Stanislaus Farm News



The voice of Stanislaus County Agriculture

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"Gypsy Cowgirl Kitchen, Bambi Porter, loves cooking, preserving, canning and growing food. Porter greeted us with snacks, a beautiful garden and a smile." See Page 14

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More Groundwater Sustainability Plans Approved

By: Brian German Ag News Director / AgNet West

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has issued determinations on groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) for 17 non-critically overdrafted basins. Guided by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the DWR evaluates these plans based on scientific merit and their potential to achieve sustainability goals. The agency will continue to support GSP development, providing technical and financial assistance, along with a robust suite of data and tools.

Out of the 17 basins, plans for Cosumnes,

Eel River Valley, Elsinore Valley, Mound, Ojai Valley, San Gorgonio Pass, San Pasqual Valley, Santa Monica, Sutter, White Wolf, and Yolo have received approval. However, the DWR has identified deficiencies in the plans for Antelope, Big Valley, Colusa, Corning, Los Molinos, and Red Bluff basins, signaling a lack of clear strategies to eliminate overdraft, manage groundwater levels, and control land subsidence. Particularly noteworthy is the surge in land subsidence and dry wells in the northern Sacramento region over the last decade, which adds urgency to addressing the issue. The clock is ticking for the incomplete basins, as they have 180 days to rectify the deficiencies, revise, and resubmit their plans.

"DWR is committed to supporting these local agencies as we work towards the common goal of protecting California's groundwater infrastructure, which is critical to a resilient water supply that can withstand the weather extremes of drought and flood." DWR Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management, Paul Gosselin said in a statement.

DWR has disbursed over \$350 million in Sustainable Groundwater Management grant funding to aid GSAs in SGMA planning and implementation. With determinations already made for 72 out of 94 basins, the DWR anticipates completing evaluations for the remaining basins by January 2024. California remains steadfast in its long-term effort to sustainably manage crucial groundwater basins, ensuring a water-secure future for its residents and industries.



On the farm we are used to living life around the seasons. Whether it's the rush and intensity of planting, the long days of summer, or lending a helping hand to a neighbor during harvest, we know that in certain seasons the whole operation comes together to focus on a common goal. At the Farm Bureau office, we have entered Annual Meeting season, where our staff works tirelessly to plan and prepare to welcome our farm and ranch members from across the state to the largest event of the Farm Bureau year.

This year's Annual Meeting will take place in Reno, Nevada at the Grand Sierra Resort December 1-6, 2023. We are excited to be back in Reno to accommodate those in our most northern rural counties. Our theme Vision – Action – Results will be carried throughout our programing as we celebrate our achievements, discuss and determine current priorities and cast a vision for the year to come.

We'll begin the conference on Friday, December 1st as we welcome our Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) as they kick off their state Leadership Conference with a reception. They'll spend the next day listening to speakers and participating in educational workshops, all while networking with their peers from around the state. Sunday, December 3rd will bring farm tour opportunities and the official kick-off of the California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, with the opening of the popular California Marketplace. The Marketplace will bring together a large variety of vendors and sponsors who will showcase their products and services in our version of a Cowboy Christmas-style trade show.

Monday, we'll hold the General Session where I'll share a year in review and introduce our keynote speaker, Amberley Snyder, a former champion barrel racer and Utah State FFA Officer who was the inspiration behind the popular Netflix movie Walk, Ride, Rodeo. Amberley will share her inspiring story of overcoming the effects of a paralyzing car accident and learning to adapt and grow in the aftermath of that accident.

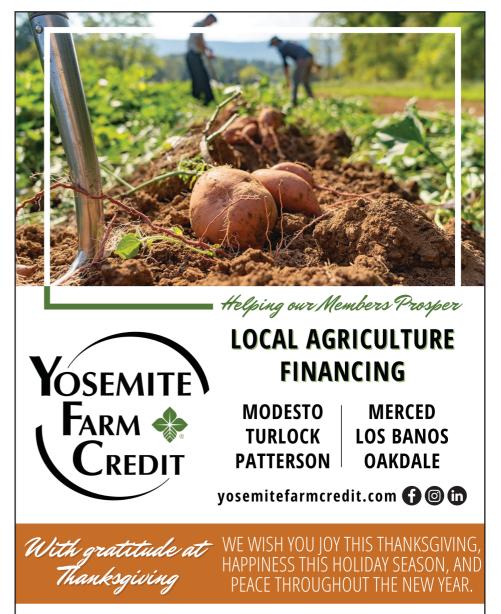
That evening we'll celebrate the achievements of our County Farm Bureaus, honor award winners, raise some money for the Farm PAC and have a great time bowling at the Multi-County reception to end the night. We will conclude the event Tuesday and Wednesday with the House of Delegates business session where delegates from each County Farm Bureau will vote on policy recommendations and organization objectives to help guide Farm Bureau into the future.

Throughout the event there will be many opportunities for educational sessions structured to bring you current information on policy changes, provide you opportunities for Continuing Education credits for your Pest Control Advisor (PCA) license and share information and insights to help you grow your business.

Most of all, we'll spend several days with friends and family from around the state; folks who share the common purpose and passion of advocating for a future in farming and ranching in California, and one that allows farmers and ranchers to pass on our legacy of loving the land for generations to come.

I hope you'll join us in Reno the first weekend of December.

Jamie Johansson President, California Farm Bureau



California farmers and ranchers honored for distinguished service

A Placer County couple with 65 years of contributions to farming and ranching and a third-generation orchard farmer who became the first East Indian-American to serve on the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau Board of Directors are recipients of the California Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service Award.

The awards for Wayne and Barbara Vineyard of Placer County and Kulwant Johl of the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau will be presented at the 105th California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Reno. The Distinguished Service Award honors lifelong contributions to agriculture.

The Vineyards are rice farmers and beef cattle ranchers. Wayne Vineyard has served as a board member of the California Farm

Bureau, the Placer County Farm Bureau, the Placer County Agricultural Commission and the Placer County Fair Board. Barbara Vineyard served on the Sierra College Board of Trustees for 28 years and is a longtime advocate of agriculture programs at the college. She also managed the Placer County Farm Bureau's Mt. Pleasant Hall for more than 40 years.

Johl's family-run Johl Orchards farms more than 1,000 acres of almonds, walnuts, peaches and prunes in the Yuba-Sutter region. Johl has served on the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau board for 35 years, including four years as board president. He is a member of the California Cling Peach Board and president of the American Punjabi Heritage Society.

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

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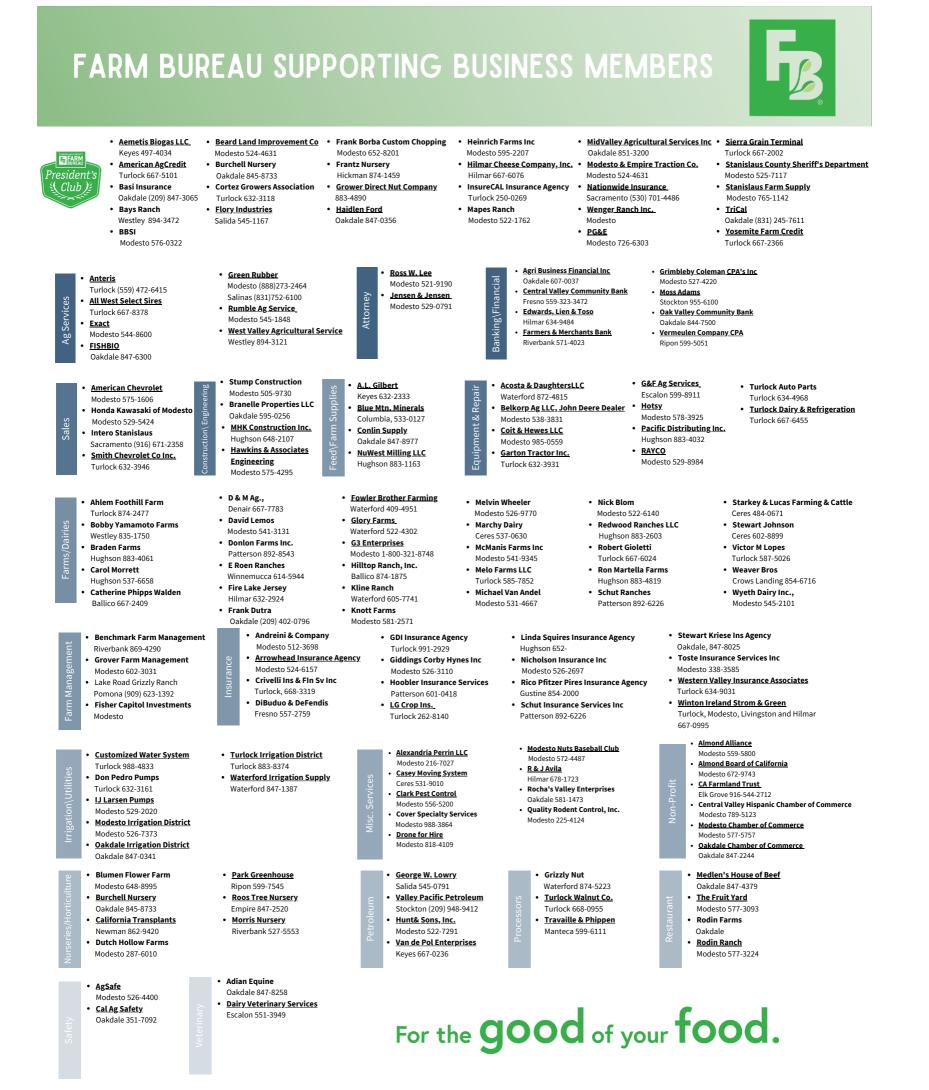


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Let's Get to Work

By: Zippy Duvall, AFBF President

I still remember the day my father announced to the family that he had bought several cows and that we were now in the dairy business. We milked those cows twice a day, and I can tell you we didn't always look forward to the work. But, every day after breakfast, my father said the same thing, "Let's go, boys. If we don't get it done before lunch, it will never get done." The lesson of those words has stuck with me many years later, and they apply to the task now facing Congress. The 2018 farm bill expired in September and lawmakers must take up consideration of a new farm bill, one of the most consequential pieces of legislation before the 118th Congress.

This legislation is simply too important to be kicked down the road. There are real consequences for farmers, ranchers and our food supply. A Congressional Research Service analysis revealed that 21 programs across 8 of the 12 titles of the farm bill do not have a continuing baseline and have expired. These range from parts of the farm safety net to research projects. Unless Congress acts, programs that help ensure the viability of farms and advancements in our industry will end. That's simply not okay.

You don't need to look very far to see how farm bill investments have paid off in protecting America's food supply. We know the impact of challenging times, such as economic downturns or natural disasters, firsthand in farm country. Important programs like Price Loss Coverage, Agricultural Risk Coverage and Dairy Margin Coverage ensure farmers can continue on, and this isn't just about farming either. It's about all Americans because the farm bill

See "WORK" on page 18













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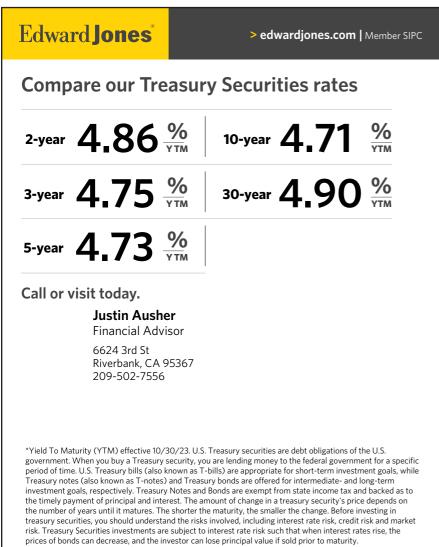
MJC Ag Ambassadors Attend Annual Conference

By: Anahy Yepez-Saenz & Joslyn Taylor Horton, MJC Students

Twelve Modesto Junior College Agriculture Ambassadors attended the annual Ag Ambassadors Conference hosted at California State University, Chico. The conference was held from October 6th through 8th and included various workshops, keynote speakers, alumni, and activities for college Ag Ambassadors from across California. Chico Ambassadors did a great job at not just putting on the conference, but making sure everyone felt included and welcomed.

The conference began with a job interview contest at the Chico State school farm. They continued their day with different groups of farm tours where Chico Ag Ambassadors were able to show, display, and promote the great facilities that their school farm has to offer. Industry tours followed shortly after, where our 12 Ag Ambassadors got the amazing opportunity to visit and tour the New Clairvaux Vineyard and Winery. Monk Luis toured our group and shared his knowledge of the history behind the vineyard, winery, and monastery. The Ambassadors were able to grasp knowledge on the land, what commodities they grow, the winemaking process, and some general information on monastery life – including a piece played on the antique organ. Once the tour was concluded, we headed back to the Chico farm pavilion for dinner and a social. Friday was a great day for learning and getting to know fellow ambassadors from different schools and regions across California.

Saturday morning began with a morning welcome at on Chico State's main campus. The morning started with an incredible opening keynote speaker, Shannon Douglass. Shannon is a director of the Glenn County Farm Bureau and a former chair of the CFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers State Committee. She was an in-



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spirational and grasping speaker because she had a personal story to tell that included so much of her experience in the agriculture industry. After our initial keynote speaker, we headed out to Glen Hall where we did three rotations of astonishing industry speakers and leaders. Bonnie Baxter was the Agriculture Education speaker, Cameron Smith presented on Plant and Soil Science, Sarah Candella was the Agriculture Business speaker, and Joyce Pexton was their Animal Science focused speaker. Concluding the industry speaker sessions, we learned from our fellow ambassadors with two workshops presented by various ambassador programs at other colleges. Our MJC Ambassadors were able to experience two workshops of their choice from either Chico State, Bakersfield College, or Fresno State. Following the college workshops, an alumni panel that consisted of three alumni, all from different universities, was open to any questions. The three alumni were Matthew Chiono from Chico State, Jacob Vasquez from Fresno State, and Joyce Pexton from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. They concluded our workshop day, but we all reunited later that evening for Awards and dinner, and ended the night with the "Light the Night" Dance. Our ambassadors had a great learning experience and were able to gain new connections and friendships from around the state.

Sunday morning started with the MJC Ambassadors touring the Chico State farm. Everyone then met at the school farm pavilion to begin the morning welcome. Our first session was presented by two ag education students from Cal Poly, SLO teaching about building your professional voice. Session two followed was presented by two Chico State ambassadors teaching about the Four Pillars of Leadership. We collectively came back to the Pavilion and listened to our Closing Keynote speaker, Dr. Brad Dodson. Dr. Dodson has been involved in Agricultural education for 43 years and recently retired from coordinating the teacher education program at Chico State. He was very insightful and was the perfect closing speaker. Ending remarks, followed by a group picture taken behind the pavilion.

After wrapping up this incredible 2023 Ag Ambassadors Conference, our ambassadors were able to take away knowledge, information, great ideas, and lifetime connections. Our 12 MJC Ambassadors will put their learning to great use by bringing back all of the knowledge and ideas they gathered from the multiple workshops, speakers, and ambassadors they met and sharing them with the rest of the agriculture department. We cherish the opportunity to attend this year's Ag Ambassador Conference and want to thank everyone at Chico State and the other colleges and universities that contributed to our learning experience.

AG is about IT as much as it is Dirt, Water, and Sunshine!

By:Dave Salzer, Solid Networks Inc., Salida CA, #IT4AG

Central Valley farms and ranches are no stranger to technology. We're awash in gadgets, apps, data, and dashboards of many kinds. There are new "solutions" to current and anticipated challenges rolling out every tradeshow we go to. It's overwhelming, but important. What we often overlook is the basic IT plumbing to assure the successful, ongoing utilization of all the complex activities that depend on the endpoints of that essential distribution and support system under the gadgets, apps, and dashboards. A house or business without power or water is in crisis quickly. Add connectivity and IT infrastructure to that short list of apex services, and you're up to date.

For many years we could rely on the phone company for service and the relative isolation of ag operations to overlook data security and internet performance. Evening "office work" to do basic reports and accounting was sufficient, but that's over. Continuously operating pumps and critical services to livestock and crop processing require uninterrupted data continuity for sophisticated sensors, controllers, displays and other monitoring/ notification systems. The intelligence, or compute that undergirds these systems, in particular the ever more prevalent cloud hosted services, depend on high performing data connections as they do power. Yet, that same isolation makes continuity, support, and now security that much more challenging.

Solutions are improving. Major Cloud hosted services providers (Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services, Google Cloud) continue to raise the performance and capacity available to platforms and applications requiring ever-increasing data size and processing performance to deliver the utility and user experience that are driving innovation in our industry at every level. Automation, robotics, telemetry, analytics, and other pillars of doing more faster with fewer assets and lower overall operational expense all pin their expectations on highly capable and reliable IT infrastructure, the "plumbing" in our ag houses.

It's imperative that our up-and-coming ag practitioners, growers and supporting businesses invest in their IT knowledge and infrastructure now in order to reap the benefits of the advancements taking place with the inputs that expect to be able to "plug in" to our farms, ranches, and facilities. Ag education programs, to be meaning-

ful for future operators, simply must integrate core information technology management sub-curricula. Large ag businesses and regional service support businesses must plan for an ag-fluent contingent of practitioners to assure that ag-clients' unique "dirty boot" requirements are met when dealing with information technology across all facets from data, connectivity, storage, security, to mobile and applications. It's a tall order and requires durable commitment to learning and loyalty to regional

community building.

California's Central Valley industry runs on water, power, and solid networks. When it comes to making sure our agribusiness has the necessary foundation for information management, Solid Networks Inc. is the longest tenure, premier IT managed services provider in our home region. For information and an assessment of your needs and opportunities, see www.solidnetworks.com



Wet year helps Colorado River, but Imperial farmers still conserving water

A consensus plan agreed to last spring by states in the Colorado River's Lower Basin should keep sufficient water in the river's key reservoirs for the next three years. Despite the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation reporting an improved water outlook after 2023 rains, implementing the plan will require farmers to voluntarily use much less water over the next three years. In California, most of the water savings will come from farmers in the Imperial Valley. "We're going to be aiming for unprecedented levels of conservation," said Tina Shields, water manager for the Imperial Irrigation District.

Market pressures may necessitate decline in winegrape acreage

The president of a leading California winegrape marketing association says growers in the state need to remove 50,000 acres of winegrapes to balance supply with decreasing market demand. Jeff Bitter, president of Fresno-based Allied Grape Growers, cited several shortand long-term factors that have combined to reduce demand for California wine. A longer-term trend is that younger adults are simply drinking less wine. "We have fragile demand, and we have a lot of headwinds," Bitter said. He said growers may be at risk of having an oversupply of winegrapes.

Sacramento summit focuses on water challenges, water-rights system

Some 150 water managers, government officials, farmers, environmentalists and others gathered in Sacramento last week to collaborate on some of the state's most challenging water issues. The Water Education Foundation annual water summit came after heavy rains boosted reservoirs in 2023, following three years of drought that brought water curtailment orders and calls for modernizing the water-rights system. Eric Oppenheimer of the California State Water Resources said the water-rights system "is a challenging system to manage" and requires better data collection.

Agriculture | Commercial Home | Auto | Health UVERTERN ALLEQ Lator App from UC Davis researchers can help farmers gather crop data

A new web application could help farmers get more out of drones used to gather data on farms. The When2Fly app-developed by University of California, Davis, researchers—aims to help drone operators on farms steer clear of glarelike areas called hotspots that can tamper with the data drones collect. Creators of the app—Alireza Pourreza, an associate professor, and postdoctoral researcher Hamid Jafarbiglu-said

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the technology can help growers allocate their resources more efficiently in managing water use or applying nitrogen.

Organic growers in quarantine region worry about citrus greening threat

As an organic citrus grower and packer in Ventura County, John Wise has long recognized the threat of the Asian citrus psyllid to his business and livelihood. The threat has become greater now that part of his region is under quarantine as state agricultural officials continue to find more residential citrus trees infected with huanglongbing, or citrus greening disease, a fatal bacterial infection that the insect can transmit. For organic citrus growers, there remain few effective treatment options approved for organic production to control the psyllid.

Rebounding harvests test agricultural trucking companies

Trucking companies that haul crops from fields and orchards to processing facilities and transport packaged produce to ports and retailers have been especially busy over the past several weeks. After three years of drought gave way to heavy rains, tomatoes, almonds, pistachios and winegrapes were expected to outpace last year's production, according to estimates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Tom Barcellos, a Tulare County farmer who runs a trucking business, said his fleet of trucks has been stretched thin by the San Joaquin Valley's record-setting pistachio harvest.

Rice Commission CEO champions partnerships to protect habitat

The CEO of the California Rice Commission says the sector is working to secure a farming future with less vulnerability to climate extremes. Addressing the California Association of Pest Control Advisors in Reno, Tim Johnson said rice producers "are starting to wrap our arms around... the impacts of climate variability." He said a key to sustaining California rice production may come from sustaining critical habitat. During the drought, \$10 million in grants were made available to rice farmers who provided some water to idled fields used by waterfowl on the Pacific Flyway.

How Bambi Porter Grew Gypsy Cowgirl Kitchen From the Bottom Up

By: Ella Pearman, Student Writer Editor: Anna Genasci

Bambi Porter's story of her small business, of growing and preserving her own food, provides an outlet of hope for other agricultural entrepreneurs.

Porter has lived in Oakdale, California since she was twenty-two-years old, and has discovered how to incorporate her passion for food into a career. Today she thrives successfully teaching classes and hosting a television show.

"My story, how I got to Gypsy Cowgirl Kitchen, was kind of an interesting one, I think. One that I didn't really like to share because I was embarrassed about it in the beginning," Porter said. "Then as I got a little bit more comfortable, I thought why am I not sharing this story!"

After being let go from a managing position at a coffee company, she found it as an opportunity to move on to bigger and brighter things. She wanted to pursue a career in the food and cooking industry.

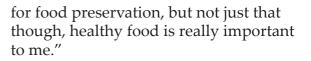
"I'm not one of those people who just lays down," she says, going on to add that she realized her true passion was in food, specifically growing, preserving, cooking, and of course, eating and enjoying her creations.

Discovering a Master Food Preserver program in 2012 was her beacon of light. Diving headfirst into the class she learned of the proper, and safe, ways of canning. "As I'm going through the Master Food Preserver program, I'm thinking, you know what, I could make a business out of this, and I could teach people how to do this."

From there Porter took the skills she had developed and created Gypsy Cowgirl Kitchen in 2013.

Porter described how in the beginning classes had one or two people, now her classes have grown to classes of 25. Porter teaches through Modesto Junior College Community Education and also privately under her own brand.

"I love it! I love sharing my passion



Porter, having two children of her own, and several grandchildren, understands the struggle of trying to eat healthy and also balance work and a homelife. However, through her cooking classes, she provides beginner meal planning and preparation that can serve as meals for the week.

"For those people who say they don't have the time, I get it, I totally do," she says. Explaining how she turned meal prepping into a family fun day on Sundays, everybody cooking together, and having it be a great way to include your kids or partner. Now Porter teaches her grandchildren about growing, cooking and trying new foods.

Porter is open to teaching private classes to all interested, and can adapt to most settings and events. Whether it's an evening with your girlfriends, a children's birthday party, a night out with coworkers, she offers classes in her home or can bring it to you.

> Porter hosts a TV series, Preserving America on the Wild Rides Network. She currently has a couple episodes up and looks forward to filming more. "I would love to get picked up by the Food Network. Quite honestly there isn't a show like it - it's usually just cooking." Porter added that she feels her show could be a unique addition to traditional cooking shows.

Entrepreneurs could look to Porter's story of success as inspiring, as she truly grew her own business based on her passion and what she loves to do.

"Even if you're sixty-one-years old like I am, and you have a big dream and you live in Oakdale, California, you can still accomplish it," she claims, "It's never too late to pursue your dreams, never!"



Gypsy Cowgirl Kitchen, Bambi Porter, loves cooking, preserving, canning and growing food. Porter greeted us with snacks, a beautiful garden and a smile.



Lawmakers Seek Engagement on Almond Tariff Increases in Turkey

By: Brian German Ag News Director / AgNet West

Nearly a dozen members of Congress are calling for action on almond tariff increases in Turkey. A recent decision has led Turkey to announce plans to raise the most-favored-nation duty on U.S. inshell and shelled almonds by 15 percent. In a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai, the lawmakers highlighted the negative impact such an action would have on American producers. "Such a hike offers other countries such as Australia, Spain, Uzbekistan, and Iran an unjustified competitive advantage over US almonds in the Turkish market," the lawmakers wrote.

Reports of an almond tariff increase would be on top of Turkey's existing 10 percent retaliatory tariff that was implemented in response to U.S. Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum. Turkey is one of the latest markets for U.S. almonds, the vast majority being grown in California. The state is responsible for 80 percent of global almond production. The group of lawmakers from California noted that the value of U.S. almond exports was more than \$4.6 billion last year.

"This tariff hike is not just a number; it's a direct hit to the livelihoods of thousands of American families," CEO and President of the Almond Alliance, Aubrey Bettencourt said in a statement. "We've worked hard to build a sustainable and competitive industry. It's disheartening to see our efforts undermined by unjust tariffs. We call upon our leaders to act swiftly and decisively."

The letter from lawmakers also points out that the U.S. Department of Agriculture expects Turkey to import a substantial amount of almonds in Marketing Year 2023/24. Despite growing domestic production of tree nuts in Turkey, the demand is anticipated to outweigh production levels. In the letter, the lawmakers highlight recent trade developments in India as hopefully serving as a model for discussions with Turkey. The U.S. is one of the leading suppliers of almonds for Turkey and the lawmakers are encouraging active engagement to ensure adequate access.



WE HIT OUR MEMBERSHIP GOAL! Because of you ...

- Stanislaus County Farm Bureau grew in Membership in 2023!
- We gained **150+** new members.
- 2nd largest membership in California.
- Your voice is one of **1,600** in Stanislaus County.
- Your membership results in *action!*
- *Multiple* comment letters submitted to legislatures and

regulatory groups on your behalf.

- Required trainings provided to our members for free!
- Keeping you *informed* on current and local issues.



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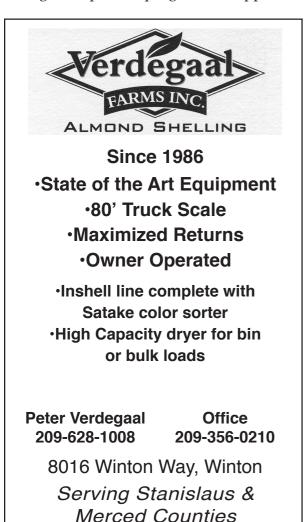
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helps ensure food continues to reach dinner tables across the country.

Americans spend the smallest percentage of their income on food compared to any other nation—a feat made possible in part through the farm bill. And nearly 80% of the funding for the farm bill is directed toward nutrition programs, playing a critical role in addressing food insecurity in the United States. The bottom line is that the farm bill doesn't only exist to benefit America's farm and ranch families. It's legislation that touches every home across our country.

I was pleased and encouraged to see Speaker Johnson share his goal of getting a farm bill done this December. If the House is successful, the Senate must do their work, and then both chambers will need to agree on a final bill. Yes, it's later than we hoped, but it's a much-needed start.

We also hear growing discussion around extending the now-expired farm bill. Yes, a short-term extension is important to avoid reverting to Depression-era policies and seeing 21 important programs disappear.



But lawmakers must also remain focused on passing a new farm bill.

Farmers and ranchers are practical people. We often experience delays from mother nature, product availability or equipment challenges. Sometimes we get the seed in the ground later than we planned, but we still plant the crop. Failing to do so would be catastrophic for our livelihoods. The work simply must be done.

Farmers and ranchers across the country showed up and weighed-in during farm bill listening sessions, town hall meetings, and congressional hearings to highlight the programs that need improvements. Agriculture committee members and staff in both chambers have been working hard to find consensus and develop legislative language on important changes. We cannot lose this momentum. Like my father would say, "If we don't do it now, it will never get done."

Seventy-three percent of Americans recognize there would be a significant impact on the country if the farm bill is not reauthorized. The public gets it. Now it's time for Congress to do the same.





AgEdventure Day 2023

Thank you to our presenters and volunteers!

On Thursday, October 19th, Stanislaus County Farm Bureau hosted our annual AgEdventure Day. AgEdventure Day is a day full of all things agriculture. All third grader students from Turlock School District join us at the Fairgrounds to learn about the importance of agriculture and where their food comes from. Roughly 1,200 third graders attend the event and hear from five different local farmers and agricultural companies to learn about different components of our industry.





Each student learns about different topics including the environment, nutrition, different commodities and a specialty component of the agricultural industry. The goal of the event is that students will leave the field trip with a positive outlook on agriculture, appreciate the importance of our industry and have a better idea of where their food comes from. AgEdventure Day would not be possible without each presenter volunteering their time and sharing their passion for the industry and teaching future generations about agriculture. Thank you to everyone who participated!



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