

The Stanislaus Farm News

The *voice* of Stanislaus County Agriculture



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County Farm Bureau
Vol.74 No.9 May 5, 2023**

*Roses are related to apples, raspberries, cherries, peaches,
plums, nectarines, pears and almonds.*

Tulip bulbs can be substituted for onions in a recipe.

*Almost 60 percent of fresh-cut flowers grown in the U.S. come
from California.*

Stanislaus Farm News

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May Snow Survey Still Shows Abundant Snowpack

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

The May snow survey conducted at Phillips Station illustrated an abundance of snow remaining in California. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) measured a snow depth of 59 inches with a snow water equivalent of 30 inches. The measurements represent 241 percent of the average for May 1 at that location. “No matter how you look at the data, only a handful of years in the historical record compared to this year’s results,” manager of DWR’s Snow Surveys and Water Supply Forecasting Unit, Sean de Guzman said in a news release.

While the snow depth at Phillips Station dropped by more than half over the last month, it has been melting at a slower pace than anticipated. Below-average temperatures in April helped mitigate the rate of runoff. Over the past month, an average of 12 inches of California’s snow water equivalent has melted. While good for water storage needs, the substantial snowpack also presents a series of concerns.

“While providing a significant boost to California’s water supplies, this year’s massive snowpack is posing continued flood risks in the San Joaquin Valley,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “The snowpack will not disappear in one week or one month but will lead to sustained high flows across the San Joaquin and Tu-

lare Basins over the next several months and this data will help us inform water managers and ultimately help protect communities in these regions.”

The statewide snowpack is 254 percent of the average at 49.2 inches, according to DWR’s snow sensor network. DWR will continue tracking snowpack conditions and update snowmelt runoff forecasts accordingly. The historic nature of the 2023 water year was contrasted with the fact that a May snow survey had not been conducted since 2020. At that time, there were only 1.5 inches of snow at the Phillips snow course.



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Agricultural Employment Policy

The Senate's Judiciary and Labor committees advanced legislation this week opposed by Farm Bureau because of new burdens they will impose for California farmers. SB-365 Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) continues the Legislature's ongoing attempts to undermine employment dispute arbitration widely used by employers; SB-399 Senator Aisha Wahab (D-Hayward) will prohibit employers for meeting with employees to educate them about the impact of last year's card-check legislation; SB-809 Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles) will hamstring employers' efforts to protect their employees and customers by avoiding hiring violent felons. Senate Labor turned back a bill to ease employees' ability to opt for flexible workweek options like "4-10s" (four ten hours days without overtime liability for employers). SB 365, SB 399, and SB 809 advance to the Senate Appropriations Committee for consideration of their fiscal impacts. Staff: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

AB-1044, Assemblymember James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) was heard in the Assembly Jobs, Economic Development and the Economy Committee on Tuesday this week. The farm Bureau testified about the importance of establishing a small agricultural business relief program that provides grant monies to those small agricultural businesses that have been affected by severe drought over the last few years. The bill received unanimous support from the committee and now goes Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

Agriculture Technology

Farm Bureau's sponsored bill, AB-1016 passed from the Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection with nearly unanimous bi-partisan support. As discussed previously, AB 1016 authorizes the Department of Pesticide Regulations to create a training program that ultimately will help farmers gain more access to unmanned aerial systems (drones) for pesticide applications. The bill would have been on the Committee's Consent Calendar; however, the California Agriculture Aircraft Association filed an oppose unless amended position, forcing the bill to be formally presented (that is why this Committee published an updated Committee analysis, removing the proposed consent recommendation).

Al Stehly, a San Diego County Farm Bureau member, presented testimony about how he hopes to use a drone as part of his commercial qualified applicator business, to improve worker safety, and provide more efficient applicator services to his clients but has struggled to become fully licensed due to DPR's structure for drone applicator training. That is the process that AB 1016 modernizes, since that statute was originally written before drones even existed. The bill has passed two policy committees without a no vote, and enjoys broad support from Republicans, moderate, and progressive Democrats. Authored by Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles), AB 1016 next

moves onto the Assembly Committee on Appropriations. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Air Quality

AB-650 by Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula (D-Fresno) was heard in the Assembly Local Government Committee on Wednesday, April 26. CA Farm Bureau opposed this bill as it would expand the membership of the governing board of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. The bill only received a courtesy motion, with failure to gain a "second" to that motion, and could not pass without a full recommendation. Therefore, the bill failed to move out of the committee and cannot proceed to the next committee. Existing law authorizes the board of the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District to be comprised of 15 members. This bill would have increased the number of members from 15 to 19 members, increased the term of office for the members from 3 years to 4 years, and would have required the addition of environmental justice or social justice issues and to be selected from a list submitted by nonprofit organizations that have a presence within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. Local Government Committee members including Chair Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters), Assemblymember Lori Wilson (D-Fairfield) and Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco (D-Downey) expressed concerns with appointing "non-elected" individuals to a "rule-making body." They emphasized these issues should be addressed at the local level, and not as a state-wide approach. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Animal Health and Welfare AB-554 by Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino) was heard on Monday, April 24 in the Assembly Banking and Finance Committee. CA Farm Bureau opposes the bill and has joined a coalition of stakeholders. AB 554 would create a new right of action enabling Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs) and their humane officers to litigate alleged violations of "any law relating to or affecting animals" in the civil courts. CA Farm Bureau has major concerns that this bill would expose our membership to unfounded charges and litigation. Under current law, SPCAs may be incorporated once 20 CA citizens have organized and filed. This mechanism of incorporation is ripe for abuse by extremist animal rights organizations which have long sought to disrupt, harass, and even shutter California businesses engaged in the production, stewardship, conservation, and care of animals. Once established as an SPCA, this bill would grant this entity the authority to "proffer a complaint" of alleged animal abuse in civil court. Farm Bureau is opposed to animal abuse and fervently believes it should be prosecuted by the fullest extent of the law in criminal court. Allowing these groups to file allegations under their perceptions or opinions of animal abuse in a civil court would certainly be a burden to our members who are legally operating their farms under CA code. The author's office and sponsors of the bill, the Animal Legal Defense Fund, argue that this bill is only "clarifying" current law and is not providing extremist groups the opportunity to impugn our

membership. In response to these claims, Farm Bureau provided amendments to provide production livestock, fairs, and rodeos with an exemption from the language – but the language was not accepted. Due to the timeline of our early negotiations, Farm Bureau did not engage on the bill when it was heard in the first policy committee – Assembly Judiciary. With the rejection of our amendments, the coalition has moved to an “oppose” position. We continue our conversations with the author’s office and hope to find a resolution that removes our opposition. Katie Little, klittle@cbbf.com

CPUC

Recently, the California Public Utilities Commission held a public hearing regarding the state cellular, voice, and broadband networks in California. The California Farm Bureau provided public comments regarding the need for rural California to enjoy the same level of network speed and reliability as urban centers, whether for pure broadband or voice and cellular network services. Farm Bureau noted that precision and automated agriculture technology need ubiquitous network coverage on the farm to maximize their potential efficiencies in farming, and that farmers and farm workers need robust infrastructure to compete in a global marketplace, and enjoy access to tele-health and educational opportunities. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Insurance

Farm Bureau’s sponsored bill SB-505, authored by Senator Susan Rubio (D-Baldwin Park), passed from the Senate Committee on Appropriations pursuant to Senate Rule 28.8. The use of this rule means that the Appropriations Committee Chair determined that any state costs to implement SB 505 are not significant and the measure was sent directly to the Senate Floor for Second Reading without a hearing in the Appropriations Committee. The bill is now on Third Reading on the Senate Floor, and can be taken up by

Senator Rubio for a Senate Floor vote imminently. The bill would move next to the Assembly, if it passes from the Senate Floor. SB 505 does not have any opposition, and is supported by key stakeholders, including the California FAIR Plan, and the admitted insurance market. The bill would add commercial insurance policies into an existing FAIR Plan process called the clearinghouse, with a goal to return policies back to the admitted marketplace and stabilize the function of the FAIR Plan. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Land Use

California Farm Bureau joined a coalition comprised largely of builders, the Chamber of Commerce, and pro-housing advocates to oppose SB-571, authored by Senator Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica) which was set to be heard in Senate Governance and Finance Committee. The bill removes local control from zoning and planning decisions in favor of a ban on any development in high or very high fire severity zones, if there would be more than 40 vehicles located in the development. While the author has an admirable goal to protect human life by ensuring developments have sufficient evacuation routes, the bill would be a statewide overlay on top of CEQA and rules from the State Fire Marshall. The bill also fails to recognize a rural lifestyle, where a homeowner will likely have a truck for work and passenger vehicle. Farm Bureau’s concerns are shared by the California Chamber of Commerce and California Building Industries Association, which labeled the bill a “Housing Killer.”

The Chair of Governance and Finance Committee, Senator Anna Caballero (D-Merced), may have shared many of the concerns brought forward by the coalition about the bill being a Housing Killer, since she has focused her legislative efforts to pass significant housing production bills like SB 6 last year. Due to the work from this broad coalition, including Farm Bureau, SB 571 was not pre-

sented in the Committee, and has been turned into a two-year bill by the author. Hopefully, the author’s office will create a working group that includes a variety of rural voices, including farmers and ranchers, to help to improve the bill. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Livestock

SB-485 by Senator Josh Becker (D-Menlo Park) was heard on Monday, April 24 in the Senate Agriculture Committee. Farm Bureau had an Opposed Unless Amended position as of the committee submission deadline. However, after coordinating with California Cattlemen’s Association, Western United Diaries, and the author’s office, we were able to incorporate amendments that removed our opposition at the committee hearing. This bill would require, CARB and CDFA to create a feed additive program to reduce emissions by August 1, 2026.

The bill would also require CARB and CDFA to provide the Legislature with a report, 2 years after a safe and effective feed additive is commercially available, about further funding and scientific research that is necessary to improve the incentive program, and convene workgroups to provide a comprehensive assessments to the Legislature of the potential impacts of feed additives. Farm Bureau asked for beef cattle to be removed from the program as feed additives have not been thoroughly researched in the industry – and in some cases can have a negative connotation. While the current goal of the program would greatly benefit dairy cattle and help reach SB 1383’s (Lara, 2016) 40% emission reduction goals, the same cannot be said for beef and feeder operations. Therefore, the bill was amended to only pertain to the dairy industry until more research can be conducted in other livestock operations. Farm Bureau also supported language to incorporate agricultural stakeholders within the workgroup process to ensure a comprehensive assessment of feed additives’ impacts. With these amendments, Farm Bureau has

moved to a neutral position and continues to work with agricultural stakeholders and the Senator on parameters of the “working group” within the bill. Staff: Katie Little; klittle@cbbf.com

Pesticides

AB-99, Assemblymember Damon Connolly (D-San Raphael) was heard in Assembly Transportation Committee earlier this week. This bill’s focus is on eliminating certain pesticides for roadside vegetation control. This is unnecessary because the California Department of Transportation already has requirements for these applications, but the author is attempting to target certain pesticides applications. The bill made it out of committee and now going to Assembly Appropriations. The Farm Bureau opposes this bill along with a broad coalition of agriculture. Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cbbf.com

Rural Broadband

AB-415, authored by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez (D-Pomona) and supported by California Farm Bureau passed from the Assembly Committee on Communications and Conveyance as part of the Consent Calendar. It moves next to Assembly Committee on Appropriations. The bill would require the Office of Emergency Services to consult with the Department of Technology and the Department of Food and Agriculture to coordinate the statewide building and upgrading of communication and internet infrastructure on fairgrounds. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cbbf.com

Taxation

AB-294, authored by Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine) passed from Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation. The bill is supported by Farm Bureau, as it provides an exclusion from gross income for any qualified taxpayer for amounts received for costs and losses associated with wildfires as a state policy. As previously discussed, current law requires

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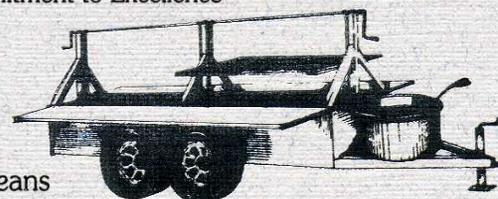
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PAST YF&R MEMBER PANEL

On Thursday, April 27th, the Stanislaus County Young Farmers & Ranchers group invited past members to participate in a panel. This allowed current members the opportunity to learn from their experiences, the knowledge they gained in the program and come up with ideas for future meetings.

Kelly Fogarty Tilma, Jessica Filippini and Daniel Bays were the three panelists for the night. All three of them are current members of the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau Board of Directors so it was a great way for YF&R Members to see that their time in the program could lead them to continue their participation in Farm Bureau by being members of the board.

Some of the questions that were asked had to do with how these past YF&R Members have used the knowledge they gained to help them where they are today. All three panelists agreed that the connections they made during their time in YF&R have been extremely beneficial to their success today. As mentioned earlier, all three panelists are currently on the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau Board and their involvement in YF&R really helped get their foot in the door to make that possible.

Our group meets almost monthly and meetings are a mixture of socials, informational meetings and tours. There are so many great opportunities available to young farmers locally and we hope that you will join us at our upcoming meetings!



From Review on page 5

this exclusion to be sought for each specific wildfire incident for impacted counties. This has created a number of carbon copy bills to address different fires and county combinations, and Farm Bureau supports those bills, too. AB 294 would clean up the process so that these amounts received would be considered excluded from gross income as a matter of law once the wildfire disaster declaration occurs, ending the need for specific follow on legislation. The bill offers good policy and good governance. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Transportation

The Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation (ACF) was brought before the California Air Resources Board (CARB) at this week's Board meeting. ACF aims to accelerate the widespread adoption of zero-emission vehicles in the medium- and heavy-duty sector and for light-duty package delivery vehicles. This is the second of two Board Meetings; the Board will also consider adopting find-

ings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations under the California Environmental Quality Act, and certifying the Final Environmental Impact Analysis. Farm Bureau continues to share concerns with the regulation as a majority of CA Farmers and Ranchers live in remote and rural communities that have limited access to the infrastructure required for this proposal. Furthermore, the time required to charge these vehicles in addition to the time needed to travel to these charging facilities could jeopardize food security and availability. These limitations do not stop at rural community borders, farmers and ranchers are part of a vital supply chain that is still feeling the effects of port congestion caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The transportation of food, and various agricultural commodities, was disrupted – which ultimately led many international consumers of these products to seek new suppliers in different markets. Another transportation disruption of goods to and at the ports, could limit the distribution of ag goods which accounts for more than 22 billion

dollars of California's economy. After hours of testimony that lead into Board discussions on Friday, the regulation has passed. Many Board members discussed the importance of implementation, infrastructure, and feasibility, and Farm Bureau will continue to engage on these conversations. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Water Rights

This week, several of the water bills Farm Bureau is tracking advanced from policy or fiscal committees, including the three water rights-related bills that Farm Bureau is actively opposing: AB 460 Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), AB 1337 Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), and SB 389 Senator Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica). The water user/diverter and business communities are united in strong opposition to these bills, with around 100 water agencies, irrigation districts, municipalities, chambers of commerce, commodities groups, and industry associations actively fighting them. Although each bill passed multiple committees, they did so

with mixed support including several "no" votes and abstentions and after extensive debate among committee members. The opposition coalition, which includes the Farm Bureau, has been collaborating in development of alternative legislative language that could be considered by the authors and other members. Staff: Alex Biering; abiering@cfbf.com

Recharge, Storage, and Drought Relief Bills

On a more positive note, multiple bills Farm Bureau actively supports also advance this week, including: AB 62 Assemblymember Devon Mathis (R-Porterville), establishing targets for statewide surface and groundwater storage; AB 830 Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria (D-Fresno), exempting diverters of flood flows for recharge from obtaining streambed alteration agreements; AB 1044 Assemblymember James Gallagher (R-Yuba City), which would appropriate \$100 million from the General Fund to the state's agricultural drought relief program; and SB 366 Senator Anna Caballero (D-Merced),

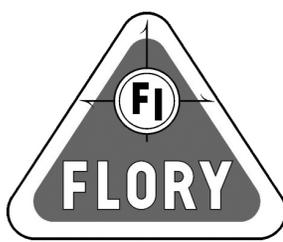
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expanding the scope and uses of the California Water Plan. Staff: Alex Biering; abiering@cfbf.com

Wildfire

SB-310 authored by Senator Bill Dodd (D-Napa) and supported by the Farm Bureau passed from the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously. The bill is sponsored by the Karuk Tribe, and supports the effort to increase the Tribe's ability to conduct cultural burning on its lands as part of wildfire mitigation efforts. The bill is opposed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers. The bill moves next to Senate Appropriations Committee. Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) released the draft mill assessment recommendations, which are part of an independently

conducted study to identify the structure and funding necessary for the department to continue to effectively carry out its pesticide regulatory program and support the state's accelerated transition to sustainable pest management. The study's author, Crowe LLC, will collect public feedback on the draft study through May 30 to inform its final recommendations. DPR's mill assessment is paid by a pesticide retailer or manufacturer when a pesticide is first sold into California and provides approximately 80% of the department's current funding. The mill assessment was last increased in 2004.

To sustainably fund DPR and the pesticide-related work of County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the

draft study recommendations consider incremental increases of the mill assessment from the current \$0.021 up to \$0.0339 per dollar of pesticide sales. The draft implementation recommendations include phasing-in the increase and continuing the mill assessment's flat rate structure to start, while considering a tiered mill assessment in the future. The Farm Bureau opposes these proposed recommendations which effectively increases DPR's budget by 50 million dollars. Crowe LLP is seeking feedback on the draft to inform its final recommendations for department

funding, which are expected to be released this summer. The feedback period is open today through May 30 at 5 p.m. Comments may be sent via email to ProjectMillStudy@cdpr.ca.gov, or by mail to 1001 I Street, P.O. Box 4015, Sacramento, CA 95812.

Crowe LLP will hold a webinar on Thursday, May 4, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. to give an overview of the draft study and recommendations. The Mill Study Webinar will be hosted live on Zoom. Registration is not required to attend, and the webinar will be recorded. Crowe LLP is also conducting three Q&A sessions for stakeholders. To sign up for a Q&A session, interested participants should email two preferred date/time choices to Jamey.Hammond@crowe.com by Monday, May 8, from the following options:

- Tuesday, May 9 from 1-2:30 p.m. PST
- Thursday, May 11 from 3-4:30 p.m. PST
- Tuesday, May 16 from 1:30-3 p.m. PST

CDFA TO DISCUSS STATE-WIDE PLAN FOR CLIMATE, WORKING LANDS AND COMMUNITIES ON MAY 2nd Plan Takes Aim on Building Opportunity for California and Climate Action

The California State Board of Food and Agriculture will discuss opportunities for collaboration and action related to the recently released statewide plan - Ag Vision for the Next Decade. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the California Department of Food and Agriculture, 1220 N Street - Main Auditorium, Sacramento, CA, 95814. The meeting is also available via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88174303335>

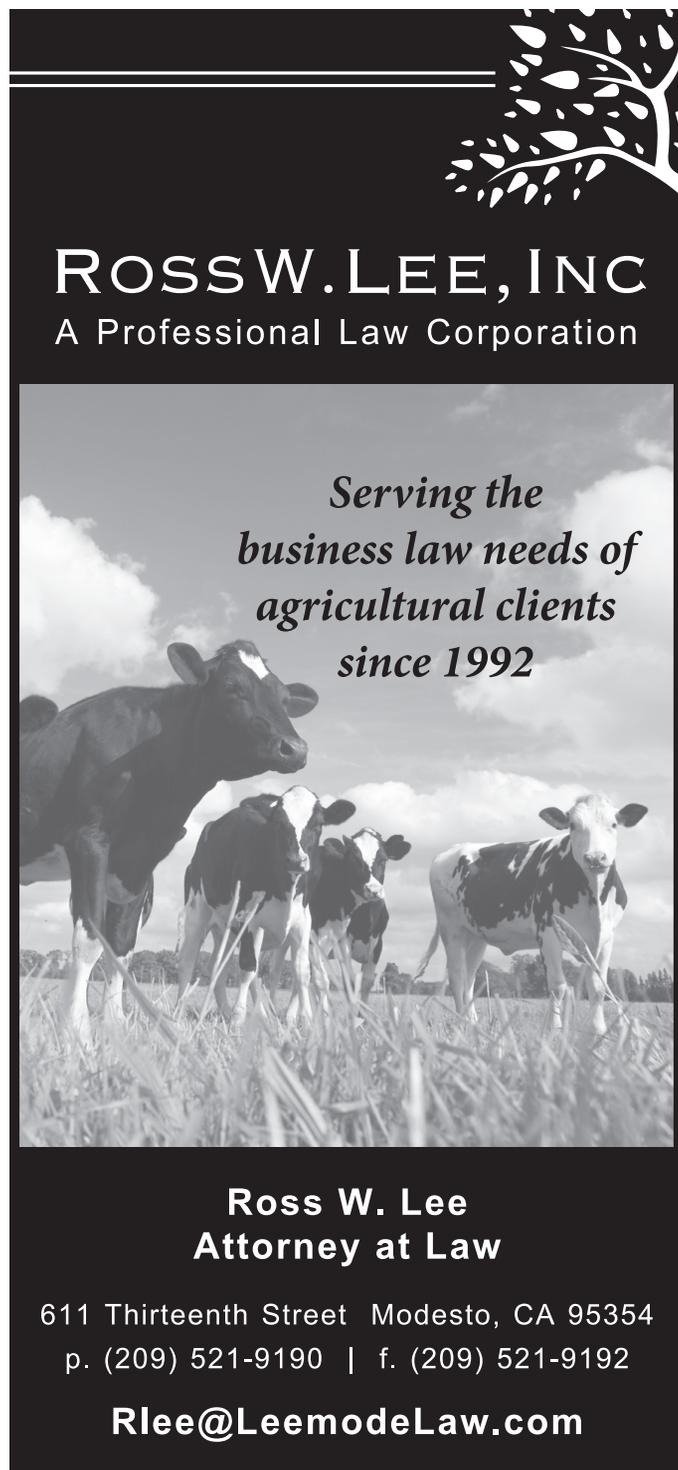
Webinar ID: 881 7430 3335 Passcode: Board2023! (Phone Access Passcode: 6805723639) (Simultaneous Spanish interpretation is available via the Zoom application)

"Ag Vision is a plan for every Californian, from those who care about the land and landscape and making it better for

the future, to those who work with or live around farming communities," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "It's a plan for those curious about their food and health and those who care about climate action to foster more climate smart, resilient and restorative food systems. While the plan is intended to guide the actions of CDFA, we can't do it alone. To bring Ag Vision to life we need private and public entities, community leaders and diverse stakeholders to come together to advance the vision through collaboration, partnerships and action."

Invited speakers include: Jennifer Norris, California Natural Resources Agency; Glenda Humiston, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources; Patricia Stock, California State University, Chico; Cherie Watte, CA GROWN; Stacia Levenfeld, California Association of Food Banks; Erika Lovejoy, Sustainable Conservation and representatives from CDFA's Office of Farm to Fork, Fairs and Exposition, and Farmer Equity Programs.

Ag Vision centers on growing opportunity - for farmers and ranchers, farmworkers, individuals and communities - and demonstrating leadership on climate action. The plan - which will guide areas of focus for CDFA and serve as a catalyst for action with farmers and ranchers, and other California agencies and partners - is being hailed as not just a plan for agriculture, but a plan to benefit every Californian. "The priorities within Ag Vision support a vibrant future for California farmers, ranchers, farmworkers and communities," said President Don Cameron, California State Board of Food and Agriculture. "California agriculture is unique in its diversity, productivity and ongoing commitment to sustainability. This plan provides a roadmap to further shared goals on climate action and build opportunities within the nation's largest agricultural state." To learn more about Ag Vision, please visit <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/agvision/>.



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Looking to New Frontiers with Farm Bureau



Zippy Duwall, American Farm Bureau President

Do you know what I love about the direction U.S. agriculture is going? It's that there is no single definition for the average

American farm. The romanticized red barn is nice, but today's agriculture is so much more. From mile-long greenhouses growing hydroponic lettuce to hemp fields to indoor aquaculture, it's fun to see agriculture exploring new frontiers. I feel incredibly fortunate to have a front row seat to all of it as the president of the American Farm Bureau. Our Farm Bureau family—from the grassroots to leadership—is involved in every facet of agriculture and that's part of the strength of our federation. That's also the inspiration behind our 2024 convention theme: New Frontiers.

Agriculture has been evolving since time began, but today we are at a point in time when science and innovation are opening more doors than ever before. New technologies and methods are bringing new opportunities to enter agriculture, too. According to USDA nearly 30% of all farms have at least one beginning farmer. It has been fun to welcome many of them to Farm Bureau. Representing all of agriculture – large and small farms, conventional and organic crops, corn to cattle to cauliflower – is key to our mission as the national Voice of Agriculture®.

In fact, at our 2023 annual convention we surveyed the 330-plus delegates who establish our policy and learned that nearly two thirds of them operate small or mid-sized farms based on USDA's

definition. A small farm has Gross Cash Farm Income (GCFI) of less than \$350,000. In a day and age when some combines cost a half million dollars, that threshold makes sense. We learned that 32% of our 2023 delegates operate small farms and 31% operate mid-sized farms. Another 32% operate large farms with only 5% operating very large farms.

It's also worth noting that 99% of our delegates come from family-owned farms, again based on USDA's definition. At a time of heightened concern about the consolidation within agriculture, this number might surprise some people. But it makes crystal clear that our policy is set by family farmers who run farms of all sizes. Farm Bureau is a big tent, as it should be.

I can't tell you how excited I am to invite everyone under our big tent, and beyond, to join us in Salt Lake City next year for our convention January 19-24. It will be fascinating to explore some of agriculture's new frontiers and hear from experts who are helping to blaze the trail. I hope you'll mark it on your calendar and join us. We are in talks with some great potential speakers, and I look forward to sharing more information about who will take the spotlight once we lock in the details.

You can bet we're committed to continuing the high energy envi-

See *NEW* on page 14

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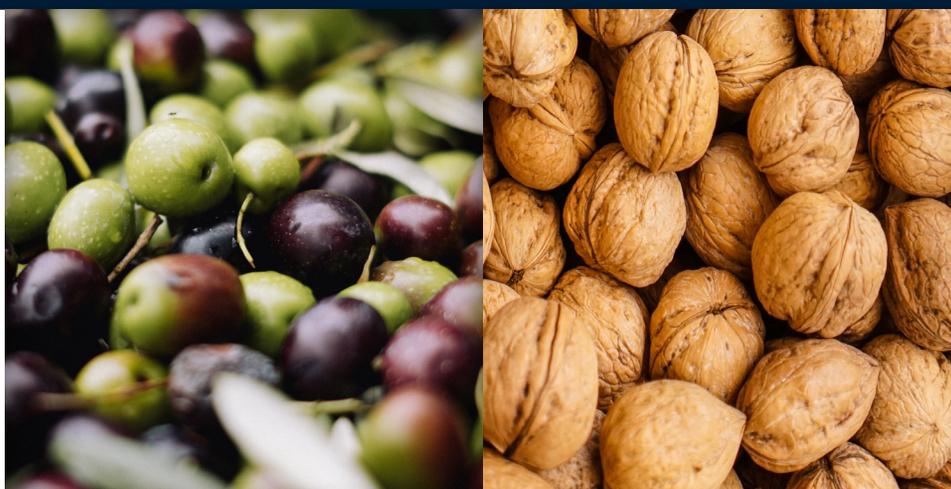
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Modesto Junior College Hosts NACTA

The 2023 NACTA (North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture) competition was hosted at MJC this year, two weeks ago from April 12th-15th. Colleges from around the nation came to Modesto, California to compete in one of the 19 contests consisting of Ag Business, Ag Communications, Ag Mechanics, Dairy and Livestock Judging and Management, Horticulture, soils, Quiz Bowl, and so much more. These contests took place over the course of three days on both East and West Campuses, we concluded the event with an awards banquet dinner. Overall, the NACTA competition was a huge success and we loved having the opportunity to host it, we can't wait to attend the contest in Idaho next year! Here are the results from MJC:

Ag Business

- Third High Team Overall
- Dylan Newsome: Third High Individual

Ag Communications

- First High Team Overall
- Dylan Newsome: First High Individual
- Braden Crosson: Third High Individual
- Anthony Agueda: Fifth High Individual

Ag Mechanics

- First High Team Overall
- Matthew Smith: First High Individual
- Larry Azevedo: Fifth High Individual

Individual Portfolio

- Third High Team Overall
- Faith Swope: Second High Individual

Dairy Management

- First High Team Overall
- Hartley Silva: First High Individual
- Alayna Azevedo: Second High Individual
- Blake Zimmer: Third High Individual

Dairy Cattle Judging

- Second High Team Overall
- Paris Cabral: Third High Individual
- Morgan Ramirez: Fifth High Individual



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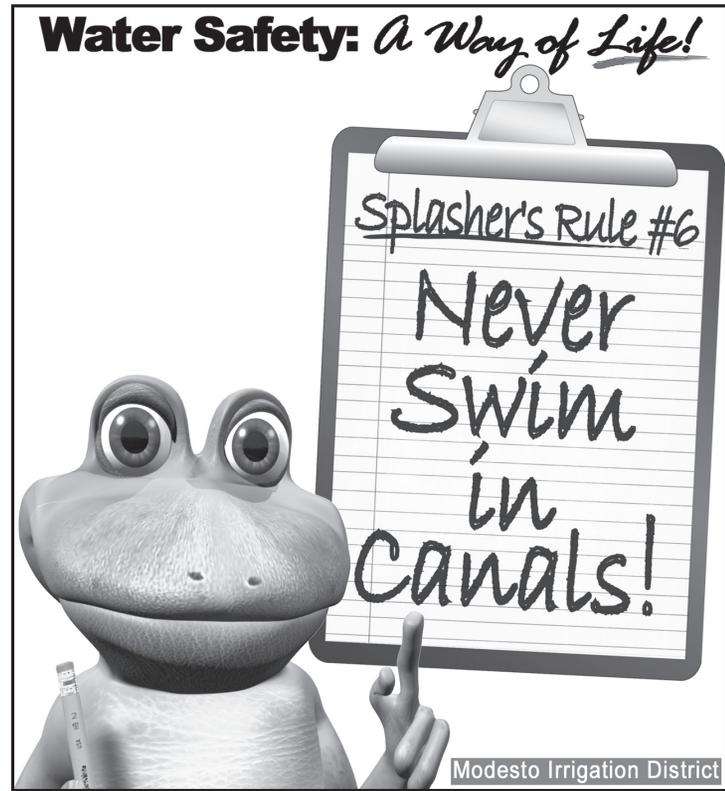
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From NEW on page 10

ronment we experienced this year in San Juan. The feedback was tremendous, and we intend to knock your socks off again in Salt Lake City. You can count on a good mix of leadership training, trends and policy insights. We'll challenge young farmers to bring their best to the high-stakes discussion meet competition, and some well-deserving entrepreneur will walk away with \$50,000 as winner of our Agriculture Innovation Challenge. That contest is open now so if you have a great new business or innovation or know someone who does, please learn more and submit an entry here.

Of course, we'll also carry on the tradition of naming a Farm Dog of the Year, with support from Purina. It's hard to believe this will be the sixth year of this competition, which has found its way into the hearts of tens of thousands of Americans. The contest celebrates farm dogs and the winner walks away with \$5,000, a year's supply of Purina dog food and a beautiful video about the bond between farmer and farm dog. Check out our 2023 winner and submit your dog for the contest here. Applications close July 14.

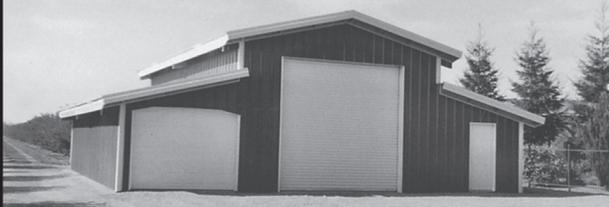
If you've never been to our convention, come check it out. I can't think of a better way to kick off the year, and I am sure you'll leave feeling energized and better informed. If you come every year, thank you, and I can't wait to catch-up with you again in Salt Lake City.



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The devil's in the details as they say, and that's never more true than when discussing the impact of conceptual policies on our farms and ranches. Sweeping terms and spotlight concepts take the California legislature by storm each year. Elected officials grab hold of broad generalized ideas that offer bold statements of change but lack substantive direction and practical application.

When it comes to theoretical science, we often hear studies quoted and the names of high profile research departments cited as authority for issues at the 30,000 foot viewpoint. Those studies are important, and the research conducted is needed, however the results of these theoretical studies must only be the start of the discussion, not the conclusion. Far too often, the theoretical science train pulls away from the station, gains momentum in the media and in a span of only a few short months policy changes

have been conceptualized, voted on and codified, leaving farmers and ranchers to deal with the questions and consequences of implementation.

Conversations surrounding topics such as reducing the effects of climate change, increasing organic acreage in production or lowering agriculture's use of water are large topics that require a multitude of detailed and practical answers to produce real solutions for the agricultural community. Studies and research surrounding the applied science and real-world benefits and consequences of proposed legislation and regulations must be a part of any policy decision before policy is codified, not after.

In 2022 California Farm Bureau chose to move beyond vocalizing the missing step of applied scientific research and we invested in a solution by funding California Bountiful Foundation and bringing Dr. Amrith Gunasekara to the team as the Foundation's Director of Science and Research. In the past year, the California Bountiful Foundation, in partnership with industry allies, leading agricultural academic institutions in the state and the California Farm Bureau have concluded important studies and produced results that have significant impact to our agriculture community.

A study on the economic impact of conceptual pesticide policies showed that increased restrictions on pesticides would result in an increase in food prices with the retail price of lettuce alone

See FARM on page 19



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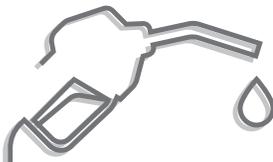
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Farmers to get full supplies from State Water Project and Central Valley Project

After a series of winter storms boosted California's reservoirs and snowpack, state and federal officials are pledging full water deliveries for farmers from two key water projects. The California Department of Water Resources said it expects to deliver 100% of requested water supplies from the State Water Project. That is up from a 75% allocation announced in March. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced that agricultural and water service contractors will receive 100% of requested supplies from the Central Valley Project, up from 80% announced in March.

UC Davis develops five new strawberry varieties to combat fungal disease

Plant breeders at the University of California, Davis, are releasing five new strawberry varieties developed to resist the soilborne disease Fusarium wilt. Researchers said this marks the first release from the UC Davis Strawberry Breeding Program where all cultivars have Fusarium wilt resistance. They also said the new varieties have high yields and improved fruit quality. In California, 1.8 billion pounds of strawberries are harvested each year

State to provide \$69 million in funding to help with farm soil and irrigation projects

The California Department of Food and Agriculture has announced a pilot program to provide \$69 million in block grant funding for agricultural projects that improve soil health and farm irrigation systems. Some \$40 million will be provided through the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program, which incentivizes agricultural operations to invest in water-saving irrigation systems. Another \$29 million will be made available through the state's Healthy Soils Program, which aids conservation management practices to improve soil health and reduce greenhouse gases.

and triggering worries about continued flooding in the Central Valley from a record-breaking snowpack accumulated during winter and spring storms. In Tulare County, farm fields have been inundated as floodwaters and now snowmelt fill lowlands of the former Tulare Lake. Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner Jimmy Hook said flooding impacts in the county have affected 64,000 acres, causing \$131 million in financial losses. He said he expects damages to extend to 115,000 acres and losses to grow to \$300 million.

Bill introduced to restrict foreign purchases of California farmland

California's farmland attracts investment from all over the world. But as drought and climate change provoke anxiety over water and natural resources, state legislators are proposing new restrictions. State Sen. Melissa Hurtado has introduced a bill to bar foreign governments and government-controlled enterprises from purchasing agricultural land in California beginning next year. Hurtado said the bill is needed to keep too many California farms from falling into the hands of foreign governments, which then control the water and energy resources that come with the land.

Two Yolo County ranches share insights on cattle raising

Two ranching operations in Yolo County have found ways to carve their own niche, allowing each to help maintain the region's rich agricultural tradition. Yolo Land and Cattle Co. and the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation opened their doors this month to a group of state legislative and committee staffers, offering a glimpse of how they manage their land, livestock and natural resources. Yocha Dehe raises cattle as part of a diverse farming operation that includes more than a dozen crops. Yolo Land and Cattle raises grass-fed Angus cattle, with some Angus-Hereford crosses.

Snowmelt renews flooding fears as Tulare Lake rises

The onset of warm temperatures is accelerating snowmelt

Increased vegetation from rains could add to destructive fire fuels

Generous rainfall may have erased drought conditions for most of the state, but it has not necessarily eased concerns for a potentially aggressive fire season. Todd Lando, wildfire hazard mitigation specialist for the Central Marin Fire Department, said he expects the extra rainfall and snowpack will promote additional vegetation growth. While the ground may be moist, heavy firestorms have followed rainy years before. As grasses dry, they become easy to ignite and can spread to heavier vegetation. In 2017, a then-record 1.5 million acres burned in California after a wet winter in 2016.



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Comment Period for Milk Alternatives Labeling to Reopen

Source: Brian German, AgNet West

The comment window for the draft guidance for milk alternatives is reopening after an announcement from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Originally, the 60-day comment period ended on April 24. FDA is reopening the comment period after requests for extensions from a variety of different stakeholder groups. FDA notes that “the new deadline for comments will be determined when the reopening notice publishes.”

The Labeling of Plant-Based Milk Alternatives and Voluntary Nutrient Statements: Guidance for Industry had originally been published in February. Nearly 1,000 comments were submitted within the initial comment period. Many agricultural organizations have expressed support for developing clearer guidelines for labeling but note that the draft guidance falls short. The National Milk Producers Federation criticized the FDA’s inaction to enforce existing standards of identity when it comes to dairy. Several law-

makers have also expressed concern regarding plant-based beverages being allowed to use dairy terminology.

Much of the criticism of the draft guidance is its focus on nutritional information and not the generalized use of dairy terms. The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) has weighed in on the issue, suggesting FDA require milk alternatives to be labeled accurately. AFBF cites existing examples of standards of identity being enforced on products labeled “jam”, and differentiations between “cheese” and “cheese substitute.” In written comments, AFBF also highlights how other developed economies such as Canada, European Union, and the United Kingdom enforce bans on dairy labeling on imitation products.

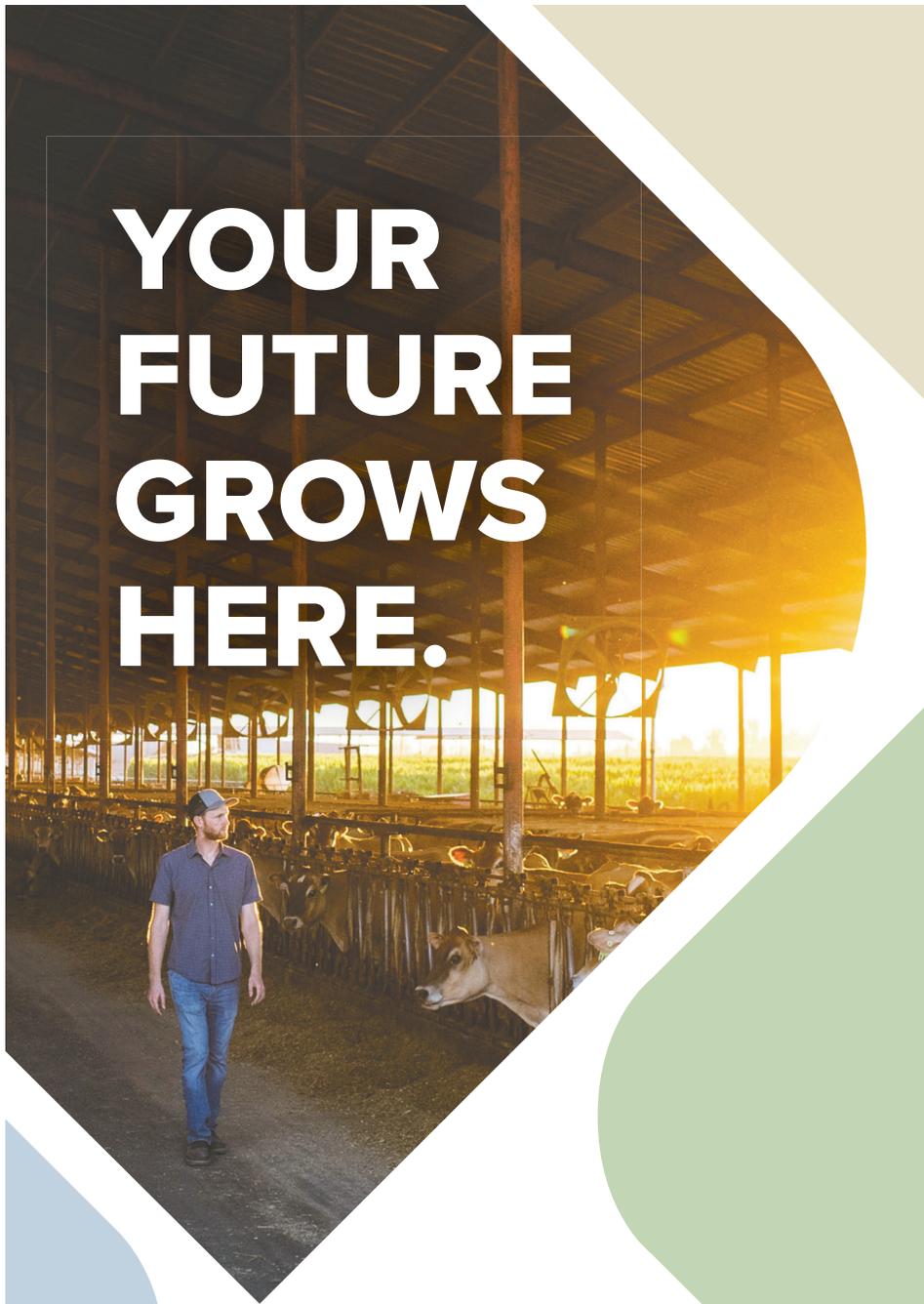
“We ask that FDA amend their draft guidance to prohibit the use of “milk” or other dairy terms on non-dairy substitutes unless products follow proper use of imitation terminology, as defined by existing law,” wrote AFBF Vice President of Public Policy Sam Kieffer. “Allowing such changes runs the risk of undercutting the entire current FDA labelling framework for imitation products, to the detriment of farmers, honest processors, and all consumers.”



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From FARM on page 16

potentially rising over 8%. An analysis on the practical application and economic impact of conceptual organic policy targets showed implementation would result in an increase in food prices and shrinking farm profits as well.

With these studies in hand, policy advocates within Farm Bureau and the larger agricultural sector are equipped to share real data and analysis with legislative offices and agency personnel to better make the case for important policy positions.

Most recently the Foundation studied California's water use and presented analysis that directly contradicts the age-old narrative that California agriculture uses 80% of the water in the state of California. Of particular interest, using publicly available numbers generated by academic and state institutions, Dr. Gunasekara has calculated that agriculture uses only 15% of the average annual water that reaches California.

California Farm Bureau remains committed to being a voice for farmers and ranchers and sometimes that means working with third parties to help provide additional detail for the things we know to be true. As California Bountiful Foundation partners with noteworthy research scientists and economic experts at the University level, we look forward to providing the missing link of practical science. At the end of the day, practical science, and not theoretical science, will lead to practical solutions to ensure food security into the future.

Jamie Johansson,
President, California Farm Bureau




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Upcoming Class Schedule

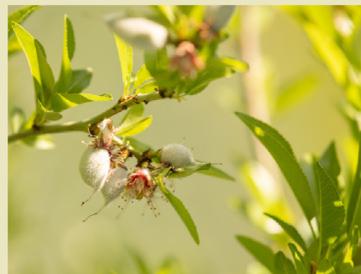
Thursday, May 25th
Cooperative Extension Updates | 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
1 Hour L/R or Other DPR
1 Hour CCA

Save the Dates for 2023

- Thursday, June 29th
- Thursday, July 20th
- Thursday, August 24th
- Thursday, September 21st
- Thursday, October 26th
- Thursday, November 30th

Cover Crops in Orchards Demonstration and Workshop

Thursday, May 11, 2023 from 10 AM to 2 PM
Gemperle Farms, 718 E. Barnhart Rd., Ceres 95307 (Look for signs from here.)



Join us for a walking tour of a 5-year cover crop trial with almonds. Learn about American Farmland Trust's cover crop trials. Hear the pros and cons of cover crops. See how cover crops impact soil health and carbon sequestration.

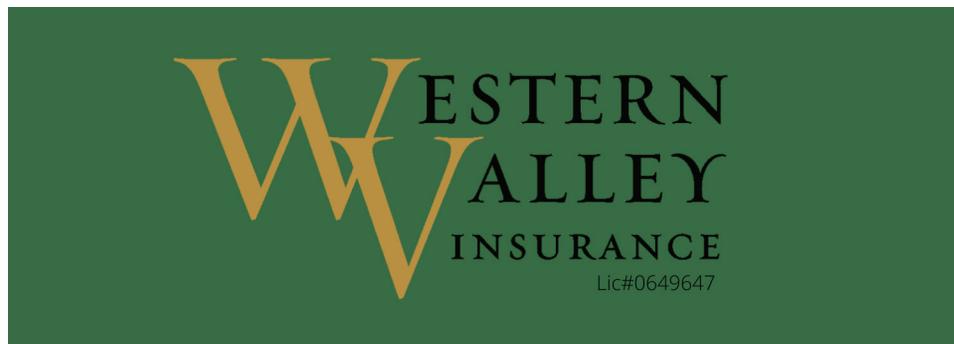
Speakers

Tanya Gemperle-Goncalvez and Richard Gemperle, Gemperle Farms
Vivian Wauters, Post Doctoral Fellow, UC Davis Gaudin Lab
Stetcyn Maldonado, Climate Smart Habitat Manager, Project Apis m.
Paul Lum, Senior Agricultural Specialist, American Farmland Trust
Anel Trujillo, California Outreach Manager, American Farmland Trust

REGISTER TODAY!

Details: www.Farmland.salsalabs.org/cover-crops-orchards
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