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THE LOCAL VOICE FOR OUR FARMERS, RANCHERS AND DAIRY PRODUCERS SINCE 2013

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VP Mike Pence Visits Central Valley Urging Ratification for USMCA

By: Jeff Flores,
Kern High School District Trustee

Recently, Vice President Pence demonstrated the Trump Administration's strong support for agriculture during a stop at Freitas and Sons Farms in Lemoore. Advocating for new and fairer trade agreement known as the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement



Preparing for the Pence address, Photo: Jeff Flores

(USMCA), Pence stated, "This state already exports more than $48 billion in goods and services to Canada and Mexico alone. Under USMCA, we know that number is going to grow. It's going to free up even more jobs and more opportunities in the city and on the farm, all across the San Joaquin Valley."

On a hot summer day on the farm surrounded by tractors and hay bales, the event started with a panel discussion with America First Policies senior policy advisor Curtis Ellis; Steve Cozzetto, President of Century Rubber in Bakersfield; Jeff Johnson, Vice President of Harris Ranch; and Joshua and Julie Freitas, event hosts with Freitas and Sons Farms. Panelists all made the case for modernizing NAFTA into a 21st century trade agreement. Themes included improving access and dairy outcomes and leveling the playing field for American agriculture and small business manufacturing.

The USMCA is a significant improvement to its predecessor, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), benefitting American patients, workers and businesses especially here in the Central Valley and Kern County.

According to the office of the United States Trade Representative, The United States, Mexico, and Canada concluded negotiations for a modernized and rebalanced trade agreement on September 30, 2018. The new USMCA will advance United States agricultural interests in the most important markets for American's farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses. This high-standard agreement opens new markets to expand United States food and agricultural exports and support food manufacturing and rural jobs.

The USMCA will create market access opportunities for United States exports to Canada of dairy, poultry, and eggs, and in exchange the United States will provide new access to Canada for dairy, peanuts, processed peanut products, and a limited amount of sugar and sugar containing products, to name a few.

Vice President Pence urged everyone to call upon Congress to ratify the USMCA. "We are not going to allow outdated trade deals to hurt American farmers or American workers anymore. That's why we need the USMCA."

Everyone should do their part to ensure Congress makes this trade deal a reality so our pillar of Kern's economy can continue to thrive for generations to come.



VP Pence addresses the crowd, Photo: Jeff Flores

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John Harris

Opinion

SB1 Will Create a Permitting Nightmare

By: John Harris, Chairman Harris Farms

In the California water world, nothing has the potential to cause more damage than a "comprehensive" bill on a fast track.

Such is the case with Senate Bill 1 (Atkins, Portantino, Sher) the"California Environmental, Public Health, and Workers Defense Act of 2019."

This is a dangerous reaction – some might say overreaction – to perceived roll backs by the Trump Administration of federal standards for endangered species, air quality and worker safety.

If the federal government weakens certain standards, SB1 would have state agencies immediately adopt the "baseline" standards that were in place on Jan. 19, 2017 (the day before Trump took office).

SB1 has passed the Senate, sailed through two Assembly committees and is awaiting a hearing in the Assembly Appropriations Committee after the Legislature comes back from summer break August 12.

The endangered species portion of this bill, in particular, could devastate ongoing federal-state negotiations over Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta operations using new scientific studies rather than decades old data.

Proponents have said SB1 will keep Trump from delivering more water to farms thereby harming endangered fish.

That sentiment is exactly what makes SB1 so dangerous.

It relies on the worn-out trope that California's

Please turn to page 10

The Rosedale Colony: Land Speculation, English Gentry And Water Rights

By Mike McCoy, Kern County Museum

If you drive out Highway 158 west from Bakersfield, you will see a line of ancient palm trees … This is the remaining visible evidence of a large agricultural enterprise conceived in 1890 as the "Rosedale Colony." It is one of the more interesting tales in Kern Ag history.

When the Kern County Land Company was incorporated in 1890 by James Haggin and brother- in- law Lloyd Tevis, the new corporation found itself land rich and cash poor. Taking the lead from other subdivision ventures, tracts of arable land in Western Kern County began to be marketed in 20 acre lots as the 12,000 acre Rosedale Colony. The schemewas designed to sell portions of raw land to outside investors for twenty to sixty dollars per acre and most of the purchase could be financed at seven percent. Manager S.W. Ferguson and land agents in London, Glasgow, New York and Chicago used promotional literature and photography to lead more than 250 mostly British investors to move to Kern County to try their hand at farming.

California was already seeing an agricultural-boom after the gold fields were depleted and farming was seen as the next avenue to riches with alfalfa, cotton, nut crops and fruit. Ferguson's brochures described Kern County to English investors as being "the largest agricultural county in the San Joaquin Valley, the largest irrigation system in America, and is the home of the peach, the French prune, pear and raisin grape." His sales pitch also claimed that "planting and harvesting take place every month of the year," and there were no "trees, rocks, hills or stumps upon the land." He finished with the claim that " failure of crops is unknown"… "Kern County fruits take the first prize at the State Fair" and "Land can be made to pay for itself in two years." He also used photography for the first time in real estate advertising.



Palm Trees Created a Dramatic Entrance to the Colony, Photo: KC Museum

This opportunity to invest in agriculture also connected with the British phenomenon of the "remittance man." Due to British laws where inheritances went to the eldest son, subsequent male offspring were forced to look elsewhere. Some found their way to the clergy, some to the military but many were shipped off to agricultural concerns in Australia, Canada and the American West. Many of these gentlemen, who received small monthly payments (remittances) from their family, were sent off for bad behavior. As described by Mark Twain in Following the Equator " dissipated ne'er-do-wells belonging to important families in England and Canada … the ne'er-do-well was sent abroad to get him out of the way." Contemporary reports from Kern County often referred to the Rosedale colonists as being part of this sector of second born British gentry.



St. Johns Episcopal Church it now resides at the KC Museum, Photo: KC Museum

At first S. W. Ferguson's scheme worked. Would be farmers from Great Britain and other parts of the United States, moved to Kern County and began to cultivate their 20 acre lots. As reported by Wallace M. Morgan in his History of Kern County,"extensive advertising of the Rosedale lands, the arrival of colonists, and the expectation of the people of Bakersfield gave the town its next boom. Building, mostly of a light character, went forward with feverish intensity." Roads were built, fences put up, crops were planted and small canals were dug.

The local newspapers reported on the colorful new English additions to Kern County withexaggerated reports of high tea, fox hunts, and formal dinners. The English farmers expected to live their old lives as entitled gentry and reportedly promoted music, picnics and theater. One of the largest land sales in 19th century Kern County was to the Earl of Gosford in modern day southwest Bakersfield. He planted pears, figs, grapes and raisin grapes but was very disappointed in the result. He allegedly tried to have Manager Ferguson arrested in London.

The one wild card in the Rosedale Colony scheme, familiar to modern California farmers, was the ability to secure water rights and irrigation. Ferguson's promotional brochures touted that "water for irrigation is in great abundance and very cheap" … "irrigating canals are already constructed to bring water to each 20 acre lot in the colony." Ferguson also shared that artesian wells were being developed that "water can be obtained at moderate depths of 45 to 75 feet. The water is inexhaustible in quantity, as it is independent of the rain." Of course this was highly exaggerated and often there were water shortages or lack of canal access for the colonists. (Lower Kern River Country by Wm. Harland Boyd)

On February 10, 1893, the Kern River broke its levies flooding the Northern part of Bakersfield. Water was afoot deep at 19th and Eye Streets. Initially this helped the colonists with their perpetual water shortages but the crops still failed in the hard times of 1893 and 1894. The Kern County Land Company finally put a stop to the colonization scheme, recalled its English agents, dismissed Samuel W. Ferguson and appointed Henry Jastro to manage its properties. The small colony lots were soon swallowed up by default and went to serious farmers who successfully planted the right crops and developed irrigation. The English gentry wandered away from Kern County to the next boom town while waiting for their monthly check to hopefully arrive at the post office. And the name Rosedale remained behind.



Brochure Marketing the Rosedale Colony, Photo: KC Museum

Corrections and Mistakes

BY VALLEY AG VOICE STAFF

The Valley Ag Voice is brought to you by a team of many human beings, and on occasion we make mistakes. There were a few mistakes in the June edition of the paper that need to be addressed. In the article Isabella Dam Release Surges as Kern River Inflow to Lake Isabella Hits Seasonal High, we had a picture of the Lake Isabella Dam. Unfortunately, dam was misspelled by adding an "n" after the m—a truly regrettable error on our part.

Second, a picture of the river on the same article had an inaccurate caption. It should have read: PG&E Powerhouse as the Kern River opens to the Valley Floor. Last, due to an editing error the first sentence of the second paragraph was changed. This, unfortunately, may have miscommunicated the intent of the article. The sentence should have read: "Due to the highly unusual May 2019 weather conditions, which brought cooler, stormy weather and rain and snow to the Kern River Basin in amounts four times greater than normal, snowpack at the very highest elevation in the Kern remained virtually frozen."

Should any reader spot a correction, feel free to email us at info@valleyagvoice.com and we will try to make it right.

VALLEY AG VOICE

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CCGGA Tours Tulare Lakebottom Area With DPR Director Val Dolcini

Provided by California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association

The California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association (CCGGA) along with other agricultural associations had the unique opportunity to tour the Tulare Lakebottom area with Val Dolcini. Dolcini is the current Acting Director of the California Department Pesticide Regulation as well as the Deputy Secretary for Agriculture at the California Environmental Protection Agency. The tour included critical discussions surrounding crop protection tools, primarily the use of chlorpyrifos on cotton and possible alternative solutions once it is no longer able to be used. On part of the tour, Acting Director Dolcini and Director of Regulatory Affairs, Jodi Devaurs were able to join others in a helicopter tour of the J.G. Boswell ranches. During this segment of the tour Acting Director Dolcini was able to get a visual as to why the current 40 and 80 acre application limits for chlorpyrifos are simply not feasible or sustainable in an integrated pest management system. In addition, the group was able to discuss the importance of aerial application along with the science, technology and testing that is put into place to ensure aerial applications are done in the safest and most responsible manner to minimize drift. Thank you to Lakeland Dusters Aviation, J.G. Boswell Company as well as Hronis Ranch for hosting the tour. Other agricultural associations that participated in today's tour were Western Agricultural Processors Association, California Agricultural Aircraft Association, Western Plant Health Association and the California Fresh Fruit Association. The Association has been heavily engaged with Acting Director Dolcini, as well as with CDPR and CalEPA, on the many issues surrounding crop protection tools and cotton, today's tour was an excellent opportunity to back up the numerous conversations that had been had and will serve as an important tool as we move forward in discussions.

For more information on the Ca Cotton Industry, please visit our website at www.ccgga.org



L-R: Harold Graebe – JG Boswell, Doug Thiel – CAAA, Beau Howard – JG Boswell, Jodi Devaurs – CCGGA, Jimmy Hook – Kings County, Val Dolcini – CDPR/CalEPA. Photo: California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association

USDA Forecasts California Almond Crop Down 3.5 Percent

Article Provided by the Almond Board of California

MODESTO, Calif. – The California Almond Objective Measurement Report, published today by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service - Pacific Regional Office (NASS/PRO), estimates that the 2019 crop will be 2.20 billion pounds, down 3.5% from the 2018 crop production of 2.28 billion pounds. The California Almond Objective Measurement Report is the official industry crop estimate.



Whole Natural Almonds. Photo: Almond Board of California

This year's Objective Report projects an almond crop down 12% from the May 2019 California Almond Subjective Forecast of 2.5 billion pounds. The Objective Report collects data later in the growing season, closer to harvest, and is based on an actual count of nuts on the trees versus phone interviews with farmers, the method used for the Subjective Forecast.

According to the Objective Report, the average nut set per tree is 4,667, down 17.8% from the 2018 almond crop. The Nonpareil average nut set per tree is 4,429, down 10.1% from last year's set. The average kernel weight for all varieties sampled was 1.54 grams, unchanged from the 2018 average weight.

"While the industry experienced less than ideal weather conditions this spring, California remains the best place in the world to grow almonds," said Holly A. King, Kern County almond farmer and Chair of the Almond Board of California (ABC) Board of Directors. "As leaders in California agriculture and producers of 82 percent of the world's almonds, we have made a public commitment to grow almonds in better, safer and healthier ways, protecting our communities and the environment. We feel a great sense of obligation to responsibly produce a healthy food accessible to people around the world."

Last year, the Almond Board of California's Board of Directors announced the Almond Orchard 2025 Goals to focus on areas that define the California almond industry's journey towards continuous improvement and commitment to sustainability.

The amount of almond coproducts – hulls, shells and woody biomass – correlates with crop size, and the California almond industry is more committed than ever to finding new uses for these valuable products. In fact, achieving zero waste in California almond orchards by putting everything the industry grows to optimal use is one of the four goals established by the Board of Directors. The Almond Board is committed to finding high-value uses for almond coproducts that support California by creating a genuine bioeconomy where every coproduct is an input for another valuable product. ABC will continue to fund research to investigate how components of almond hulls and shells can be transformed to provide increased value for farmers as well as other industries such as food, pharmaceuticals and automotive.

"California almond farmers produce the vast majority of the world's almonds, and for every pound of kernels there are nearly three pounds of hulls and shells. With size comes great responsibility and the resources to continue to meet steadily growing demand for almonds and fund research into ways to grow almonds more sustainably," said Richard Waycott, ABC president and CEO. "Our vision is to make life better by what we grow and how we grow."

Since 1973, almond farmers and processors have invested $80 million in research through the Almond Board. These funds have propelled the industry to make significant advancements in the areas of water, nutrient management, air quality, honey bee health and more, increasing farming efficiencies while minimizing environmental impacts.



Robust Growth in Organics Predicted At Organic Produce Summit

Provided by Matt Seely, Organic Produce Network

An upbeat growth outlook for organic fresh produce was one of the big headlines coming out of the fourth annual Organic Produce Summit held last week in Monterey, California, July 10 -11. Over 1,600 were in attendance, including nearly 300 retailers and 148 exhibitors.



Chef Dan Barber addresses the Summit, Photo: Organic Produce Network

Organizers say the summit itself continues to enjoy growth, with the exhibition sold out. The two-day program included field tours, educational seminars, a pair of keynote presentations and a retail roundtable.

In addition to networking opportunities, the educational sessions focused on international organic produce trends, the continued growth of organic meals at retail, how to deal with the problem of food waste, and a deep data dive into what motivates a consumer to buy organic.

"We've literally doubled the size of the event in four short years," said Susan Canales, OPS President. Canales credits the summit's success to bringing major players together and looking at trends from all sides. "We are vertically integrated and look at the issues from the ground up. Always looking at ways to reach the consumer and make organic accessible to everyone," she said.

Laura Batcha, Executive Director of the Organic Trade Association, says their research shows there is great opportunity for growth by moving so called "light" consumers who buy organic products some of the time into "heavy" users who buy organic most of the time. "If you tell your story that will help you hold your price in the marketplace," she said. "Consumers understand it is not easy to be organic and growers and retailers need to reinforce that message."

The keynote speakers echoed that sentiment from different perspectives. Activist Robyn O'Brien campaigns against genetically modified organisms and other chemical additives affecting our foods, and sees organic as the only healthy choice. Chef and author, Dan Barber said he loves organic because it tastes good and its healthy. "Deliciousness and nutrient density are the same thing," he says.



Robyn O'Brien Organic Food Advocate addresses the Summit, Photo: Organic Produce Network

Telling that story of health and taste is, according to top retailers, the challenge and key to continued growth. Vic Savanello, Vice President of Produce for The Fresh Market, says he sends a message to his customers by the decisions he makes. "Everything is an organic section in my store. Its fully integrated. I carry organic over conventional whenever it is an option and lately it's been option in almost every commodity."

Savanello was joined by Don Barnett, Chief Operating Officer for Sun Basket and Greg Corrigan, Senior Director of Produce and Floral for Raley's for a Retailer Roundtable moderated by Tonya Antle, Co-founder of the Organic Produce Network. All three predicted continued growth in the organic sector, and described how consumers buy will continue to evolve, from organic meals at retails to online sales. Sun Basket's Don Barnett said, "We are still in the early to middle stages of online disruption in the food industry. Maybe four to five percent today is bought online, that's going to continue to grow and probably 15 to 20 years from now we'll see 20 to 30 percent bought online."

Raley's Corrigan also sees big opportunities ahead with on-line shopping. "We're seeing phenomenal growth in online. Whether its click and collect or delivery. We're latching on to that just like everyone else," he said.

So, as the industry continues to evolve, how consumers shop will change as well, but chef Dan Barber encouraged all of those at the summit to remember their roots. "Organic was the original disruptor and as it becomes more mainstream, we ought not to lose that energy and enthusiasm. We should dig deeper into the themes and ideas that will change the world, one seed at a time."





Retailer Roundtable Discussion, Photo: Organic Produce Network



Field Tours were one of the activities at the Summit, Photo: Organic Produce Network



Rudy Salas, Assembly Member

State Budget Delivers Big for the Central Valley

By: Rudy Salas, Assembly Member

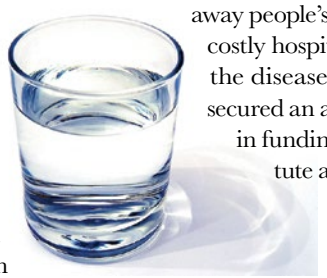
Every year, the state budget is one of the most important items that my colleagues and I work on. In California, a state with the fifth largest economy in the world, there are a lot of budget items and issues that we debate. As a lifelong resident of the Central Valley, it is always my top priority during these discussions to fight to make sure that the Valley gets its fair share of state funding and resources. This year, I was proud to help deliver a balanced and on-time budget with some major wins for families in the Central Valley.

Throughout the many items included in this year's budget, I am particularly proud of our commitment to agriculture, clean drinking water, and combating valley fever. The agricultural industry is vital to the strength of California's economy and the well-being of working families in the Valley. This year's budget included some important investments in programs that incentivize farmers and combat dangerous pests.

I was pleased to see that funding for the Healthy Soils more than quadrupled from last year's $5 million dollarsto a total of $28 million dollars in this year's budget. This program provides financial assistance to farmers who implement projects that improve soil health and sequester carbon. With last year's funding from the 2018-19 budget, four farms in my district received money for projects including farms in Hanford and Delano. As the next round of applications are submitted, I will continue advocating for Valley farmers to benefit from this important program.

Our state continues to invest millions in technologies to partner with farmers in looking toward the future. This year, the state budget included $34 million for dairy digester projects that will capture methane from manure that is then converted into clean and renewable fuel. In the past few years, I have actively supported the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars for dairy digester projects that will help provide new sources of clean transportation fuel while reducing pollution and improving air quality. The state has also invested hundreds of millions of dollars from the cap-and-trade program into the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emissions Reductions (FARMER) Program to incentivize farmers to purchase newer, cleaner agricultural equipment. The vast majority of the funding for both of these programs gets invested right here in the Central Valley to help our farmers and I will continue to fight for those programs to be adequately funded.

Another urgent issue that requires California's immediate attention is the invasion of the Citrus Pest. These insects have the potential to devastate the entire California citrus industry resulting in the loss of billions of dollars and thousands of jobs. I was proud to support an ongoing investment of $5 million dollars in this year's budget to build a dedicated Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division within the California Department of Food and Agriculture to enhance citrus pest detection, suppression and eradication throughout the state.



Safe and clean drinking water remains a top priority. This year's budget made substantial investments in addressing water challenges with the creation of the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water fund which will provide $100 million dollars per year to provide communities with the resources to deliver clean drinking water to their residents. We were also able to secure specific funding for the Central Valley with $12.5 million for safe drinking water and $2.5 million to bring rural communities like Arvin into compliance with safe drinking water standards.

These investments are critical to improving the lives of Valley residents who suffer disproportionately from issues like unsafe drinking water. Another difficulty that faces residents in the Central Valley is valley fever. This debilitating sickness is caused by a fungus which becomes airborne when soil is disturbed. Thousands of families are affected by valley fever every year. The devastating effects of the disease can take away people's ability to work resulting in costly hospital bills. In the worst cases, the disease can be fatal. This year, I secured an additional $2 million dollars in funding for the Valley Fever Institute at the Kern Medical Center to research and treat valley fever. With this funding, we will move one step closer to raising awareness, discovering a cure and ridding the Central Valley of this terrible disease.

This state budget reinforces California's commitment to supporting working families by investing in the Central Valley. But we can and must do more. I will continue to fight to ensure that our farmers and families get the resources they need and look forward to advocating for continued investments in agriculture, clean water, and finding a cure for valley fever.

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Giants Fans Can Find Solace in California, U.S. Agriculture's MVP in Sales

USDA MEDIA BLOG Posted by Gary Keough, Director, NASS Pacific Region in Research and Science

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It might not be the Giants' year in baseball, but in U.S. agriculture, California is clearly the MVP in sales. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, California's 70,521 farms ranked No. 1 in agricultural sales with $45.2 billion; this accounted for nearly 12 percent of the U.S. total and was over $16 billion more than the No. 2 state. In addition, Fresno, Tulare, Monterey, Kern, Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin Counties led all U.S. counties in sales. In fact, Fresno County's agricultural sales were greater than 25 states.



Artichokes. Photo: USDA

The Golden State's commodity roster ranges widely from grapes to poinsettias to mozzarella. In 2017, California led the nation in crop sales ($33.4 billion) by toping all other states in sales of fruits, nuts, and berries ($19.7 billion); vegetables ($8.2 billion); nursery, greenhouse, and floriculture production ($2.9 billion); and other crops and hay sales ($1.0 billion). California also ranked third in cotton sales ($0.5 billion).

California ranked fifth in the nation for livestock and poultry sales ($11.8 billion). California's the No. 1 milk producer in the country ($6.5 billion); it is also a top ten producer of: cattle and calves ($3.1 billion); poultry and eggs ($1.9 billion); aquaculture ($105.6 million); sheep, goats, wool, and mohair ($86.9 million); and other animals and animal products ($76.6 million), and equine ($48.3 million).



California is the primary producer of American grown flowers with a variety of types grown by farmers throughout the state. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the Golden State led the nation in floriculture sales at $2.9 billion. Photo: USDA

Looking for that little known statistic to plug into your own sabermetrics of agriculture? California is the top state for using renewable energy producing systems in agriculture with 14,552 farms. Solar is the state's most common renewable energy producing system on farms and ranches. For more Census statistics about this heavy-hitter in agriculture, check out the California state and county profiles and congressional district rankings and profiles on the NASS website.

California Farm Income and Expenses, 2012 and 2017 ($ millions)

	2012	2017	% change
Value of ag products sold	42,627	45,154	+6
Government payments	147	128	-13
Farm-related income	1,205	1,404	+17
Production expenses	35,456	37,776	+7
Net income	8,523	8,910	+5
Per farm average net income (dollars)	$109,474	$126,351	+15

CA
USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service www.nass.usda.gov 2017 CENSUS of AGRICULTURE

While California's value of agricultural products sold increased 6 percent from the last Ag Census, so did production expenses in the Golden State. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, agricultural production expenses increased 7 percent from 2012 to 2017. Photo: USDA

Young Farmers and Ranchers Promote Agriculture and Community at Local Farmers Market

By: Valley Ag Staff

Growing strong and healthy communities is about more than just providing healthy food options; its about giving back to support and uplift others. That was the very goal of the Kern County Young Farmers and Rancher's 6thAnnual Farmers Market held on July 11th, 2019.

Allie Cushnyr, the Vice President for the Young Farmers and Ranchers, said she has been attending the event since 2015. "I first attended the event in 2015. Being in agriculture, I wanted to give back to the community and network with other young professionals in the agriculture community as well. The market is what involved me in Young Farmers and Ranchers."

According to Cushnyr, all the fruits, vegetables, nuts, and plants were donated by local growers. The proceeds of the event go to support the Boys and Girls Club of Lamont. The event in 2015 supported a garden for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Kern County in East Bakersfield. This year our goal is to raise enough money to build a garden bed for the kids at the Boys and Girls Club Lamont location. Last year the market raised over $6,000, and this year the goal is to raise $8,000.

The CSUB Agriculture Club came out in force to help support the Farmers Market. According to Adrian Sunita, President of the Club, nearly have of the club was in attendance. "Support from the local growers is the most notable aspect of the day. Local growers made it happen."

Cushnyr added, "The whole community helps to make this event a success. Without the community supporting the event and buying local produce we wouldn't be able to support the efforts of the Lamont Boys and Girls Club."

To learn more about Kern County Young Farmers and Ranchers you can find them on Facebook or visit their website at kerncfb.com/programs/young-farmers-ranchers/





Farmers Market

Photos provide by: Valley Ag Voice Staff

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The Cattleman's Corner

Opinion

Trust the Experts?

By: Austin Snedden

Those of us who are producers in the agriculture industry are blessed to have some of the best colleagues in the world. In general, we are a hardworking, humble, and honest bunch who have no problem making a deal on a handshake or trusting someone's intentions or motives. Many of us have been humbled by weather or markets, or just flat out mistakes. There are usually no corners to cut in farming or ranching, and that makes most of us that stick with it pretty hardworking and honest. Farmers and ranchers have generational knowledge of their trade that is unmatched in any other industry. While not exclusive to agriculture, these attributes are all positive and have made some folks lend the term "salt of the earth"to us in agriculture. The only downside to these outstanding traits is that many folks who are this honest and forthright assume others are the same way. As a result, they can fall victim to the motives of people with an alternative agenda.

We all know that the best hay isn't baled by the guy who needs a probe to tell him when to stop baling; just as we know the best cattle aren't picked by a stock show judge or EPDs. Yet, all the experts and academia would tell us that is the best way to make hay or cattle. The agriculture industry is definitely not averse to innovation—from high tech GPS-guided farm equipment, to embryo transfer and sexed semen in cattle. Even so, the time-honored generational knowledge of knowing the right conditions for making hay and knowing good cattle is invaluable, even if all aspects can be measured or documented. I would encourage people to be open to innovation, but also know the motive and balance it takes against time-proven performance. Be open to experts, but try to discern their motives, and realize that you are most likely an expert and balance that against your trial and error—and the trial and error of generations gone by.

In the cattle industry we got hoodwinked by "experts"that many in on our industry thought had our best intentions in hand. In 1986, the experts told cattlemen that we needed to start our own self-help program, and so a dollar per head checkoff was passed through Congress stating that producers would have to pay upon every sale. In 1996, the experts of the then National Cattlemen's Association (NCA) used fear of lost market share to chicken and pork to convince members to vote on consolidating the association with the packing industry (of which the primary players also processed chicken and pork) to supposedly increase leverage. As a 14 year old kid at that convention in San Antonio with my grandparents, I didn't know much, but I knew there were some industry wide issues where this would be beneficial.However, I also knew that cattle producers were losing their singular voice. The merger passed by an overwhelming majority, (774 out of 903) and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) was born. The experts and academia pointed to this being progress and the right thing to do.There were only a few sage folks who had looked at history that gave cautionary advice as to what this could become.



Photo: R CALF USA

Now you had the group of producers that wanted to sell their product for the highest they could, represented by the same group that wanted to buy that same product for the lowest they could, not a match made in heaven, but a match made by a lot of trusting, honest people who respected the "experts." One voluntary group like this alone does not wreak havoc on an industry, but one group (NCBA) that becomes the primary contractor of the mandatory Checkoff dollars can speak with a loud voice—a loud voice that has been the mouthpiece of the packing industry and meat importers. Less than 5% of U.S. cattle producers are members of the NCBA, yet all of us pay into the checkoff which makes up to 75% of the NCBA annual budget.

The largest producer-only cattlemen's group, R-CALF, started in 1998. Since then it has been very effective, despite R-CALF's funding only coming from voluntary dues and contributions. However, they lack the booming voice and influence exerted by the NCBA, which is funded by the compulsory Checkoff we all pay. The U.S. cattle industry saw a brief moment of hope when Congress imposed country of origin labeling (COOL) for beef from 2008 to 2015, despite the protestation of the NCBA. Domestic cattle prices rose, and imported cattle and beef diminished as consumers spoke with their wallets. During this time of higher prices, the NCBA and Check-off took credit for these premiums while at the same time working to eliminate COOL in Congress. NCBA lobbied with a loud voice funded by the mandatory Check-off against COOL, and Congress,assuming that NCBA spoke for the over 95% of producers that are not NCBA members, repealed it. Subsequently, since the elimination of COOL, cattle prices have flat lined.Meanwhile, packer margins are at all-time highs, retail beef prices remain near record highs, and imports of cattle and beef are at all-time highs. To add insult to an already injured industry, NCBA offered no complaint to USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) rules that now allow a steer to be imported today, processed tomorrow, and then labeled "product of U.S.A." According to USDA data, since the beginning of the "self-help"mandatory Beef Checkoff in 1986, and the subsequent merger of NCA/NCBA merger in 1996, the U.S. cattle industry has lost over 400,000 beef producers, and over 25 million head of beef cows. While not completely due to NCBA and the Checkoff, the reduced amount of people ranching today is partly due to trusting the "experts"and academia in 1986 and 1996, and giving up the singular voice of the U.S. cattlemen in favor of what would later become the voice of generic international beef.

The first national cattlemen's convention was held in 1898 and was called the National Stock Growers Convention. The primary issues on the table were packer concentration, and public lands ranching. 120 years later and the issues are still the same. Sure, our day to day operations look very different, and we have taken advantage of a lot of progress in technology, but packer concentration and public lands are still our most compelling issues. We trusted the "experts"in 1986 and 1996 and are right back to the issues that are ancestors faced in 1898. The future is not bleak for U.S. cattle producers despite what I just said; we are progressive and efficient in our practices, not to mention a resourceful gritty bunch who have the generational knowledge and experience to keep going. I would encourage you, before you jump in with what the "experts"say, trust your instincts, lean on your generational knowledge, and realize the "expert"may not be as humble as you are.



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Marcia Wolfe

Bakersfield's Special Treasure: The Kern River

By: Marcia Wolfe
Valley Ag Voice

The headwaters of the Kern River originate from snowmelt that flows into Lake South America on high rocky alpine slopesnorth and west of Mount Whitney. It wends its way south through the western side of the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains to Kernville. It fills Isabella Lake and enters the Kern River Canyon, winding and cutting its way through and roaring around the rocks to the southern floor of the San Joaquin Valley. As the foothills open, the river channel loosens up and meanders alternatively north and south, with the channel concomitantly widening compared to its width in the canyon. Before being channelized with dikes to protect the city and farmlands from flooding, numerous small sloughs skirted off the river channel, to return. The river meandered into Kern and Buena Vista Lakesthrough multiple small channels and sloughs. There the waters turned north to run through the edges of oil fields on the west side of the valley floor, and then Buena Vista Slough through a sand ridge into Tulare Lake, north through what is now the Tule Elk Reserve. Eventually, waters of the Tule River and other creeks from the western side of the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains also drained into the lake. From there it charged further northward all the way through Tule swamps and eventually into the Fresno Slough, from which it finally entered the San Joaquin River. It was quite a trek. About 165 miles from Mount Whitney and down the canyon to Bakersfield, and then more than another 159 miles to Fresno Slough and the San Joaquin River. A map made by explorers in 1850, shows the original Kern River drainage.

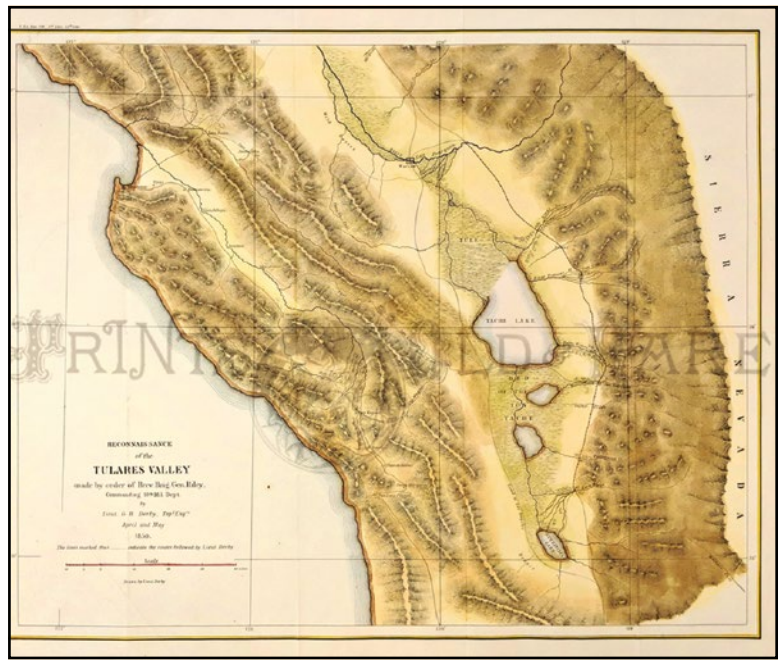

Kern River, Photo: Marica Wolfe


Red winged blackbird on Kern River, Photo Marica Wolfe

Of course, today the River no longer runs natural and wild its entire original distance. Of its entire channel length, a relatively small portion of the Kern River passes through Bakersfield. However, in spite of that, the benefits that are bestowed upon us from the river's presence are immeasurable! They range from complicated hydrological values for surface water and alluvial and critical deep groundwater aquifer recharge,both the human and financial values of the agricultural production of foods like carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, fruits, nuts and spices like garlic and onions, and fibers, such as cotton and wool, to the multitude of simple, yet positive and relaxing,psychological benefits of its surrounding beauty. The ever-changing colors during the day and evening sunset, the smell of spring, the different smell of fall, the quiet trickle and rush of water passing across willow branches hanging in the water, the silence when there is no flow, the different species of birds singing and calling are constantly evolving during each day and the seasons.

The river channel and associated riparian cattail and wetland habitats and the upland habitats of willow trees, cottonwoods, sedges and grasses alongside the river floodplains and adjacent uplands create the only contiguous wildlife movement and habitat corridor across the San Joaquin Valley south of Fresno, over 125 miles to the north. The values of the river corridor to all wildlife, both resident species who live in its habitats and migratory species who rest and forage on their trips north and south is invaluable. The river habitats are also used by endangered species like the San Joaquin kit fox, the Nelsons or San Joaquin antelope squirrel, eagles and hawks and other California species of concern, like the western spadefoot toad,and other species too numerous to list here. We volunteer environmental education for underprivileged schools in small classes alongside the Kern River at the Panorama Preserve. When our lives depend upon a healthy environment, it's almost frightening to realize how little our children seem know orare aware of about the values of the environment, the outdoors and its care and conservation today!

Rafting, canoeing, swimming, snorkeling and fishing are also activities enabled by the river when there is water. But water is not needed for all activities. There is always eating lunch, relaxing, talking with friends or simply reading a book (or your phone these days) in the shade of a tree.



1850 Map of Kern River in the Valley Floor, Provided by Marica Wolfe

The bike trail along the river goes from Hart Park to Enos Lane! It's 3 times as long as the bike trail along the San Joaquin River in Fresno! Beginning bikers, exercisers, families, friends, and those practicing for marathons ride the trail everyday. The Kern River Parkway includes the stretch of the river and city lands from Manor Drive to the Stockdale Highway Bridge. Plans are underway to extend the Parkway Plan to include the area east around Lake Ming. The Kern River Parkway Foundation and others also are pursuing the potential to include the county lands in the Kern River Parkway from the Stockdale Bridge to the west to at least Enos Lane, or maybe Buena Vista Lake. The precise ending point is still under study. The Parkway also includes other recreational areas, such as picnic sites, fishing sites, exercise areas and volleyball areas.

Part of the purpose of the Parkway Plan is to enhance the river corridor habitats, with thousands of new trees having already been planted by dozens of volunteers. Since the drought, with the death of many of the cottonwood trees from the resulting drop in groundwater, a lot more trees need to be planted, and proper maintenance needs to be conducted, which costs money. Upland shrubs more resistant to changes in groundwater table also could be planted on the secondary floodplains.But leave the dead trees as even they have wildlife value for cover and nesting. They also help new plants and trees germinate and become established. Boy Scouts and other volunteers have made and installed wood duck houses and bat houses along the river corridor. A million (figuratively speaking) opportunities to help enhance and improve the riverand its habitats exist on all fronts.

Opportunities for disseminating interpretive information are being evaluated. This could include nature trails, or plaques on stones with natural history, habitat and wildlife information. The river brings us so many benefits, I have only begun to brush the surface as they are so numerous. But everyone needs to get on the band wagon to help take care of the river and its environment. If you have a picnic, and carry things in, carry them out. When everyone takes care of their own debris, maintenance costs less. Use a trash can; don't throw your garbage on the ground! It's too simple. At the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia, "a carry it in/carry it out" campaign resulted in a spectacular 90% decrease in solid waste. Just imagine how much money that could save us. That money could be spent on other improvements, interpretive naturalists, or habitat enhancements and restoration of trees, shrubs and native wildflowers and grasses, benches along the trail and so many other things.

So, help take care of our Kern River, its treasures are toonumerous to count and too valuable to discount.



Proposed Changes to Agricultural Visa Program Shows Promise

Press Release Provided by the California Farm Bureau Federation

As farmers in California and elsewhere around the country try to cope with chronic employee shortages, the president of the California Farm Bureau Federation said administrative changes to the current H-2A agricultural visa program could be one element of a solution, while Congress continues to work on broader legislation.



Tomato Harvester, Photo: California Farm Bureau Federation

The U.S. Department of Labor announced plans to modernize and improve the existing H-2A agricultural visa program, which allows people from certain countries to enter the United States temporarily for on-farm jobs.

"We're encouraged by the administration's efforts to improve the H-2A system," CFBF President Jamie Johansson said. "We continue to analyze the full proposal, but our initial reading shows that it would streamline certain aspects of the program and expand it to include additional forms of agriculture, such as reforestation work."

More California farmers have begun using the H-2A program, he said, but added that it has generally not been flexible enough for many of the state's crops and commodities.

"When we asked Farm Bureau members earlier this year to tell us how they are addressing employee shortages, only 6% of the farmers who responded to our survey said they were using H-2A," Johansson said. "Changes proposed by the administration may increase that proportion, but farmers also need wider improvement to immigration laws that can only be addressed through congressional action."

Farm Bureau and other organizations continue working with members of Congress on solutions that would provide legal status to current farm employees in the U.S. while further enhancing the agricultural visa program to include a portability mechanism.



Tractor Hauling Pears, Photo: California Farm Bureau Federation

"Ultimately, immigration laws need to accommodate employees and their immediate family members who are in the country now, plus allow future employees to enter the U.S. and move from farm to farm for employment," Johansson said. "We will continue to pursue that goal with Congress and the administration. H-2A reform is only one piece of the puzzle."

ABOUT CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

The California Farm Bureau Federation works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of nearly 36,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of more than 5.5 million Farm Bureau members.

OPINION: SB1 WILL CREATE A PERMITTING NIGHTMARE FROM PAGE 1

water issues boil down to "farms versus fish."

The assumption is the only way to save our endangered native fish is to increase delta flows and cut water to farmers.

Punishing water users by cutting their water deliveries hasn't worked for farms or fish. Delta flows have been increased and endangered fish populations have continued to plummet.

Meanwhile, a wide array of fish-saving efforts are being considered or are underway. Those include improving in-delta habitat, fish salvage, increased fishing limits on non-native predatory fish, temperature and timing controls, increasing flood plains both on and off farms, etc.

And modern scientific studies are at the heart of federal biological assessments that will be used in a new state-federal agreement for delta operations. An agreement that had not been renewed since 1986 and the Obama Administration sought to renegotiate starting in 2016.

The biological assessments were only recently released and the coordinated operating agreement is still being negotiated.

SB1 would bring that collaboration to a screeching halt.

Any new science offering guidance to better aid endangered fish would be tossed out in favor of the tried-and-failed method of simply turning up delta flows.

SB1 would actually mandate a continued decline of endangered species.

The bill would also create a permitting nightmare.

SB1 states that if the feds downgrade a species, the California Fish and Game Commission "shall" list it under California's Endangered Species Act (CESA). Further, SB1 states that if the Administration changes the federal Endangered Species Act, or any of its regulations affecting the protected status of a species, the Commission must list every federally-listed species not already covered under the CESA.

This could result in mass species listings without public input or best science.

Such an event would nullify existing incidental take permits and cause a massive backlog of applications for new state permits opening up applicants to state civil and criminal citations, even though they are complying with federal ESA rules.

Finally, SB1 isn't needed.

California's regulatory agencies already have the authority to adopt more stringent standards than the feds. And the majority of California's environmental and labor regulations do go beyond federal requirements.

SB1 won't cocoon California from Trump.

But it could wreak havoc on the emerging progress toward more scientifically sound, sustainable operations of the most important water battle ground in California.

John Harris is Chairman of Harris Farms, founded in 1937 on the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley near Five Points. He is also an active member of the Central Valley Business Federation (BizFed). He can be reached at johnharris@harrisfarms.com



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John Gladigau, Executive Director at Bulla Burra Operations Pty Ltd

Opinion

Open Letter to the Non-Agricultural Community

Originally posted on LinkedIn

Hi.

We need to talk.

Firstly - apologies to you, because we are not always that good at doing this. We all too easily get defensive, up in arms and occasionally confrontational when we are challenged, accused or criticized. The thing is, we get a little sick of being called uneducated and ignorant when we have a lifetime of experience and many of us have qualifications which are like (or even exceed) our city cousins. It hurts us when people tell us we are cruel to animals, don't care for the future of the planet and are blasé about food safety whereas for the majority of us the opposite is true. It frustrates us when people with little agricultural knowledge or experience lecture us on social media about the dangers of chemicals, our contribution to a changing climate, soil health, genetic modification and more when we have spent a lifetime working in, studying, experiencing and developing strategies to not only benefit our businesses, families and communities - but also those we produce for that we don't even know.

But we don't always react well to being criticized and challenged. And when we do, we usually find solace in 'preaching to the converted' and sticking to our own rather than seeking to engage in meaningful conversation with those who may either not agree with us, or have a limited understanding of what we do and say. For this, we can only apologize.

There are many topics we should discuss, and these are but a few:

1. CLIMATE CHANGE: There are few in rural areas who would argue against the suggestion that the climate is changing. The conjecture is not around this, it is really around whether this change is manmade or not - and if reductions to use of fossil fuels, livestock emissions or taxing industries will have any impact on this. What is generally missed in the debate is that agriculture has made huge strides in the past 20-30 years as it has looked to preserve the quality of our soil, minimize emissions and produce high quality food and fiber in an increasingly challenging climate. Ironically (to some at least), glyphosate and GMO's are two of the tools which allow us to reduce our overall chemical use, preserve our fragile environment and reduce our fossil fuel use while farming in a sustainable manner. Unfortunately, we have not always done a good job of explaining this.

2. ROUNDUP: Actually, we know it as the active ingredient glyphosate - and it is one of the most important tools we have in agriculture. Glyphosate is the reason the country is no longer a dust bowl. It allows us to retain our cropping residues and soil structure, and farm in an environmentally sustainable manner in a changing climate. There are many chemicals which we as farmers dislike, mainly because of chemical safety issues, and soil and crop residues - but glyphosate is not one of them. Let us be very clear - if we did not believe it was safe, we would not use it. And we do not douse our crops with glyphosate - why would we? Sadly, this is a lie perpetuated by social media. It is used in a limited and strategic manner, and as per the label. We are repeatedly told to trust the science on climate change, so please also believe the science which categorically has deemed this product safe. While we are not all fans of Monsanto / Bayer - wanting to punish them (as per the US court cases) for greed and other sins helps no one and will ultimately only hurt agriculture and the environment if it is banned.

3. GMO's: The mere mention of the acronym seems to terrify many, and it is unjustified. Firstly, despite what many think, there is no GMO wheat and barley in the world grown commercially. That means GMO's are not the cause of perceived higher incidences of gluten intolerance and other supposed grain caused diseases. They are not related. The only commercially grown genetically modified crops in Australia are GM canola and GM cotton, though other countries grow large areas of other GM crops including corn and soybeans. Yes - if we are to increase our use of this technology it needs considerable community consultation and acceptance. It does however open the door to less use of potentially harmful chemicals, better nutrition and health benefits bred into crops, and much more environmentally and sustainable farming practices. However, we fully understand your concerns, many which are due to us not properly explaining what GMO's are, how they work and their benefits. We also have not always gone out of our way to listen to your concerns, fully educate ourselves on potential issues or properly articulate how they could benefit us as a planet as a whole. And if in the future they are scientifically proven to cause harm - then lets definitely steer away from them and find alternatives.

4. ANIMAL WELFARE: As a general rule, farmers do everything they can to maintain the highest level of animal welfare on their properties and are pained themselves when they see animals suffer. Yes, there are cases where farmers have caused acts of animal cruelty - and for that they should be made an example of and dealt with in accordance with the law and social standards. Most livestock producers focus heavily on ensuring their animals are happy and healthy. Why would they not? Yes - they are ultimately killed and used for human consumption as food or fiber. We know some of you struggle with this, and we respect your right to not eat meat or use animal products. I'm sorry some of us occasionally fly off the handle if we find this difficult to understand, just as you may find our position unacceptable. Let's try and respect each other's position on this, even if we don't agree.

I'd also love to talk to you about farm technology, droughts, careers in agriculture, live export and many other subjects, but we would be here all day. The main point of this letter is to say that agriculture is a professional, thriving industry - but we are not very good at talking about it. We tend to live in our own little farming bubble and talk and whine amongst ourselves. We get frustrated when we see something on "Sunrise" or "The Project" which affects us, and we go off halfcocked on FB or Twitter - mainly to people within our own industry. And when we do get to talk to you, we are usually being reactive or do a poor job of articulating our argument. We are sorry about that.

> ***"Make no mistake, farmers are some of the most intelligent, educated, climatically aware, hardworking people on the planet..."***

From our perspective we also need to do a far better job of listening. You rightly have questions and concerns about what we do, as the results of our efforts ends up feeding and clothing your families. How can you not be rattled by what you see on social media about GMO's and Roundup, especially if we don't have meaningful conversations with you about what we do and why. Of course, those of you who love animals will be furious (as we are) when you see examples of animal cruelty. And yes, the whole idea of climate change is scary for us all.

Make no mistake, farmers are some of the most intelligent, educated, climatically aware, hardworking people on the planet - and focused on developing new, innovative and environmentally sustainable ways to continue to feed, clothe and fuel us all. As farmers, we don't always get to have meaningful conversations with people outside of own agricultural bubble, so please feel free to pass this letter on to your friends both within and outside of ag. It is only by listening to each other that we create understanding, empathy and stronger communities.

With respect,

John

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Lois Henry

New Chair of the State Water Board, Joaquin Esquivel, Visits Local Water Sites

By: Lois Henry, Advocacy Director BizFed Central Valley

BizFed Central Valley is a diverse grassroots alliance of 54 businesses and associations representing more than 20,000 employers with nearly 300,000 employees in five counties from Madera to Kern. BizFed's goal is to help strengthen the voice of business in the valley and advocate for a stronger economy.

As part of that goal, BizFed regularly brings key regulators and politicians to meet with our members in small-group settings to share information and ideas. Over the course of two years, BizFed CV has hosted meetings with a wide array of policy makers from House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy to valley Air Pollution Control District Director Samir Sheikh.

Following is a recap of a BizFed CV meeting with Joaquin Esquivel, who was recently appointed as Chairman of the State Water Resources Control Board.

BizFed Central Valley members recently enjoyed a full day of touring water facilities and engaging in in-depth discussions about the future of California's water with newly appointed Water Resources Board Chair Joaquin Esquivel.

Esquivel wanted to see how water works in Kern County so the day began at 7 a.m. with a bus tour arranged by BizFed CV member Water Association of Kern County. Esquivel learned how water is moved between several systems including the Central Valley Project, State Water Project and Kern River at what's known as the "spaghetti bowl" in Bakersfield along Coffee Road, where all three systems come together.

Water managers from different districts explained how water can be moved into or out of Kern through the Cross Valley Canal, giving locals enormous flexibility in how water supplies are handled.

The tour then moved to the Kern River, the massive Kern Water Bank and finally to the California Aqueduct.

At the luncheon, which was hosted by GEI Consultants, BizFed CV members shared a number of concerns with Esquivel.

Q: What are the state's plans if locals can't get their Groundwater Sustainability Plans done by the deadline of Jan. 31, 2020?

A: Though that's more of a Dept. of Water Resources issue, Esquivel said he expects it will be handled on a case-by-case basis. "While you don't want to allow too much delay – we could have another drought – I am hearing that people are concerned about the timeline." He added that he's been having conversations with Karla Nemeth, DWR chief, about this issue.

Q: What about data overload? Water managers are uploading and reporting often the same data to multiple agencies that never seem to speak to one another.

A: That IS a problem, Esquivel acknowledged, noting that the state is asking for much more information, such as how much water is being used by each rights holder. He said there are 68 data systems at the state and none communicates with the other. "There's nothing more frustrating for users than having to deal with one side of the system for water reporting and another for finance and having to give each system the exact same information."

Q: Thoughts on using recycled oilfield water for irrigation?


Esquivel and Jevan Muhar gen manager of Arvin Edison Water Storage District at Coffee 6.25.19

A: The state and communities use recycled water in many different areas, Esquivel said. And the state has strict safety protections for that water. "There's a perception that we don't know what's in the water. Yes. We do," he insisted. "It's important not to let dogma rule the day on this issue."

Q: Could the Friant-Kern Canal be used as a drinking water source for communities along its path, many of which have undrinkable water?

A: That would take a change by the feds, which own that system, Esquivel said. Though he is not personally involved in those discussions, he noted communities would view the canal as a valuable asset that they would fight to protect if it could also deliver clean drinking water.

Finally, Esquivel heard from local 4th generation farmer, Jason Giannelli, who explained that the future for family farmers in California is grim because ofincreasing state regulations.

The reporting, labor and water burdens are becoming unworkable for a one- or two-person shop.

"If this keeps up, we won't be here in another 10 years," Giannelli said of his farm.

The state needs to look at the cost of compliance for the small farmer every time they add a new regulation.

Esquivel agreed.

"Where a regulation creates a major burden but doesn't really change the outcome, we need to look at that."



Oriental Fruit Fly Detected in Sacramento County

Press Release Provided by the Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner's Office

The Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner, in cooperation with the Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture, are beginning an extensive survey in response to the detection of two oriental fruit flies (OFF) within the City of Sacramento near the Meadowview community in Sacramento County.

The detections were confirmed on July 10, 2019. The detections were made as part of our coordinated pest prevention system that protects our agriculture and natural resources from invasive species with early detection a key component to successfully eradicating an infestation before it can become established.

The extensive survey, also known as a delimitation survey, consists of multiple oriental fruit fly traps placed in concentric circles going out 4.5 miles in each direction from the oriental fruit fly detection sites. Additional OFF detections may trigger a quarantine.

Following the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), agricultural officials use "male attractant" technique as the mainstay of the eradication effort for this invasive species. This approach has successfully eliminated dozens of fruit fly infestations in California. Trained workers squirt a small patch of fruit fly attractant mixed with a very small dose of an organic pesticide, Spinosad, approximately 8-10 feet off the ground on street trees and similar surfaces; male fruit flies are attracted to the mixture and perish after consuming it. The male attractant treatment program is being carried out over an area that extends 1.5 miles from each site where the oriental fruit flies were trapped.

While fruit flies and other invasive species that threaten California's crops and natural environment are sometimes detected in agricultural areas, the vast majority are found in urban and suburban communities. The most common pathway for these pests to enter the state is by "hitchhiking" in fruits and vegetables brought back illegally by travelers as they return from infested regions of the world or from packages of homegrown produce sent to California. Help protect California's agricultural and natural resources; please Don't Pack a Pest when traveling or mailing packages.

"Fruit flies are serious pests for California farming and backyard gardens," said Sacramento County Interim Agricultural Commissioner Chris Flores. "These recent detections on the heels of last year's oriental fruit fly detections reminds us to be vigilant in protecting our agricultural and natural resources including our local community gardens and gleaning programs.When traveling abroad or mailing packages to California, we urge the public not to bring back or mail fruits, vegetables or meat products as they are pathways for OFF and other invasive species entering our state."

The oriental fruit fly is known to target over 230 different fruit, vegetable and plant commodities. Important California crops at risk include pome, stone fruits, citrus, dates, avocados and many vegetables, particularly tomatoes and peppers.Damage occurs when the female fruit fly lays her eggs inside the fruit. The eggs hatch into maggots, which tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption.

The oriental fruit fly is widespread throughout much of the mainland of southern Asia and neighboring islands, including Sri Lanka and Taiwan, and it has invaded other areas, most notably Africa and Hawaii.

Federal, state and county agricultural officials work year-round, 365 days a year, to prevent, deter, detect and eliminate the threat of invasive species and diseases that can damage or destroy our agricultural products and natural environment. The efforts are aimed at keeping California's natural environment and food supply plentiful, safe and pest-free.

Residents with questions about the project may call the Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner's office at 916-875-6603.



Photo: Martin Hauser, California Department of Food and Agriculture



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Are You Prepared For the Earth Shaking?

By Tony Castiglione,
Founder of Life Saver Safety

July 4, 2019 marked the day in California as the day we rocked and rolled due to a significant 6.4 Earthquake centered in Ridgecrest California. Some say this was the precursor for "The Big One." Little did they know that the very next day would be the largest U.S. Earthquake recorded in over 20 years. The 7.1 earthquake that occurred on July 5, 2019 was felt by residences throughout California, and as far away as Phoenix, Arizona and Mexicali, Mexico. Fortunately, there was very little structural damage and injuries as a result from 2 very significant earthquakes and hundreds of aftershocks.

So what does this all mean? Are you and your family prepared for the next earthquake? I was on duty as a paramedic in the Los Angeles area when the 1994 Northridge earthquake occurred, and I can tell you I was not prepared for what occurred then. It was definitely an eye opener of what needed to change for my family's preparation. Cell towers were down and the local phone lines were so busy that I was not able to communicate with my parents who were 3 miles form the epicenter or with my wife, in Bakersfield, for about 3 days. My family had no idea if I was okay and I didn't know if they were okay. I was on duty for 5 days running calls from house to house because the 9-1-1 dispatch was so busy. We just roamed the area to offer help as needed until the system was back up, which took a couple days.

There are a number of resources that you can turn to for an Earthquake preparedness checklist for you and your family. Some are Red Cross, FEMA along with county and city fire departments. Below I will provide a basic list that you can use at both your place of work and home. Some things to keep in consideration is that you may be at work when "The Big One" hits. Employers should have an earthquake plan. This plan should include how to keep the employees safe at work along with allowing the employees to be able to communicate with their families after an earthquake.

There are several things to be aware of and think about during a major earthquake. The biggest concern is that power and water may be unavailable for a couple of days to weeks—or more. The goal is to have enough food, water and resources to last for 2 weeks at a time to cover you for a worse case scenario. Look around your home and think about your resources … Do you have a swimming pool that can be used as a water source? Do you have an RV? Is the RV fully stocked with food, water, extra clothes, fuel and/or propane? Do you own a generator? Does everyone in your family know where and how to turn off the gas and watervalves? Do you have extra drinking water available? Since most local landline and cellular phones will be too busy to use after an earthquake… Do you have a family member or friend out of state or country that can be the main point of contact so everyone can check in?

Most kids are taught at school what to do in case of an earthquake, but do they know what to do at home?

These are just a few things to think about and discuss with your family or employer. Remember, that if you live in California, there is a good chance that you will be involved in an Earthquake!!! Are you and your family ready?

PLEASE CONTACT LIFE SAVER SAFETY FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT HOW TO PREPARE FOR NATURAL DISASTERS INFO@LIFESAVERSAFETY.COM

ASSEMBLING EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Take the time now to collect the emergency supplies you would need if the power was out, water supplies were cut off, and grocery stores were not open. You can build your supplies over time by adding a few items as your budget permits. Basic emergency supplies should include the following, most of which you probably already have in your home.

- ✔ **WATER** – Ensure you have at least 1 gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days. (Store a longer than 3-day supply of water, if possible). An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of fluid daily. Individual needs vary depending on age, gender, health, level of activity, food choices, and climate. You may also need stored water for food preparation.
- ✔ **FOOD** – Store at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable food for members of your household, including pets. Consider special dietary needs (e.g., infant formula). Include a non-electric can opener for canned food.
- ✔ **FLASHLIGHT, RADIO,** and **CELL PHONE CHARGER** – You will need to be able to charge these items without electricity. Your flashlight and radio should be either hand-cranked or battery-powered, and stored with extra batteries. Your cell phone charger should be hand-crank, solar, or able to be charged from a car outlet.
- ✔ **MEDICAL** – Include first aid kit, prescription and non-prescription/over-the-counter medications, and medical supplies.
- ✔ **SANITATION** – Pack supplies for sanitation, such as hand sanitizer, towelettes, paper products, and plastic bags, for use when water resources are limited.
- ✔ **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY** – Include battery backup power for power-dependent mobility devices, oxygen, and other assistive technology needs.
- ✔ **CLOTHING AND BLANKETS** – Ensure you have clothing with long sleeves and long pants, thick-soled shoes, and work gloves to protect yourself after the earthquake, and a sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person, if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- ✔ **WHISTLE** – Include a whistle to signal for help.
- ✔ **CASH** – Store cash in case ATMs are not functioning after the earthquake.
- ✔ **FIRE EXTINGUISHER** – Earthquakes can cause fires to break out; have a fire extinguisher so you can put out any small fires. Use a fire extinguisher only if you are physically capable.

Consider storing supplies in several locations if possible. This means having basic supplies of food and water in locations, including your workplace, your vehicle, and, if possible, other places you and members of your household regularly spend time (e.g., house of worship, community center, and school).

It is important to consider the unique needs of your family, including access and functional needs, and the needs of children and pets. You may need to include: extra water; special food, such as infant formula or pet food; and supplies or equipment, such as diapers, glasses, or medical equipment.

Download Emergency Supply Checklist at www.ready.gov/build-a-kit.







The Winds of Heaven

By: Sandy Mittelsteadt, Valley Ag Voice

In researching last month's topic on "Can We Believe the Bible?" I read a statement that every word in the Bible is relevant, and every word has significance. The Bible is so deep that we humans can't get to the depth of it with our physical minds and intelligence. So, I thought I would put this to the test; instead of looking for the profound, the unexplainable, or the miracles, I would search for something simple and not spiritual in the Bible. I thought: what would a farmer be interestedin? My first consideration was the sun and then the rain. But those topics might be too easy, so I selected the unassuming concept of "wind," and decided to explore how much meaning this word used in the Bible could have. To my surprise, I found that the word "wind" has great meaning and depth.

First of all, I actually discovered that the Bible really talks about the wind. It not only discusses the types of winds, but also the directions of the wind and whether the wind is positive or negative. The East Wind is most often mentioned of all the winds. In fact, it is referenced seventeen to twenty-one times in the Bible (depending on the authority). For example, Palms 78:26 reads as:

"He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind."

Another example is in Genesis, Chapter 41, Verses 6, 23, and 27, which mention that the seven good ears of grain in Pharaoh's dream were eaten by the seven withered ears blasted by the East Wind.

The East Wind is viewed as "bad" by the prophets. First, the geography of Israel promotes the concept of a "bad East Wind" since the winds normally blow from the West to the East (just as they do in Kern County). This West Wind has the positive effect of bringing cool humid air to the Land of Israel. However, when the winds blow from the Arabian desert in the direction of East to the West, the result is a hot, dry, wind that deposits dust everywhere over Israel. This dust can kill crops and make breathing difficult. (Compare this to our Santa Ana Winds that promote fires here in California.)

Examples of East Wind judgements are:

In Ezekiel 19:10-12, the prophet Ezekiel laments the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah by Babylon by comparing it to a vineyard attacked by the East Wind. Ezekiel states that the East Wind dried up the vineyard and stripped off its fruit, and the stem was burnt by fire. Babylon is located in the desert to the east of Israel, so this is a "bad East Wind."

The plague of locusts upon Egypt (Exodus 10:13)

The separation of the Red Sea that brought death to the Egyptians and deliverance to the Jews (Exodus 14:21)

The anger of Jonah in which "God prepared a vehement east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die…" (Jonah 1:8)

Another prophet, Isaiah, in Isaiah 32:1-2 associates the just rule of a king to a shelter that provides cover from the wind and the tempest. This verse alludes to the fact that there are two aspects of wind. The first wind is the natural or physical wind and the second aspect of wind is its spiritual characteristics. According to George Kirkpatrick, who wrote God's Judgment Written in the Wind, the spiritual aspects of the winds are that:

The East Wind
is the wind of judgment.

The West Wind
restores all things;

The North Wind
symbolizes power,

The South Wind
comforts and refreshes.

With our new understanding, let's reread Psalms 78:26 to discover that after God sends the East Windof judgement in this verse, He will bring a South Wind to quiet, to refresh, and to comfort.

Paul had an encounter with both the East Wind and the South Wind in Acts 27 as he was sailing from Caesarea (Israel) to Rome (Italy). In verse 13, Paul and his shipmates encounter a South Wind and "supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete." However, in Verse 14 & 15, they face an East Wind: "But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive." The Euroclydon is literally a north-east typhoon that blows in the Mediterranean Sea. In Jonah 1:4, it is described as a great wind and violent storm. We know understand that an Euroclydon is a North Wind or powerful wind and an East Wind of judgement.

With our new understanding of the meaning of the different winds, let's now read Exodus 10:12to 10:19 and decipher:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, "Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind up the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous were they; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field through all the land of Egypt.. Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the LORD your god, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only. And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD. And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt."

In all the times I have read these verses I thought I understood everything, but after studying the simple concept of "wind" I now read these verses with new eyes. The word "wind" has new significance to me.

The wind witnesses to the greatness of God and to the depth of the Bible!



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