spoiled," Poncetta says with a laugh. She gets up, puts Rip's collar on him and they head outside, where she feeds the chickens and goats and makes sure they have enough water.

Then she and Rip begin their work with the goats.

"He helps me day-to-day herding the goats from the pasture into pens and into our working chute," Poncetta says. There, the goats get hands-on care such as monthly deworming, embryo transfers or pregnancy checks. The goats also need to be herded into pens for photos that will be shown to potential buyers.

Through it all, "he's right there with me and he keeps bringing the next goat in," Poncetta says. His talent is a combination of training and instinct, she says. Even as a small puppy, Rip showed herding was "in his blood" and she has nurtured that by steadily teaching him commands.

"Right off the bat, he wanted to herd the goats," she says. "He even tries to herd the chickens around if they get out. He'll help me sort them and get them back into their coop. He would go after the cattle, too, but I don't want him to," she adds, explaining that the goats are smaller, safer and less stubborn. After a few hours of work, they take a break and, if the weather is nice, go down to a pond where Rip likes to swim and play. "He loves to play fetch," Poncetta says.

Then, it's back to work.

Constant companion  
Even when Poncetta is busy

doing other tasks around the ranch, such as moving hay on a tractor or helping out with the cattle, Rip never leaves her side. Since adding her full-time teaching job to the mix, "it's been a little bit of a juggle ... but we go out early in the mornings and then when I get off at 3 o'clock, I go home and we get right back to work again." Interns and employees help fill in when she's gone. Harder on her than keeping up with the workload is leaving her beloved pooch behind when she heads for school.

"As soon as we walk out the door, Rip wants to go to work and I feel bad that some days I have to leave him at home," Poncetta says, adding that the dog would rather help her around the ranch than do about anything else.

Of some consolation to them both is she's now able to bring him to school with her fairly often—which is a big hit with the students.

Time to clock out  
"Usually after our workday's done, if he's really dirty or muddy, I'll give him a bath on our little goat stand. ... I blow him off and then I carry him inside because I don't want his feet to get dirty on the sand and track dirt. Then, he'll be in for the night. He has his little dog bed in the living room and he has his little toys. Sometimes, he'll get all spunky and throw his little toy parrot around," she says.

"A big cuddle bug," Rip loves being inside and hanging out with the family but at times he's less of a night owl than the others. "Some days if we're up too late, he'll sneak off and he'll go jump up on our bed—he's like, 'I'm going to bed. I'm tired.'" "Rip is truly a blessing and a one-of-a-kind dog I wish everyone could have," Poncetta says. "He is one of the best things that has happened to myself and my family. He forever changed my life. He's the best dog ever."



## Agricultural Groups Concerned by Latest H-2A Wage Rules

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

A final rule updating the Adverse Effect Wage Rates for the H-2A program has been published in the Federal Register. The amended H-2A wage rules from the U.S. Department of Labor will become effective on March 30. Wages for field workers will be based on wage data from the Farm Labor Survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Other H-2A workers including agricultural equipment operators will have wages based on the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Multiple ag groups have cited the rule change as adding additional burdens to an industry already struggling with a variety of economic challenges.

“With economic blinders on, the Administration will now mandate that farmers pay higher wages to H-2A work-

ers and domestic workers in corresponding employment,” Western Growers President & CEO Dave Puglia said in a news release. “Increasing wages by regulatory order will force farmers to cut back on plantings in the U.S. and increase their farm operations in Mexico and other countries where wages are a fraction of the H-2A wage.”

A similar sentiment was expressed by other ag groups including the National Council of Agricultural Employers (NCAE) and the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA). NCAE described the new H-2A wage rules as “a disaster,” adding that the only thing the rule will accomplish is a heavier reliance on imported produce. IFPA has noted the rule seeks to address fair wage rates, while ignoring the “flawed formula” used as a means for calculation.

“The H-2A program is unaffordable, ineffective and out of date, and these program changes make it even more difficult for our members to find the workers they need,” said

IFPA CEO Cathy Burns. “This is why Congress must act to pass agricultural immigration reform now. America’s agricul-

tural producers simply cannot wait any longer.”

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 H-2A Temporary Agricultural Program –  
 Selected Statistics, Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 EOY

FY	Q1 (Oct-Dec)	Q2 (Jan-Mar)	Q3 (Apr-Jun)	Q4 (Jul-Sept)	% Change FY 2019
14,131	3,545	6,129	2,681	1,776	8.0%

**Applications Processed**

Determination	FY	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Total Processed</b>	14,063	2,111	6,820	3,095	2,037
- Certified	13,552	1,991	6,654	2,964	1,943
- Denied	247	62	73	67	45
- Withdrawn	264	58	93	64	49
<b>Positions Requested</b>	286,900	43,178	100,248	88,136	55,338
<b>Positions Certified</b>	275,430	40,844	97,375	85,044	52,167
<b>Processed Timely<sup>2</sup></b>	96.8%	97.8%	96.8%	95.9%	96.0%

**Review of Positions Certified FY 2020 EOY**  
 (% of total certified FY 2020 EOY)

State	Count	%
Florida	39,064	14.2%
Georgia	27,614	10.0%
Washington	26,832	9.7%
California	25,453	9.2%
North Carolina	22,052	8.0%
Louisiana	11,332	4.1%
Michigan	9,912	3.6%
Arizona	8,602	3.1%
New York	8,482	3.1%
Kentucky	6,952	2.5%

**Top 10 States of Employment**

Occupation	Count	%
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop	242,585	88.1%
Agri. Equip. Operators	15,396	5.6%
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, & Aqua. Animal	10,898	4.0%
Construction Laborers	3,256	1.2%
Agri. Workers, All Other	1,155	0.4%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	577	0.2%
Graders and Sorters, Agri. Products	467	0.2%
First-Line Supervisors of Agri. Crop and Horticultural Workers	379	0.1%
Farm Labor Contractors	143	0.1%
Helpers – Production Workers	100	0.04%

**Top 10 Occupations (based on SOC Codes)**

Employer	Count	%
North Carolina Grower's Assoc., Inc.	10,650	3.9%
Fresh Harvest, Inc.	5,326	1.9%
WAFLA	4,358	1.6%
Foothill Packing, Inc.	3,199	1.2%
Farm Op Kuzzens H2A, LLC	2,998	1.1%
Rancho Nuevo Harvesting, Inc.	2,864	1.0%
Overlook Harvesting Company, LLC	2,589	0.9%
Templabor, LLC	2,252	0.8%
Zirkle Fruit Company	2,191	0.8%
R & R Harvesting, Inc.	2,056	0.8%

**Top 10 Employers<sup>3</sup> (based on unique FEINs)**

**Top States**

**Top Occupations**

<sup>1</sup>Includes all applications submitted for processing during the reporting period.  
<sup>2</sup>Percent of complete applications resolved no later than 30 days before the start date of need. A complete H-2A application is defined as one containing all the documentation (e.g., housing inspection report, workers' compensation, recruitment report) necessary for OFLC to issue a final determination no later than 30 days before the start date of need.  
<sup>3</sup>All calculations are aggregated based on the unique FEIN submitted by the employer. Multiple appearances of the same employer name may occur when associated with multiple FEINs.

Data as of September 30, 2020. All figures are rounded and calculated based on data submitted by employers for processing.

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## Developing Future Leaders Is Why Farm Credit Supports the YF&R Program

Last year's chair of the California Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers program took a California message to the United Nations Climate Change Conference

The California Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) program is designed to identify, grow and develop young Farm Bureau members and provide them with opportunities and experiences to help them become effective leaders in the agriculture community.

But when Jocelyn Anderson, a fourth-generation almond and walnut grower from Willows joined the state YF&R Committee in 2018, little did she realize the opportunities that would be made available to her, the latest being the United Nations Climate Change Conference, where she told delegates from around the world about ways California farmers are working to save water.

"I was able to meet people from around the world, farmers and people in policy. I didn't know what to expect but came out ex-

cited. Attendees said we need to work with farmers, or climate policies won't work," she said about the meetings in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November. "I think it opens the door for ag to continue to be at the table, make policymakers understand what we need to be successful and form better agreements together."

Mark Littlefield, President and CEO of AgWest Farm Credit, said developing future leaders like Anderson is why California's Farm Credit organizations have been supporting the YF&R program for nearly 15 years.

"The Young Farmers and Ranchers program has a great track record of developing future leaders in agriculture, both nationally and here in California," Littlefield said. "Farm Credit is proud to have provided over \$145,000 over the years to support YF&R's efforts to promote farming and build stronger and sustainable rural communities."

Other Farm Credit organizations supporting the program are American AgCredit, Co-Bank, Colusa-Glenn Farm Credit, Fresno Madera Farm Credit and Yosemite Farm Credit. The organizations are part of the nationwide Farm Credit System

— the largest provider of credit to U.S. agriculture.

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson agreed that the YF&R program helps develop farming leaders.

"The California Farm Bureau is proud to support the next generation of farmers and ranchers through the Young Farmers and Ranchers program," Johansson said. "We see firsthand how participants in YF&R can make a difference locally, nationally and even internationally. The future of agriculture is in good hands, thanks to the contributions and dedication of our YF&R community."

Anderson's great-grandparents began the family's farming legacy, growing oranges in Anaheim on land now occupied by Disneyland. In 1950, her grandparents moved north to begin operations in Glenn County. The farm has grown to 1,000 acres and also includes a walnut hulling operation.

Besides learning everything her father, Gary, knows about farming so she can eventually assume the reins, Anderson has spent several years in YF&R activities at the state and national levels. She served on the California YF&R Committee

for several years before becoming vice chair and in 2022 the organization's chair. During the last two years of her service, she was also an American Farm Bureau YF&R Committee member and helped organize state and national leadership conferences. The most recent California YF&R conference was held in early December in Monterey and attracted more than 120 members.

She said developing expertise in agricultural issues so she could become a strong advocate was an important outcome of her participation.

"It's important that we have people fighting for ag in the future," she said. "We have the fifth-largest agricultural economy in the world in California, with close to 400 different crops and livestock grown here. But it's also one of the most regulated states and we face issues other states haven't faced yet. Being an advocate for what small family farms need to be successful is doing what's best for my family farm and everyone else's."

Through her YF&R involvement, she was introduced to Solutions from the Land (SfL), a

*See YF&R on page 24*



From YF&R on page 23

nonprofit formed in 2009 to put farmers, ranchers and foresters at the forefront of resolving food system, energy, environmental and climate challenges. Sfl has brought farmers to the U.N. Climate Summits for a decade and participated in discussions during the past five years. This year, the summit featured its first ag-themed day.

She discussed how California farmers are using water more efficiently. For example, she said GSA Farms drains water used in hulling operations back into the fields so it can percolate into the ground and help recharge the aquifer. She also talked about how the farm reuses the shells and leaves from the hulling operations to fertilize the soil for planting winter wheat.

Anderson said she constantly encourages young people involved in agriculture to get involved in YF&R because it allows them to be advocates for the industry and to share their own stories with others.

“I think it’s extremely important to belong,” she said. “Not only does it create a network for you, it’s also important that we have people fighting for ag in the future.”

Keith Hesterberg, President and CEO of Fresno Madera Farm Credit, agreed.

“The state continues to impose increasingly stringent and expensive regulations on California’s farmers and ranchers,” Hesterberg said. “While many of these new requirements are well-intentioned, state officials need to understand how the cumulative impact is affecting farmers’ ability to keep their businesses going. The best voice for agriculture is family farmers who can share their experiences and provide alternative solutions that can ensure that California continues to feed the nation for generations to come.”

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About Farm Credit:

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

About the Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee:

The Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee is a program for agriculturalists between the ages of 18 and 35 involved in production, banking, business, and many other areas of the industry. YF&R provides opportunities to develop leadership skills through involvement in Farm Bureau at the county, state, and national levels. YF&R members are a vital part of the organization. Each member’s efforts help California Farm Bureau to effectively represent the diversity of farmers and ranchers across the state. For more information, visit <https://www.cfbf.com/ag-programs/young-farmers-ranchers>



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- Thursday, July 20th  
Respiratory Safety
- Thursday, August 24th  
Vertebrate Pest Management
- Thursday, September 21st  
Drift Prevention
- Thursday, October 26th  
Mix & Loading Safety
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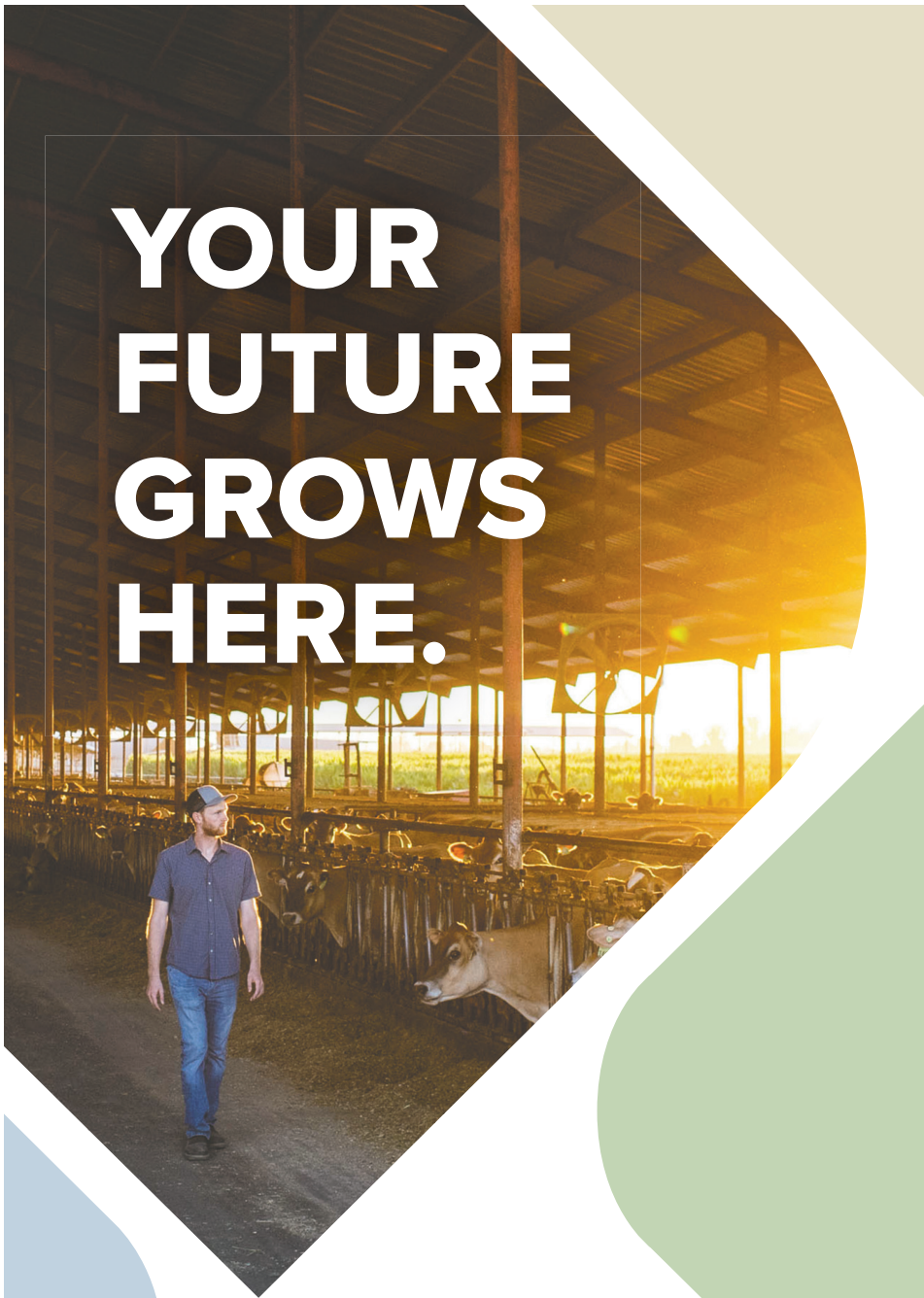
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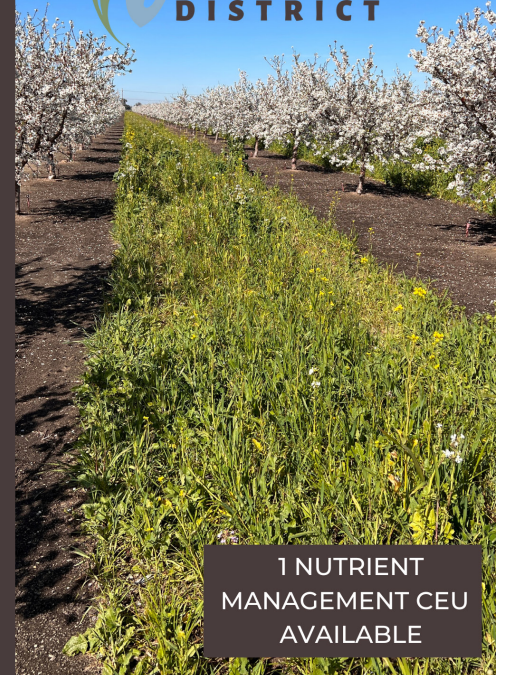
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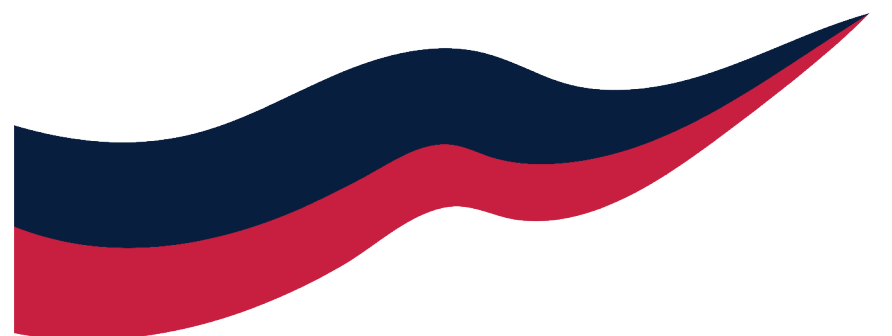
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