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Concerns Rise at the Water Summit

By **Scott Hamilton**
President, Hamilton Resource Economics

The Water Association of Kern County held their Water Summit May 19th after a two year hiatus due to Covid. The Summit featured more than a dozen speakers covering a wide range of water-related topics. Most indicative of the Summit perhaps was the response to a question from CSUB Economics Professor and panel chair, Dr Aaron Hedge, who asked his panel if there was any good news for Kern County. The panelists were silent, unable to provide a solitary answer, prompting nervous laughter from the audience. Finally, Dr Alvar Escrivá-Bou from the Public Policy Institute of California, responded with “SGMA” (the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act that is forcing land fallowing, anxiety among farmers and escalating water prices). If that is the best that Kern County farmers

have to look forward to, there is reason for concern, and such was the theme for much of the day. What Dr Escrivá-Bou intended was that SGMA should result ultimately in certainty and sustainability in groundwater supplies.

Regardless of the future of groundwater, the severity of the current drought was highlighted by several speakers. Ernest Conant, long time water attorney in Kern County and now Regional Director of the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento, indicated that the current drought is unprecedented. Not only is the State in the third year of extreme drought but the precipitation for January through March was the driest on record. There is simply not enough water in the Sacramento Valley to meet basic needs, Conant said. Releases from Shasta Dam are being reduced to 4,500 cfs when the previous record low was 6,800 cfs. Something in excess of 350,000 acres are projected to be fallowed. There will be insufficient Sacramento River water to meet

Exchange Contractor obligations, resulting in releases of San Joaquin River to them instead of Friant Contractors – an action once rare but has now occurred in five of the last eight years. As a result, Friant Contractors are facing a 15% allocation. As bad as that is, it’s still better than the 5% SWP allocation. Kevin Donhoff from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California foretold of the extreme measure his Board has been forced to. Certain regions within their service that can only receive water from the State Water Project are being cut to landscape watering one day per week, and perhaps not at all.

While SGMA is presenting significant challenges, encouraging words were provided by Paul Gosselin, DWR’s Deputy Director for Sustainable Groundwater Management. His message was clear: “local control is the cornerstone of how It (SGMA) is going to work”. While DWR had found numerous groundwater plans incomplete, he

reiterated that DWR was here to help. They wanted to ensure that plans are on track to achieve sustainability with minimal impacts and are making \$350 million available over the next three years to help implement plans.

Of course, SGMA is only one of numerous regulatory measures local farmers are facing. Patrick Pulupa, Executive Officer of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, spoke of the CVSalts Program and the measures being taken to manage nitrogen and salinity in the Valley. And on a related note, Dr Lynn Hamilton from Cal Poly, highlighted the increasing regulatory costs farmers are facing noting an increase for nut crops from \$100/ac in 2012 to \$250/ac in 2018.

Perhaps most disconcerting were the undertones from Joaquin Esquivel, Chairman of the State Water Resources Control Board who considered many rivers to be badly oversubscribed, noting that water rights were a right to divert, not an ownership right and that “the public trust doctrine is important”. As if groundwater supplies were not enough, now surface supplies are being called into question.



Recent questions have been raised regarding some of Louis Gill’s campaign funds for this election. (Photo: Louis Gill for Supervisor)

Were Campaign Finance Rules Violated in Supervisorial Race?

By **Melissa A. Nagel**, Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

Kern County’s District 3 Supervisor race is heating up and with elections right around the corner in June, it’ll be interesting to see who comes out on top! Kern has three candidates running for the District 3 Supervisor position that is being vacated by Supervisor Mike Maggard who has been in office for 4 terms since his election in June of 2006. Maggard announced in January of 2022 that he would not seek reelection for a 5th term, opening the door for new candidates to run for the position.

District three is one of five districts in Kern County and represents areas covering northwest Bakersfield, Rosedale, Oildale, and east Bakersfield. The three new

candidates for the District 3 Supervisor position are Jeff Flores, Brian Smith, and Louis Gill. If you are

familiar with Bakersfield or Kern County politics, then these names should look familiar to you. Here is a little more on each candidate and what they have earned so far this year for their Supervisor campaigns committees.

First up is Jeff Flores, current Chief of Staff to Supervisor Mike Maggard, a position he has held since 2010. Mr. Flores has also been a member of the Kern High Board of Trustees since 2014 and will remain on that board through the end of 2024. Flores announced his bid to run for office once Mike Maggard announced his retirement earlier this year. He is already familiar with District three thanks to his time under Supervisor Maggard and is passionate about improving issues with public safety and continuing with Kern’s three phase plan to improve and restore Hart Park under the Hart Park Master Improve-

ment Plan. Mr. Flores has raised more

than \$94,000 to-date for his Supervisorial campaign.

Moving on, let’s discuss candidate Brian Smith, a retired California Highway Patrol Assistant Chief who is dedicated to keeping the public safe. Smith is also a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and has dedicated much of his career to law enforcement and helping to maintain public safety. If successful in his bid for the District 3 Supervisor position, one of Smith’s main goals is to restore the public’s confidence in law enforcement, something that has been lacking in recent years due to many reasons, but most notably, high profile cases in the media. Smith has raised upwards of \$96,000 thus far towards his Supervisorial campaign.

Lastly, let’s get to know District 3 Supervisor candidate Louis Gill. Mr. Gill has been active in Bakersfield for many years and is the former CEO of the Bakersfield

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Rusty Roots Show: The California Antique Equipment Show is Back!

By **Audrey Hill**, Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

Every year in April, Tulare’s International Agri-Center hosts the California Antique Equipment Show, featuring antique motors and farm equipment of all shapes and sizes. Held on April 23rd and 24th, this was the show’s second year back since the COVID shutdown in 2020. The Antique Show was paired with the Agri-Center’s *Big Tulare Swap-O-Rama* for classic cars and motorcycle parts, which made for a bigger turnout than usual. All generations, young and old, came to the Agri-Center to experience the

See **RUSTY ROOTS SHOW** on **PAGE 5**



(Photo: B. MacDougall / Shutterstock.com)



FARM BUREAU NEWS

The United Voice of Kern County's Farming Community



President's Message

**By Patty Poire
President, Kern
County Farm Bureau**

WOW, here we are in June where half of the year has come and gone and May

did not change or improve any of the California agricultural impacts from fertilizer, labor, regulatory, or water issues. If anything, those impacts just became more complicated. The toughness and resolve of the California farmer are truly being challenged as I stated in last month's article.

In July of last year, Governor Newsom declared a drought emergency with an executive order asking Californians to cut urban water use by 15% compared to 2020 levels. However, records show that by March, Californians had increased water usage by a whopping 18.9% statewide compared to the March 2020 levels. Keep in mind that California agriculture has been given a water cut by both the State and Federal Water Projects of almost 100% of its contract amount of water, leaving only a questionable 5% of allocations. As mentioned in last month's article, Governor Newsom extended that executive order on March 28, 2022. He added water well permit requirements that required confirmation that the new water well would not impede the ability of the basin to achieve groundwater sustainability, interfere with existing nearby wells, and not likely to cause subsidence that would adversely impact or damage nearby infrastructure. All these new requirements shall not apply to water well permits for wells that provide less than two acre-feet per year of groundwater for individual domestic users or that will exclusively provide groundwater to public water supply systems. I believe that all water wells contribute to groundwater overuse and all should be considered the same to begin educating every Californian about water use and conservation. What better time to stress water conservation as a way of life than at the beginning of the process to obtain a water well permit, in my opinion. Governor Brown's Executive Order Making Water Conservation a California Way of Life signed back on May 9, 2016 began to set the stage.

In the Senate budget hearings going on in Sacramento, there are funds in the amount of \$1.657 million being requested to hire 7 new permanent positions to carry out critical, statutorily mandated oversight responsibilities under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This means that the state is preparing to have basins that submitted Groundwater Sustainable Plans (GSP) fail with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) review process and move towards probationary status with State Water Board intervention. The Kern subbasin is one of those basins that currently has an "incomplete" status with DWR and may be affected, which could mean the state coming in to oversee. The state intervention has two phases: (1) probation, and (2) an interim plan. What should be noted is that phase (1) requires data and fees from pumpers (landowners) to be submitted directly to the state. That data would then be used if the second phase should occur, which is when the state would develop an interim plan. The interim plan will likely require pumping cutbacks and other potential actions to correct groundwater overdrafts. Now, remember, water allocations have already been set by the state.

If that isn't enough, that same senate budget hearing has an item called "Rebalance State Water Supply and Water Rights" in the amount of \$2 billion. The intent is that California must consider new approaches to help reduce water demand to improve freshwater flows, enhance habitat conditions, and provide clean drinking water. I am in complete agreement about clean drinking water, but don't understand improving and enhancing! At least at this time, they are stating that all this is voluntary, meaning they will not "force" anyone to participate. The Kern subbasin has had a State Water Project water right under contract since November 16, 1963, and it might appear that the state is looking to rebalance that water right. The contract water right invoice for the Kern subbasin in the year 2022 is \$155 million. The allocation is only 5%, however, 100% of the bill is due and paid.

The supply chain situation has not improved at all, which has complicated commodity pricing, and there appear to be no solutions presented by the Federal Administration. Kern County is one of the richest counties in natural resources like oil and ag—resources that could



Executive Director's Report

**By Romeo Agbalog,
Executive Director, Kern
County Farm Bureau**

Can you believe we are already in June? It appears as though we are sprinting towards the end of 2022 as we reach the mid-way point of the year, and your local Farm Bureau continues its work with advocacy, education, and promotion of local area agriculture. For example, next month the Teachers Ag Seminar will be here and the month after that, we will hold our annual Save Water, Drink Beer event. Specific dates and times on both events will be forthcoming.

Back to June. There's a lot that happens this month. June marks the beginning of Summer, we celebrate Father's Day in June, and this year we'll hold a primary election. The outcome of the primary election will determine which candidates for statewide, federal, state legislative, and some local political offices will appear on the ballot for the general election in November.

Did you know that the California primary election system has been changed a few times over the years? Here's a brief history. Prior to 1996 a "closed primary system" governed the state's primary elections. Under a closed primary system, only voters registered to a specific political party may cast a ballot of that political party.

In March of 1996 voters approved Proposition 198 which altered the closed primary system to an "open"

or "blanket" primary system that allowed all registered voters to cast ballots for any candidate, regardless of political party affiliation and without declaring association with a political party. However, in June of 2000 the United States Supreme Court issued a decision in California Democratic Party, et. al, v. Jones that declared Proposition 198 unconstitutional stating the law violated a political party's First Amendment right to associate.

Later, the state enacted Senate Bill 28 which took effect January 1, 2001, and implemented a "modified" closed primary system. The modified system allowed for "decline to state" or "non-partisan" voters to participate by providing the option to cast a non-partisan ballot, or unless requested a ballot of a specific political party.

The primary system would be changed once again on June 8, 2010, to our current system when voters approved Proposition 14, which replaced the modified system with a "top-two" open system. Under the top-two system only the top two candidates in the primary who received the highest and second highest votes for statewide, federal, and state legislative political offices advance to the general election ballot, regardless of political affiliation.

So why the history lesson? Well, first we should always know how a system works before we engage in it and secondly, because elections have consequences. Consequences that can directly and indirectly impact agriculture. And whether under a closed, open, modified, or top-two systems, something of consequence happened to agriculture in those elections. Will that happen again? I guess we'll see in November.

and would have assisted in curbing inflation. It just doesn't make any sense!

Inflation also plays a part in the triggering of minimum wage for California agriculture and businesses. The soaring rise in inflation will have an impact on the setting of the minimum wage to \$15.50 per hour beginning in January. This is due to a 2016 state law requiring that the minimum wage be increased when inflation grows more than 7%. One item to note is that wages have already risen this year by \$1, with large employers paying \$15 an hour and

small employers paying \$14 an hour. Now with inflation being as high as it is, small businesses will see a \$2.50 rise in wages over the course of just one year. Inflation is not a friend to anyone!

The toughness and resolve of the California farmer are on display and being challenged. The Kern County Farm Bureau and California Farm Bureau will continue to demand a seat at the table to speak frankly on these issues—because, if you are not at the table, then you are on the menu.

Young Farmers & Ranchers



**By Timothy Collins
Chair, Kern County
Young Farmers
& Ranchers**

The pleasant spring weather gave the Kern County Young Farmers and Ranchers the great opportunity to have tours of two

small family-owned farms at our last two meetings. In April, we toured Maggenti Show Goats out at Poncetta Farms, and then less than two weeks later in May, we picked cherries and toured Murray Family Farms. In a world where farming seems to be becoming more and more corporate, it was exciting to see two small family operations active in Kern County.

We learned about the Poncetta family immigrating to Kern County and starting a farm over 100 years ago.

Poncetta Farms has transitioned over the years, but it has still stayed small and family-run. In addition to the family farm, Mike Poncetta found a niche market in raising and selling show goats and created his own company, Maggenti Show Goats. For a decade now, his hobby has turned into a successful business producing many champion goats. By embracing the opportunities technology provides, they are now auctioning goats online to buyers across the county and even occasionally to other countries.



YF&R members with Steve Murray at Murray Family Farms. (Photo: Young Farmers & Ranchers)

In May, we met at the Big Red Barn of Murray Family Farms. We left the popular pitstop off highway 58 and were taken down into the orchards by Steve Murray who explained to us the process and challenges of growing cherries. Unlike many family farms today, Murray is a first-generation farm with Steve himself founding it in the 1980s. To be successful, he also had to find a niche in the massive and diverse California agriculture market. He explained that his niche was cherries, which he often sells at farmer's markets in addition to his own store. He started with next to nothing and now farms hundreds of acres growing over a hundred varieties of fruits and vegetables, while still focusing on cherries.

While we think of most farms or companies being founded long ago when it was easier to do so, at both tours we learned that there are still opportunities for new farms and companies in California. There are niche markets yet to be taken advantage of and we

have the technology to make it possible. Sometimes farming seems synonymous with complaining. Nobody is saying it's going to be easy, but as Steve Murray told us,

See **YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS** on the NEXT PAGE

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Basque Sheep Camp Coming to the Kern County Museum



Mark Parsons and Dan Hay at the new sheep camp exhibit at the Museum. (Photo: Kern County Museum)

ing houses that served as a home base, bank, post office, and social hall for the young immigrants. They connected the young Basque men with work on local ranches, farms, shearing sheds, and the Sierra sheep camps. This was their entry point to a new country.

The sheep trail started in the high desert or sometimes in the San Joaquin Valley where large herds of sheep would be organized into bands and then

connected with the young shepherds. The sheep would move into pasturage climbing higher and higher up established trails with the spring and summer season.

When the sheep reached the meadows of the Eastern Sierra, tents were used for shelter, usually erected in aspen groves. Sometimes, a stone oven was built for baking bread. Pack mules were used to carry essentials and working dogs were the shepherd's only companions. A camp tender brought supplies for the herder every three to eight days. Later, wooden wagons provided more protection from the weather than tents and were in use until the 1960s when used travel trailers took their place.

To celebrate the tradition of the herding migration, the Kern County Museum is in the process of developing a Sheep Camp exhibit thanks to the generosity of the Hay Brother's Sheep Company and Jim Etcheverry. Local businessman Mark Parsons restored one of the vintage sheep camp trailers for the exhibit along with a water tank and a drinking trough. Local historian Steve Bass contributed several artifacts related to the sheep business and camps for display.

For the thousands of young Basque immigrants, working in the sheep camps of California was a rite of passage. The work was difficult, sometimes dangerous, and very lonely. Yet, many old-timers would say, it was the best time of their lives.



By Mike McCoy
Executive Director,
Kern County Museum

Basque immigrants from the Pyrenees mountains of France and Spain were first drawn to California by the Gold Rush in the mid-19th century. They

found out though, that providing the miners with lamb and wool was more profitable than digging for gold.

Moving into the 20th century, the cattle and sheep business took off in California's Central Valley. The old California ranchos began to give way to large livestock operations that used rail lines to feed a hungry nation. World War I gave the sheep business a boost with a high demand for mutton and wool. A 100-year-old tradition was soon created where young Basque men would follow their sheep bands up into the High Sierras for summer grazing.

The young Basque shepherds, leaving hard scabble pastures and farms in the Pyrenees Mountains, often showed up in Bakersfield or later Boise, with just the clothes on their backs and a small bit of money. Local labor contractors worked out of the legendary board-



Two young Basque herders in the high desert, 1950s. (Photo: Steve Bass)



Pierre Laxague in the High Sierras, about 1932. (Photo: Marianne Laxague)

Young Farmers & Ranchers

Continued from the PREVIOUS PAGE "There's never been a better time for young people to get involved in agriculture."

In our support of young people in agriculture, YF&R is excited to announce that our Ag Grant applications are now available! We will be giving out 10 grants between \$250 and \$750 each to local 4-H members and FFA students who are showing an animal at the Kern County Fair this fall. Applications can be found on our Insta-

gram and Facebook pages or by emailing us. Be sure to tell everyone you know who is eligible to apply before applications close July 1st! Also, we are looking forward to our 7th annual Charity Farmer's market planned for Saturday, July 16th. If your farm or company is interested in donating produce, please reach out to us.

Email: KernYFR@KernCFB.com

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Now-retired President, Vard Terry, looks on beside a modern spreader. (Photo: The Holloway Group)

Technology Is Always Evolving in the Field

By Brian Milne, Vice President, Director of Marketing & Communications, The Holloway Group

The agriculture industry has done some remarkable things over the years.

Despite the agricultural evolution and ability to produce more food today than it ever has in our history, outsiders sometimes mislabel the ag industry as outdated and technophobic when it comes to its farming practices.

But if you've worked in or followed agriculture closely over the past couple of decades, you've seen just how far technology has come on our farms.

Looking back at Holloway's 90 years working in Central California, we see that technological evolution first-hand in our photo archives.

Back in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, Holloway spread gypsum and other soil amendments with pickup trucks that were outfitted with spreading mechanisms on the beds.

By the 1960s and 70s, Holloway had switched to larger, commercial-sized spreading trucks, but the process

"Technology is nothing. What's important is that you have a faith in people, that they're basically good and smart, and if you give them tools, they'll do wonderful things with them." –Steve Jobs

of spreading amendments across a field or orchard hadn't changed that drastically. In fact, for the first 60 years, little changed with *how* we spread amendments here in California – other than the axle width and horsepower used.

Then came GPS technology in the mid-1990s, which drastically changed the accuracy and precision we spread amendments with today, with little compaction issues or impact on the crop or soil.

In recent years, variable rate technology has allowed tech-savvy managers – equipped with field sensor data, aerial maps, and other ag technologies – to apply inputs at different rates depending on soil type, soil/water/tissue analysis, and for different varieties. All of which have drastically helped improve soil and crop health while cutting down input costs, particularly in permanent crops.

See **TECHNOLOGY IS ALWAYS EVOLVING** on PAGE 5

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Fresno Lays Claim to Title of California Garlic Capital

By Dennis Pollock, Reporter

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If you open your car window just a tad as you drive through Gilroy, you're almost certain to detect a distinctive smell: garlic.

It's a smell that Kevin Collins, a manager at Borba Farms in Fresno County, loves. He's a grower of garlic, after all.

"A dairyman likes the smell of cow manure," he said. "I like the smell of garlic."

Gilroy smells that way because of a major dehydrator operated there by the multinational Olam Group. Much of the garlic grown in Fresno County goes elsewhere for processing into fresh bulbs or dehydrated powder.

But Collins, like many in the garlic industry, has long known that Fresno County has been the true "garlic capital of California."

People who don't know better may have assumed, beyond the smell, that the title belonged to Gilroy because of the famed Gilroy Garlic Festival. That event recently announced its closure before being rescued and relocated to Stockton this year.

In truth, the competition between Gilroy and Fresno was never close. Fresno County is America's foremost producer of the bulbs, with 77% of all the garlic in the U.S. grown in the region.

Over the weekend, the Big Fresno Fairgrounds sought to cement the county's garlic credentials by playing host to the National Garlic Festival. The May 13-15 event featured garlic cooking demonstrations, garlic-inspired foods, midway games and more.

"I'm glad they (Fresno promoters) picked it up," said Collins, ranch manager at Borba Farms, looking out at a field of fresh garlic where a worker is barely visible as he moves through the field checking drip lines.

Collins had no qualms about the festival being held there and talk about "the garlic capital of California." It was promoting the crop, after all.

With a nearly \$400 million value in 2020, according to the most recent crop year report, garlic is Fresno County's forth most valuable crop, ranking behind almonds, grapes and pistachios. It ranks seventh overall in commodities when poultry, milk and cattle are added to the list. The crop is grown on some 24,000 acres in the county.

He explained that fresh garlic and garlic for the dehydrator are not labor intensive to grow. "Once they're planted, there's not much tractor work," Collins said.

Collins was preparing to cut water to the field in anticipation of harvest. A machine would next go through the field, slicing beneath the bulbs. Then workers put them into windrows where they will dry.

After the bulbs dry, as many as 400 workers come in and do the clipping needed to ready the bulbs for their trips to supermarkets.

Collins said he hopes to get 8½ tons per acre out of the field, which stretches as far as the eye can see.

Challenges to grow a crop include the cost of the 28 inches of water the plants require each year. There are other challenges.

Collins' boss, Mark Borba, cites one of the themes he said was partly responsible for a decline in garlic acre-



Kevin Collins shows off the garlic crop at Borba Farms in Fresno County. The county produces 77% of garlic in the U.S. Fresno County played host to the National Garlic Festival on May 13-15. (Photo: Dennis Pollock)

age in Santa Clara County, the former home to the Gilroy festival: white rot. He said the disease there resulted in some farmers being unable to grow the town's signature crop.

Borba Farms has 1,900 acres of garlic, compared to 80 acres of plantings in the Gilroy area, Borba said.

Collins knows the threat of white rot all too well and is working to mitigate the threat. He explained that sclerotia, which is about the size of a pin head or poppy seed, bears a pathogen that can survive in the soil for more than 20 years.

He is chairman of the California Garlic and Onion Research Advisory Board. He warned that white rot can be spread from field to field on machinery and spoke of the danger of infected transplants. Researchers are trying to find fungicides to keep it at bay.

They're also trying to "trick" the pathogen by applying materials in the field in the absence of onion or garlic, so that sclerotia germinate and cannot find an allium root. This causes them to die rather than lying dormant.

Collins explained that garlic must be rotated with other crops and grown only in each field every four years. Rotation crops include tomatoes, cotton, lettuce and melons.

"It requires a lot of open land," Collins said.

That land abounds on the west side of Fresno County, where this garlic field sits outside of Five Points. But this time of year, something is planted in most of those fields.

Collins said in most cases, garlic is planted by the buyer, who purchases the virus-free seed that must be grown outside the area where it is to be planted. He said there is strong camaraderie among growers and processors.

Collins doesn't just like the smell of garlic. He keeps a jar of the powdered product handy and adds some of that to his food, including his morning eggs.

"I like to eat my product," he said, adding that he thinks many underestimate the amount of powdered garlic that is consumed.

Collins said the garlic powder winds up in all sorts of foods as an ingredient, including sauces, dressings and spice blends.

Borba is on an advisory board for the National Garlic Festival and credits Peter DeYoung, its chief operating officer and CEO of the Fresno-based National Food Festivals Inc., with "creating something out of thin air."

Borba said he is pleased that sponsors this year included Christopher Ranch, which previously sponsored the Gilroy festival. DeYoung, a Fresno native, had an advertising agency that represented some agriculture clients, including the California Table Grape Commission.

It was as he dealt with those clients that DeYoung learned something new about Fresno County. The place long known as the raisin capital of the world and the dominant almond producer has another title: America's garlic king.

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Rusty Roots Show

Continued from PAGE 1 show. Attendees got a slice of the old ways of farming and a chance to meet those who work hard to preserve it.

At the show, I met Marg Risi, a spunky woman who has worked for the Agri-Center since 1970, more than 50 years total. She mainly works at the World Ag Expo, which the center puts on every February. The Antique Equipment Show is considered the older cousin of the World Ag Expo as it is smaller, slower-paced, and centers around the preserved machinery of an older era. Ms. Risi sped around the grounds on her golf cart answering questions and “helping people with their problems.” She and the rest of the staff at the show were very helpful and kind. Golf carts and mules could be reserved by guests for the event and proved to be a big hit due to the size of the grounds. However, all were claimed very early into the event and the carts I saw driving around were piled in with families. If you plan to attend the Antique Equipment Show next year and would like to rent a cart, call early!

The wonderful and helpful Ms. Risi led me to “S” street near the parade route where tractors and trucks were being started up for the parade. Antique tons of metal roared to life making a series of loud rumblings and exhaust as they drove down the street. The oldest vehicle I saw at the show was a 1914 wooden flatbed truck that had been commissioned by the army and was being driven by a young teenage boy. I never got the chance to speak with him because of how fast and diligently he worked moving and tinkering with the machines. However, I was able to speak with the boy’s father and younger brother. Brice Brown, the younger son who is about 6 years old, expertly pointed out the names and models of the tractors and trucks his family and friends had at the show. It was obvious he had been around these machines his whole life and was very comfortable with them. His father, Andy Brown said that they rebuild a project vehicle about every other year and emphasized that they do it to keep the history of

the machines alive in the minds of the next generations. The Antique Equipment Show is of course not just for showcasing the past, as some still use these machines on their farms today. On the northeast side of the grounds, there was a hay bucking competition, as well as a youth pedal pull competition that showed the kids a bit of the working life in farming. Easy as it may sound, the rusty little tractor pulling a water bottle gave some kids a harder time. Across the way on the Swap-O-Rama side, collectors and vendors lined up to sell the rare, the not-so-rare, the old, and the not-so-old. The Horseless Carriage Club of Tulare was set up in the Brass Era section where pieces and parts from the late 1800s to early 1900s were sold and bartered for.

Food vendors also lined up selling street tacos, burritos, and hamburgers to fuel visitors for an eventful day. Also sold at the show was ice cream from the famous Rosa Brothers Milk Company whose headquarters are just down the road from the Agri-Center. Many will say that the Central Valley is only made up of empty little towns full of dust and miles of fields, farms, and mountains to look at while on a drive. However, being handed an ice cream cone that was processed down the street, while standing in the International Agri-Center grounds where the world meets on agriculture every February, the notion that nothing is going on in these little towns disappears. I truly got the sense that, although it doesn’t look like much, this is the agricultural capital of the world.

On my way out of the show, I passed by a tractor that looked like many others I saw that day, only this one was completely consumed by a tree that had sprouted out from underneath it. This tractor was a beautiful testament to age and strength as it has undoubtedly spent decades, possibly a century, under that tree. This display also serves as a symbol of what it means to be a farmer, to work with and against nature, to be ceaselessly resilient and strong, and to withstand the test of time. Although the Antique Equipment Show is a market that also serves as a place to make connections, it is also a place to instill tradition, history, and knowledge for those willing to look for it.

Technology Is Always Evolving

Continued from PAGE 3 Here’s a look back at how spreader technology has changed over the decades:



Holloway spreading gypsum over cotton by truck in the 1960s, when field crops were a dominant crop in Central California. (Photo: The Holloway Group)



By the 1970s, Holloway was using larger commercial trucks to spread gypsum in specialty crop types such as almonds, fruit tree orchards, and vineyards. (Photo: The Holloway Group)



Today, spreader trailers can deliver amendments right along the tree row and irrigation lines. (Photo: The Holloway Group)



Today’s tractors are also outfitted with precision GPS to ensure operators are efficient and delivering amendments exactly where they need to be for crop uptake. (Photo: The Holloway Group)

You can read more about California ag history as part of Holloway’s 90-year anniversary celebration by visiting online at HMHollowayAg.com/90.

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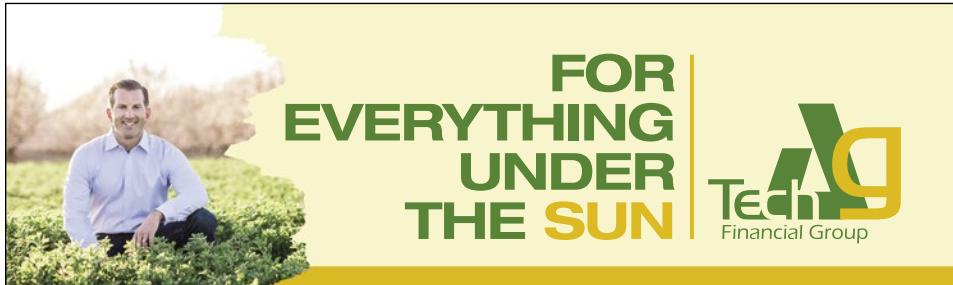


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Water Shortage Limits More Cotton Acres As Price Surges

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

Considering the red-hot price of cotton these days, California farmers say they would love to plant more of the field crop—if only they have the water.

State cotton growers have increased plantings by a modest 10% more than last year, according to preliminary estimates by the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association. In its March prospective plantings report, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated state cotton acreage at 142,000 this year, up more than 24%.

“We should see wall-to-wall cotton out there, and it’s not,” said Roger Isom, association president and CEO.

The price of pima cotton, a higher-end type of cotton that dominates state production, has reached record levels at around \$3.40 a pound compared \$1.20 to \$1.50 during the past two years, he noted. Upland cotton prices also remain at historic highs—rising to more than \$1.20 a pound from the more-typical 75 to 85 cents in recent years.

Given current prices, Isom said increased state acreage comes as no surprise. But he lamented another year of drought has limited the amount that got planted.

Such was the case with Kern County farmer Matthew Cauzza, who for the past three years has had to leave one field unplanted due to lack of water. Because his family has been growing cotton since the 1930s, they’re set up to grow and harvest cotton, which he described as “a safer bet” because of its “consistent outcome” compared to other crops he’s grown.

He pointed to cotton’s versatility, which allows him to rotate it in between vegetable crops such as tomatoes, onion and garlic. There’s also “nostalgia” about cotton, he said, recalling growing up in a region where “every field was just cotton.”

“We want to hold on to that a little bit, as long as we can do it,” Cauzza said. “Water is the only thing that’s keeping us from growing more cotton.”

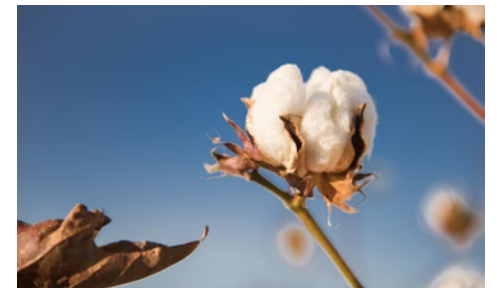
California cotton acreage peaked at 1.4 million to 1.6 million during the late 1970s and early 1980s, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Today, with drought limiting water supplies to farms and more land transitioning to permanent crops such as tree nuts, cotton acreage has declined to about 10% of what it used to be.

Because so few acres are being grown, Isom said there’s concern that low cotton volumes won’t be able to support the state’s remaining commercial cotton gins, which have dropped to about a handful. Also, growers who got out of growing cotton have sold their cotton-picking equipment, he noted.

“If those go away, how do you pick your cotton and get it to the gin?” Isom said. “We’re definitely seeing that and are very concerned on the infrastructure side of it.”

Besides water shortages, depressed cotton prices in recent years eroded grower interest in planting the crop. Demand for cotton plunged during the height of the pandemic, when textile mills shuttered and people were buying less apparel. The market roared back last year, as shoppers returned to stores and mills ramped up production, devouring cotton stocks.

With a new crop on the horizon, Isom characterized the economic outlook for cotton as “cautiously optimistic.” If demand stays up and supplies remain short, he said, prices will hold strong. But he warned cotton prices are now at a point where merchants and mills are buying less and turning to synthetic fibers. The good news, he said, is the soaring oil market has increased the cost of



Record-high cotton prices inspired California farmers to plant 10% to 25% more acreage than last year, according to early estimates. (Photo: Jerry Horbert / Shutterstock.com)

petroleum-based fibers such as polyester and rayon.

For pima cotton at least, Isom said he thinks higher prices could hold through next season, though it will be “pretty tough” to sustain current prices. California still grows the majority of the world’s pima, and the slight bump in acreage this year won’t “make a big dent” in supply, he added. Other producers of extra-long staple cotton to watch include China, India and Pakistan as to how their crops turn out.

With upland cotton, focus will be on Texas, the nation’s top cotton producer, which has also faced a punishing drought. If the Lone Star State gets rain and produces a “decent-size crop of decent quality,” Isom said, then prices might soften.

Though “the main attraction” for growing cotton this year is the price, Merced County farmer Bill Crivelli said another big driver is it uses less water than corn and processing tomatoes, two competing crops that have also seen prices move up.

“The tomato price is probably the highest it’s ever been too, but tomatoes are kind of risky,” he said, noting diseases such as tomato spotted wilt and curly top virus that could wreck fields. Tomatoes and corn also require more fertilizer to make a good crop compared to cotton, he pointed out.

In addition, having his own cotton picker makes cotton an easier choice over corn, Crivelli said, because “hardly any growers have corn harvesters,” so they would have to pay for custom harvest.

Because cotton is one of the last crops planted, Fresno County grower Mark McKean said it is often the one that gets cut out of the planting schedule when water is limited. He noted his cropping plan was already in place last October, when he also considered growing canning tomatoes and garlic or onions, all of which are contract crops he’s committed to grow. To make it work, he reduced his typical cotton acreage by 15% to 20%, but he will need to use surface water and groundwater to grow it.

“I would have more acres if I had more water available,” he said.

Kings County farmer Charles Meyer had planned to grow 300 acres of cotton this year, but after his well went down, he was able to get only 30 acres planted. He’s grown up to 2,000 acres in the past, but now most of that ground is planted to almonds, pistachios and alfalfa. He didn’t plant any cotton last year due to lack of water.

Besides the higher price, Meyer said, another incentive for growing cotton is he’s part of a cooperative that markets the commodity. He said he plans to use different agronomic approaches and new practices on the cotton he managed to plant.

“You might say these 30 acres is an experimental crop, because we’re going to try to handle it a little bit different because of the lack of water,” Meyer said. “We’re always trying to learn new ways to improve and make it more efficient.”

Port Delays Worsen As Harvest of New Crops Approaches

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

As ongoing port congestion and persistent shipping obstacles continue to block movement of California agricultural goods, farmers and exporters face bulging warehouses and dwindling cash flow that threaten to sink some businesses.

Tree nuts, fresh produce, dairy products and other California farm commodities struggle to find rides on vessels and containers in which to ship them, with ocean carriers rushing to set sail empty rather than hauling agricultural exports.

“We have 50 loads packed and ready to ship, that customers would take tomorrow, that we can’t get on the ship,” said Bill Carriere, a Glenn County walnut grower and handler.

Agricultural exporters say their shipping problems—which trace to pandemic-related supply-chain disruptions that started in 2020—have only gotten worse. More shipping companies have notified them that they won’t stop at the Port of Oakland to pick up containerized farm products, which account for 60% of total exports through the port. The companies opt instead to return ships directly to Asia following long delays in the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Only one ocean carrier—Mediterranean Shipping Co.—so far has committed to servicing the Port of Oakland, said Roger Isom, president and CEO of the Western Agricultural Processors Association and California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association.

The Northern California port saw 67,910 empty containers leave its shores during the first two months of this year. That’s compared to 37,263 empties during the same time in 2020, according to a letter that agricultural groups, including the California Farm Bureau, sent to the Biden administration last week. The letter further noted that three out of four containers at U.S. ports return to Asia empty.

Because ships continue to bypass the Oakland port, exporters say the opening in March of a new “pop-up” yard for pickup of empty containers has offered limited



Tugboats assist cargo ships to dock at the Port of Oakland in March, when 83 ships stopped at the Northern California port compared to 93 the previous March. (Photos: Sheila Fitzgerald / Shutterstock.com)

relief. The temporary hub, located offsite of the port, allows shippers to stage export loads while avoiding busy marine terminals where most empty containers are stored.

As of last week, there were more than 500 containers in the yard, said port spokesman Robert Bernardo. The port saw 83 ships stopping in Oakland in March, compared to 93 a year ago. Reduced vessel arrivals were due in part to a COVID-related port shutdown in Shanghai, the port said.

Though the port has enough empty containers to cover current demand, Bernardo said supplies remain “in constant flux.” He said he expects inventory to tighten as imports from China begin to resume.

Aside from dealing with a shortage of containers, agricultural shippers say they struggle to secure bookings, which often get canceled or “rolled,” meaning the cargo wasn’t loaded onto the scheduled vessel, usually because there’s no room.

Don Barton, a San Joaquin County tree-nut grower and walnut handler, said his company’s bookings were rolled so many times that product his “loyal customers in Israel” expected in December finally arrived this month.

“It’s inexcusable,” he said, calling the delays “unconscionable.” But he acknowledged “the pure economics of it.” The cost to ship a 40-foot container from China to Los Angeles surged from \$2,000 to \$15,000 during

the past two years. The backhaul from Los Angeles to Shanghai cost \$1,400.

“It’s hard to argue,” Barton said. “We’re also business-people; we understand the numbers.”

California agricultural exporters are “prepared to accept higher shipping costs,” Barton said, if that would encourage steamship lines to bring their vessels to Oakland. But there are limits. “There’s no way,” he said, that farm companies could match the current \$12,000 to \$15,000 price for containers going the other direction.

In their letter, farm groups asked the Biden administration to help convene a meeting with ocean carriers “to negotiate a restoration of export services immediately.” The problem is urgent, they said, because in a matter of months, farms will begin harvesting new crops while what’s left of last year’s crop remains in storage due to inability to ship.

Almond shippers would need to move 1.4 billion pounds of the nut across domestic and export markets before August to meet 2021’s leftover crop. Moving such a volume would require 31,000 to 34,000 containers, farm groups said.

To achieve their 10% average annual carryout, walnut marketers would need about 18,000 containers to ship 398 million pounds of product before September. They list projected losses to date at \$600 million to \$700 million

due to shipping problems, not including lost market share, lost contracts and increased costs for freight and other related fees.

Isom of the processors association said he considers ongoing shipping issues a trade barrier that warrants government intervention. Because most ocean carriers are foreign-owned, he acknowledged the U.S. lacks jurisdiction over the companies. But he said the trade imbalance needs to be addressed, perhaps through imposition of tariffs.

“Under President Trump, they did a lot of things on trade; some of it was called unfair,” Isom said. “Maybe it was, but at the same time, this isn’t fair. We have no way to resolve this.”

Barton said the U.S. may not be able to force steamship lines to change their practices through legislation, but he noted the U.S. does control its own ports and the unloading of ships. He suggested the U.S. could use this leverage to require ships to leave with full containers.

Meanwhile, Carriere said the 50 loads of walnuts that sit in his warehouse hurt him and his growers financially, because buyers will not pay until they receive their shipments.

What’s more, he said, California agricultural exporters continue to lose market share. He noted some customers, wanting to ensure they have product in time for Christmas, are already ordering walnuts from Chile, which is harvesting a new crop now.

“We’ve lost our reputation of being this reliable, high-quality supplier because we can’t get (product) there on a timely basis,” Carriere said.

With transit time to Southeast Asia still around five to six weeks from when containers are loaded, shipping fresh fruit overseas remains an ongoing challenge, said David Najarian, vice president of Paramount Export Co. in Alameda County, which exports fresh fruits and vegetables.

Noting the “strained” West Coast port network hasn’t been able to efficiently process the current higher volume of import cargo, he said he sees two solutions: “Import less from overseas or start working on a multi-year project to enlarge the West Coast port operations.”

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Campaign Finance Rules Violated?

Continued from PAGE 1 Homeless Center, as well as the Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault. Gill was originally running for office in California’s 23rd Congressional District race against Congressman Kevin McCarthy but decided to transition to a run for third district Supervisor after redistricting went into effect earlier this year. Gill maintains his main motivation for the switch was to continue his dedication to the communities of Kern. Mr. Gill has raised upwards of \$75,000 in his campaigning efforts so far this year.

As one can see, all three candidates have done an amazing job raising funds for their respective Supervisorial campaigns and each candidate has a unique view or reason as to why they are running for office and believe that they can make the most impact for citizens living within Kern’s third district.

However, recent questions have been raised regarding some candidate’s campaign funds that are being used for this election. Specifically, the question of whether candidate Louis Gill may have transferred some funds from his Congressional campaign bid to his bid for third district Supervisor. Kern County’s Measure K stipulates that no more than \$3,000 in funds can be transferred from a federal campaign to a local campaign, a number that appears to have been exceeded according to finan-

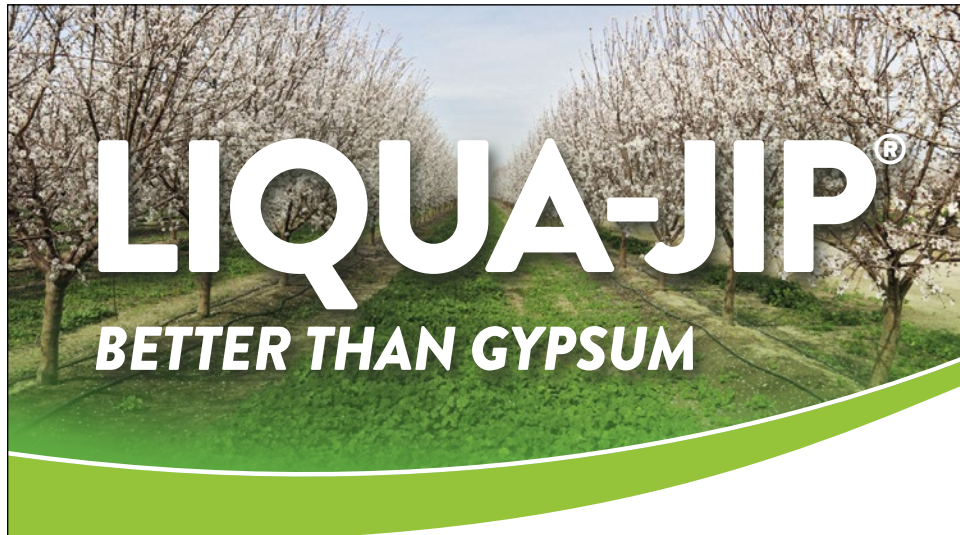
cial reports listed on KernVote.com.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with concerned citizen and local educator Paul Stine regarding this matter. According to Mr. Stine, the main concern here is that Louis Gill may have “Raised his money improperly and not in adherence to Measure K. He should have refunded that money to the donors and asked them to reissue checks to his county campaign committee.” This violation of Measure K raises questions of a possible unfair advantage in the upcoming election and raises some concern for those who are following the election closely.

A formal complaint has been filed with the Kern County District Attorney’s office under Measure K’s 2.130.150 Administrative Actions stipulations. According to Stine, the goal here is not to alienate any candidate or to take away from the good that they have done and will do in the future for Kern County. But rather, to ensure that laws are being followed consistently and enforced equitably to ensure a fair election for all.

The election for Kern County District 3 Supervisor takes place on June 7, 2022. Make sure you are registered vote, either by Absentee Ballot or in person at your local poll. For more information regarding the election and candidates please visit KernVote.com.

(Financial totals are referenced from 5/18/2022)



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Bruce Fry examines chardonnay vines hit by a mid-April frost in a vineyard northwest of Lodi. Fry said his vine damage is minor compared to what happened to some of his neighbors, some of whom will have little to no viable winegrapes this year after a deep freeze on April 11-12. (Photo: Kevin Hecteman)



Deep Freeze Hammers Winegrape Farmers

By Kevin Hecteman
Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

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The 2022 vintage in some of California's winegrape-growing regions took a massive hit from a mid-April frost that will leave some farmers with nothing to harvest.

Bruce Fry, who grows winegrapes near Lodi, said some of his vines lost their grape clusters—still in early stages of development—to the freeze. Overnight temperatures the night of April 11-12 reached 27.7 to 30 degrees around Lodi, with some lows lasting three to four hours. While he's more fortunate than others, he still has damage.

"It burned all the way down the top of the shoot, all the way down to the spur position on the cordon," where the shoot starts growing after pruning, Fry said. He likened the frost to "a blanket of cold air."

"My dad's seen some frost in years past where it looks like a river of cold air—it flows, finds the low spots and flows around—but this was like a cover of cold air just landed on these vines and crops, and just burnt them," Fry said.

Near Thornton, in northern San Joaquin County, farmer Frank Olagary said losses to his grapevines run well north of 90%.

"There could be maybe 10 acres I could harvest that was along a levee, and then another 10 acres or so around my house," Olagary said. Otherwise, "it's a complete wipeout," he added. "The frost I had in the past, I was able to harvest and get half a crop, or maybe a little bit less. This year, I don't see that happening."

Winegrape growers on the valley floor and in the foothills east and southeast of Sacramento are reporting significant losses of their 2022 crops. Amador and Calaveras counties have sent requests for disaster declarations to the state, and more may be in the works.

Jim Spinetta, a Plymouth winegrape grower and president of the Amador County Farm Bureau, said the frost was the worst he'd seen since the 1980s.

"It wasn't necessarily the temperature; it was the time," said Spinetta, whose crops endured four hours at 26-27 degrees.

Amador County winegrape farmer Jay Wilderotter said the point of concern on the thermometer is in the high 30s. "The coldest part of the day is sunrise," Wilderotter said. "If it's 35, 36 degrees at 2 o'clock in the morning, you're going to have some problems."

Wilderotter, who grows about 20 different winegrape

varietals, said this frost was different from most.

"Most of the time, the frost would just settle on the ground, but this was a pretty deep layer of cold air," Wilderotter said. "It just wiped out everything."

Spinetta said this was an advective frost, brought by a mass of cold air and freezing temperatures from the Gulf of Alaska.

"Wind machines did not make a difference in this type of an advective frost and at those temperatures for that amount of time," Spinetta said. "The problem is that there's actual vascular damage in our plants and on our ranch."

That means the 2023 vintage is in trouble, Spinetta said.

"On all of our vines," he said, "the spurs have damage. This is not just the bud; this is next year's crop. We have to retrain all these vines to bring up a new spur. It's just going to be a mess this year and next year."

In Thornton, Olagary said, "we had a couple helicopters flying out here to push down warm air, and it seemed like that did not help at all this time." He's done this before, with some success, but this year's cold air was too deep.

Amador County Agricultural Commissioner Eric Mayberry reported the average crop loss at 60%. A third of the grape and walnut growers his office surveyed reported a complete loss for the season, he noted.

In Calaveras County, Agricultural Commissioner Jesse Fowler reported an average of 60% damage to winegrapes.

Tim Pelican, San Joaquin County's agricultural commissioner, said damage levels in his county likely won't meet the 30% threshold for a disaster request, but because his county borders others that have declared disasters, San Joaquin County farmers can take advantage of U.S. Department of Agriculture programs for farmers who lose crops to adverse weather.

Pelican has already filed a disaster-declaration request for the county's cherry crop, after the late-February frost caused about a 50% crop loss. Rain and hail just after Easter may have been a backbreaker.

"Since we're already going to have a light crop, depending on how much damage there is, some of the crop may just not get harvested," Pelican said.

Mayberry said that while crop insurance and USDA programs can help, they won't make the farmer whole. Crop insurance does not cover 100% of a farmer's losses, he pointed out, and USDA assistance comes in the

See **DEEP FROZEN WINEGRAPES** on the **NEXT PAGE**

Local Solutions Central to Water Forum



**By Christine Souza,
Assistant Editor, Ag Alert**

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from California Farm Bureau
Federation*

Facing a third year of drought, leadership from county Farm Bureaus, spanning all regions of California, gathered in Sacramento last week to engage with state water officials about all things water.

A changing climate, shrinking snowpack, water rights, aging infrastructure, groundwater regulations and solutions to the state's water crisis were among the topics discussed at the California Farm Bureau Water Forum. The event brought together state water officials and county Farm Bureau leaders from the Mountain, North Coast, Central Valley, Central Coast and Southern California regions.

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson said drought is one of myriad issues facing farmers, along with rising costs, trade impacts and remaining challenges of the pandemic.

"We're seeing a confluence of issues around the globe right now that are just going to compound what we know will be a severe and painful drought session," Johansson said. "It is going to be a very challenging year."

State and county Farm Bureaus, he said, have proposed many solutions to help solve the state's water crisis such as more water storage, conveyance and infrastructure improvements, groundwater recharge, temperature controls, adaptive management and stormwater capture. "But we have faced roadblocks every step of the way," Johansson said.

"We can have a state that serves the needs of farmers, consumers, as well as the environment," he said. "But farmers have to know that you want agriculture in this state. Know that we want to be part of the solution."

California Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth discussed urgent climate challenges for California, saying, "The world is definitely changing around us, and we've got a lot of work to do."

Addressing the audience, she said, "It's the people in



California Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth, right, talks to, from left, Danny Merkley, California Farm Bureau director of water resources, California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson and State Water Resources Control Board Chairman E. Joaquin Esquivel, during the Farm Bureau Water Forum last week. (Photo: Christine Souza)

this room that have the most ingenuity of any sector in California. That gives me a lot of confidence that if we work together and focus on solutions, we'll be able to do that. One thing we need to understand is we are very much in the era of extreme hydrology."

State Water Resources Control Board Chairman E. Joaquin Esquivel discussed California's water rights system, which sets it apart from other Western states that he said curtail water rights more often.

"It is how the water right system was built to make sure that we can manage when things come down to such scarce resources," he said.

To avoid drastic cuts, he said, interest groups for local watersheds are discussing development of cooperative agreements as a more comprehensive approach to managing water during times of scarcity.

Esquivel said "being able to start to really dig into the water right system for the first time ever in an active way" is a key step. He said "just even looking at what's hydrologically available, saying what water rights could support it and actively curtailing to that has been really important."

Imperial County farmer Ronnie Leimgruber said renegotiating water rights is a huge concern for agriculture.

"Senior water rights (holders) gave concessions to allow junior water right holders access to excess flows, and

that agreement was negotiated in good faith, and they realized in times of shortage they would be cut off first," Leimgruber said. "Now people want to renegotiate."

Conversation at the forum also focused on California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. Local agencies must adopt plans that show how they intend to achieve groundwater sustainability by the 2040s. Johansson said Farm Bureau opposed SGMA, but once it became law, county Farm Bureaus and farmers participated in the process to form agencies and develop plans.

"What we know now about our local groundwater is light years ahead of where we were in 2015 when this bill passed. We're getting there," Johansson said.

In answering a question about a lack of agricultural representation on SGMA agencies, Nemeth said, "We are hearing this issue crop up in different parts of the state. I would put this in the category of something that's not working, but there are some improvements we need to make, and we can make those as we propagate regulations."

Some county Farm Bureaus weighed in on a plan to improve water quality for salmon and native fish in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Voluntary agreements unveiled in late March by the Newsom administration are an alternative to the regulatory regime of the Bay-Delta water quality control plan by the state water board. Signatories include U.S. Bureau of Recla-

mation, DWR and water districts in the Sacramento Valley and south of the delta.

Merced County Farm Bureau Executive Director Breanne Vandenberg asked water officials about the status of the effort as it relates to Merced River stakeholders.

Nemeth and Esquivel said their agencies are open to working with Merced Irrigation District.

"We want to continue to work with Merced," Nemeth said. "I do think there is a solution. VAs (voluntary agreements) always work better when we can include brick and mortar projects that help the system work better. There's water investments, infrastructure investments that the state can partner with Merced to make a more complete package."

In response to questions from Butte, Del Norte and Solano counties about the status of water infrastructure projects such as the proposed Sites Reservoir, Nemeth said, "I share that frustration. Infrastructure is hugely important," adding that the state should take advantage of building water infrastructure during dry periods to have for times of drought.

Representatives from several counties asked for help in streamlining the permitting process to complete groundwater recharge projects and help with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. San Diego County Farm Bureau President Mary Matava described the order as "really complex" and suggested making it simpler for smaller farms.

Kevin Merrill, a winegrape grower in Santa Barbara County, said complying with various water requirements "is tough. I've spent a lot of time on this and a tremendous amount of money." He asked officials to help with more grant funding, for which they noted there is state and federal grant funding available.

Several county representatives, including Amador County winegrape grower Jim Spinetta, called for improving forest management. Spinetta said practicing better forest management will help conserve water supplies.

In discussing drought and the future, Tulare County dairy farmer Joey Airoso said, "This is everybody's problem including—and I'm part of it—the 40 million people who live in this state.

"We try not to waste water because we're trying to preserve our ground for the next generation," Airoso said. "Most farms have been in our families for a long time and we love this state, but we're getting tired of being kicked, and we need some support."

Deep Frozen Winegrapes

Continued from the PREVIOUS PAGE form of low-interest loans.

"Any dollar they get is going to have to be paid back with interest," Mayberry said. "It's not like they're getting free money."

Wilderotter said there isn't much more to do than "wait till next year."

"Some plants will put out a secondary shoot and put out some grapes," he said. "But usually it's the primary shoot that has your prime grapes on that gets knocked down. There's not a whole lot you can do."

Spinetta said wineries will be scrambling for grapes this year, thanks to the frost and the likelihood that harvesting remaining grapes won't pencil out for many people.

"Let's say that I have 40% of my crop out there," Spinetta said. "A crew isn't going to want to go out there and pick a 40% crop. I have to pay double or triple what the going rate is, and then it's unprofitable to go out there and harvest. A lot of vineyards are going to go unpicked this year, because we can't afford to do it."

Shutting down the vineyard, of course, is not an option,

Spinetta noted. "We still have to use crop-care materials," he said.

"We still have to water the vines. We still have to take care of these crops."

Olagary will be on watch for mildew and mealybug issues. Two things he may need less of: water and fertilizer.

"Since we don't have the grapes, (the vines) can survive without fertility, which is a good thing since the fertilizer this year is quite expensive," Olagary said.

As to irrigation, Olagary added, "we're going to water a little bit less in the beginning, because there isn't any canopy growth, but as the leaves and shoots start growing, then we'll bump up the water."

Ben Kolber, who has affected grapevines west of Lodi and in the Isleton area, is farming with the 2023 harvest in mind.

"It's a hard situation to be in, because we're farming not only on whatever's left for this year for our crop, our residual crop for this year, but also we are constituting on growing strong wood for next year, so we can have a crop for next year," Kolber said.

"We can't really do much differently," Kolber said. "We still have to keep on trucking here."



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State Rice Acreage Plummets Amid Water Reductions

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

This time of year, the Sacramento Valley should be buzzing with tractors working the soil and planes dropping rice seed onto flooded fields as farmers ramp up planting.

In the heart of California rice country, the town of Maxwell in Colusa County gets busy during planting season. Farmer Brian Barrett, who grew up here, said he would see people running around, going to the parts store, maybe grabbing lunch at the local eatery.

“That dollar’s getting rolled down Main Street,” he said. But this year, “it’s a ghost town.”

There’s a lack of activity because more rice fields will go unplanted this season due to the drought and reduced water deliveries to farms. In its prospective plantings report released at the end of March, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated that California rice acreage will drop to 348,000 this year, the lowest since 1983-84. That’s compared to 407,000 acres last year and 517,000 acres in 2020.

Farmers such as Barrett say they think actual acreage may end up being much lower than the current USDA estimate.

Much of the economic hit is being felt on the west side of the Sacramento Valley, especially farms in Colusa and Glenn counties that get water from irrigation districts that divert from the Sacramento River, or Sacramento River Settlement Contractors. In past critically dry years, those irrigation districts received 75% of contract amounts. This is the first year they’re getting 18%.

The Northern California Water Association estimated that of the 450,000 acres of all farmland in the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors service area, 370,000 acres will go fallow this year due to reduced water deliveries. That amounts to some \$925 million in direct on-farm impact. Specific to rice, impacts could reach an estimated \$251 million, with more than \$76 million associated with lost wages.

Rice farmers who are fallowing ground say crop insurance will help them make ends meet. But they expressed concern about long-term drought impacts that could potentially collapse the rice-farming infrastructure, including businesses that support them, such as rice mills, dryers, aerial applicators, trucking companies and suppliers.

“I’m really worried about what’s going to happen to these small towns—not just this year but next year,” Barrett said.

On rented land where he has wells, Barrett said he’s using groundwater to avoid having to fallow. But on his family’s own farm that has no access to groundwater, he said this will be the first time not “a single kernel of rice” is planted.

Even with the cost of fuel and fertilizer soaring, Barrett said he’s not skimping on inputs, as the higher market price for rice will help him offset the increased cost to produce the grain. Plus, he said he’s doing what he can to get good yields and more of the crop into the marketplace to keep it well supplied.

“If you’ve got water, my thought is we need all the rice we can get,” he said. “What I don’t want is for these markets to leave, and then we go back to a full planting and this thing just crashes.”

With farmers in the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District—the largest of the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors—getting 0.4 acre-feet of water per deeded acre this year, down from 4.1 acre-feet in past critically dry years, Larry Maben said he won’t be farming any rice. The district



Rice with rice husk. (Photo: Naowarat / Shutterstock.com)

estimates about 1,150 acres of rice will be planted with surface water this year, down from 79,172 acres in 2021.

Maben noted growers will likely end up with less than the allocated amount due to losses from the delivery system. On average, it takes about 5 acre-feet of water per acre to grow a field of rice, according to the University of California Cooperative Extension. With such a reduced allocation, Maben said, “the rice that’s going to be raised here is going to be raised on wells for the most part.” Even though he has access to wells, he said, “I don’t trust them enough” to depend on them for growing rice.

Maben also grows olives for oil in the region. With more farmers tapping the aquifer to grow crops such as rice, he said he fears there will be less water for other crops such as trees.

“Groundwater is a finite resource,” he said. “The more that’s used here is less that will be available later on, and we’re already in an overdraft situation.”

He lamented he’s already seeing effects of the reduced rice plantings on the local farming community. He noted the company that does his aerial applications told him they will need to find additional work out of state to make up for the lack of work here.

“It’s a real cascade effect,” Maben said. “I’m concerned about the operations that are local, your friends, family here in the local community that may not be able to make it.”

Bill Weller, who farms in Colusa and Glenn counties, said the only rice he’ll be planting this year is with groundwater. Having crop insurance, he said, he’ll do OK financially. But he noted he didn’t hire any of his regular part-time crew that helps with planting, and he worries about other employees who work in rice dryers, trucking and chemical companies.

He said he’s also noticing the impacts on wildlife. Because there’s so little water out there, Weller said he’s having to go out at night to scare off geese that use his rice fields as a refuge and food source.

“The fields that are watered are getting hammered,” he said. “I know a couple other farmers have had to reseed a few times just because the geese are eating the rice.”

On the east side of the valley, growers who belong to irrigation districts that divert water from the Feather River face a second year of 50% cutbacks. These cuts may not be as “draconian” as on the west side of the valley, said Carl Hoff, president and CEO of Butte County Rice Growers Association, but some of the same impacts are being felt, just not as “catastrophic.” All parts of the cooperative—seed, drying, storage and marketing—will be reduced due to less acreage being planted, he noted.

Even though he’ll be able to plant less than 60% of his ground, Butte County farmer David Lundberg said his concern is for the future, as he has no wells on his ranch.

See STATE RICE ACREAGE PLUMMETS on PAGE 13

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DWR Awards \$150 Million to Support Communities That Rely on Groundwater

Press Release Provided by California Department of Water Resources

In an effort to boost water supply reliability for millions of Californians, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) today announced its first round of funding to 20 agencies responsible for managing critically overdrafted groundwater basins throughout the state.

A total of \$150 million in funding is being awarded to regional groundwater agencies through the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Program. The funding will go toward projects focused on water efficiency, groundwater recharge, feasibility studies for alternative water supplies, and the installation of monitoring wells. The grant funding is made possible by a \$171 million investment from the Budget Act of 2021, and will support other benefits such as improving drinking water quality and restoring habitat.

“Groundwater is a critical lifeline for millions of Californians and that is especially true during severe droughts like the one we’re experiencing right now,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “We are dealing with the real-time impacts of a warming climate, and we know that less snowpack, precipitation, and surface water supply will lead to an increased reliance on groundwater. This first round of grant funding will help strengthen groundwater management, improve the reliability of those supplies statewide and ensure access to safe and clean water for all Californians.”

This funding will support 119 individual projects across 20 groundwater basins, with 102 of those projects benefiting underrepresented or severely disadvantaged communities including Tribes.

Today’s awards include more than \$40 million for projects within the San Joaquin Valley, a critically overdrafted region that is home to millions of Californians, that are dedicated to capturing excess flood waters for groundwater recharge. Projects include:

- In Kings County, the Mid-Kings River Groundwater Sustainability Agency’s Corcoran Irrigation District’s North Reservoir Project will construct new reservoirs for water storage and recharge basins. The project will directly benefit the Tulare Lake Subbasin by increasing groundwater availability and stability by recharging the aquifer, reducing groundwater pumping, and increasing groundwater quality.

- In San Joaquin County, the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District’s North System Improvement Project will direct excess surface water, when available, to recharge the subbasin through an approach known as Flood-Managed Aquifer Recharge (Flood-MAR).

- In Tulare County, the Lower Tule River Irrigation District’s Allensworth Project will divert flood waters in wet years from the White River to an 80-acre recharge basin, while also creating wildlife habitat and a recreational park.

- In Stanislaus County, the Del Puerto Water District will conduct three projects: the Los Baños Creek Recharge and Recovery Project, the Flood Water Capture Project, and the Cottonwood Creek Recharge Project, that will capture and recharge stormwater to support basin sustainability. The projects will capture peak flows while creating a seasonal habitat during known periods of migration along the Pacific Flyway.

Outside of the San Joaquin Valley, projects located in the cities of Paso Robles and San Miguel, once completed, will deliver approximately 5,000 acre-feet per year of recycled water from wastewater treatment plants to use as irrigation for parks and agriculture. This direct use of recycled water will reduce the need to pump groundwater from the basin and further improve the sustainability of the city’s water supply and provide a supplemental water supply to irrigators in the basin.

Projects that will help improve drinking water supplies include the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency’s Aquifer Storage and Recovery, Beltz Well 10 Project



Row crops with groundwater irrigation in Castroville. (Photo: DWR)

which will store surface water, treated to drinking water standards, into the Santa Cruz Mid County Groundwater Basin for use as an underground storage reservoir. The drinking water will serve as a water supply during periods of water supply shortages or drought. Additionally, a project through the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Authority will identify and destroy up to 10 wells in the Oxnard Subbasin to reduce cross-contamination between two aquifer systems that serve multiple underrepresented communities in the area.

In addition to developing projects in these communities, the grant funding will help groundwater sustainability agencies revise their existing groundwater sustainability plans or plan alternatives.

Several non-governmental organizations in the state will partner with the GSAs to help implement these projects, including the Central Coast Wetlands Group, Stanford Foundation, River Partners, Sustainable Conservation, Self-Help Enterprises, Sequoia River Alliance Trust, Tulare Basin Watershed Partnership, California Partnership, and Borrego Valley Stewardship Council. DWR encourages these types of partnerships, which helps meet the intent of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and is working to provide tools and resources to strengthen

such collaboration through a complementary effort called the SGM Grant Program’s Underrepresented Community Technical Assistance Program.

California is home to 515 groundwater basins, with the majority of residents relying on groundwater for some portion of their water supply. During dry years, groundwater contributes up to 60 percent of the statewide annual supply and serves as a critical buffer against the impacts of drought and climate change.

The SGM Grant Program will provide additional support for groundwater basins through a second funding solicitation later this fall, which will offer more than \$200 million for planning efforts and projects in medium and high priority groundwater basins to help local agencies reach their groundwater sustainability goals under SGMA. Critically overdrafted basins that received funding in the first round will also be eligible to apply for funding in the next round.

For more information about available funding, visit DWR’s SGM Grant Program page. Individuals who are experiencing a failing drinking water supply should contact their county’s Office of Emergency Services for immediate assistance and emergency response to urgent drinking water needs. For more information about the State’s drought response and available resources, visit [Drought.CA.gov](https://drought.ca.gov).

Avaunt® eVo Insect Control Receives Supplemental Label in California; Offers New Mode of Action to Target Codling Moth, Navel Orangeworm and Peach Twig Borer in Tree Nuts

Press Release Provided by FMC

Avaunt® eVo insect control from FMC has obtained a supplemental label for use on tree nuts to control codling moth, navel orangeworm (NOW) and peach twig borer in California. Crops on the label include almonds, pistachios and walnuts, both black and English.

This tool delivers rapid activity with residual control of Lepidoptera as well as a new insecticide mode of action for tree nuts. Built on the active ingredient indoxacarb, an IRAC Group 22A insecticide, Avaunt® eVo insect control utilizes a unique mode of action previously not available for tree nut growers.

As a Group 22A insecticide, Avaunt® eVo insect control has little to no impact on beneficial insects, does not flare mites and has no cross-resistance to other insecticides. These components make Avaunt® eVo insect control an excellent fit in integrated pest management programs and rotational tool with solutions like Altacor® insect control powered by Rynaxypyr® active on almonds.

“The introduction of Avaunt® eVo insect control for California tree nuts is another step forward in the FMC mission to offer growers more tools to address their challenging pest spectrum, reduce selection pressure on existing chemistry and enhance the growing environment,” said Issa Qandah, technical service manager for FMC.

With a distinct pest control range, Avaunt® eVo insect control, depending on the pest, can be used during both larval and adult stages. Specific application recommen-

dations for the three pests noted in the supplemental label are as follows:

Codling Moth

Make initial application at or before peak egg lay for targeted generation. Depending on level of infestation, reapply 14 days later as needed. Use higher rates, MSO/COC blend adjuvant and ground application equipment to achieve thorough coverage.

Navel Orangeworm (NOW)

Use as a mummy spray. Depending on level of pest infestation, use the higher label use rate mixed with MSO/COC blend adjuvant to achieve better performance.

Peach Twig Borer

For spring application to overwintering generation, make application at late dormant, just prior to bud break, to early bloom. For “May spray” applications

to the summer generations, make applications at peak moth flight timed at or before peak egg lay. Higher rates in the labeled rate range may be needed for high infestations levels and large, dense foliage trees.

To maximize application coverage, penetration and performance, it is recommended applicators and/or growers use an MSO/COC blend adjuvant when applying Avaunt® eVo insect control.

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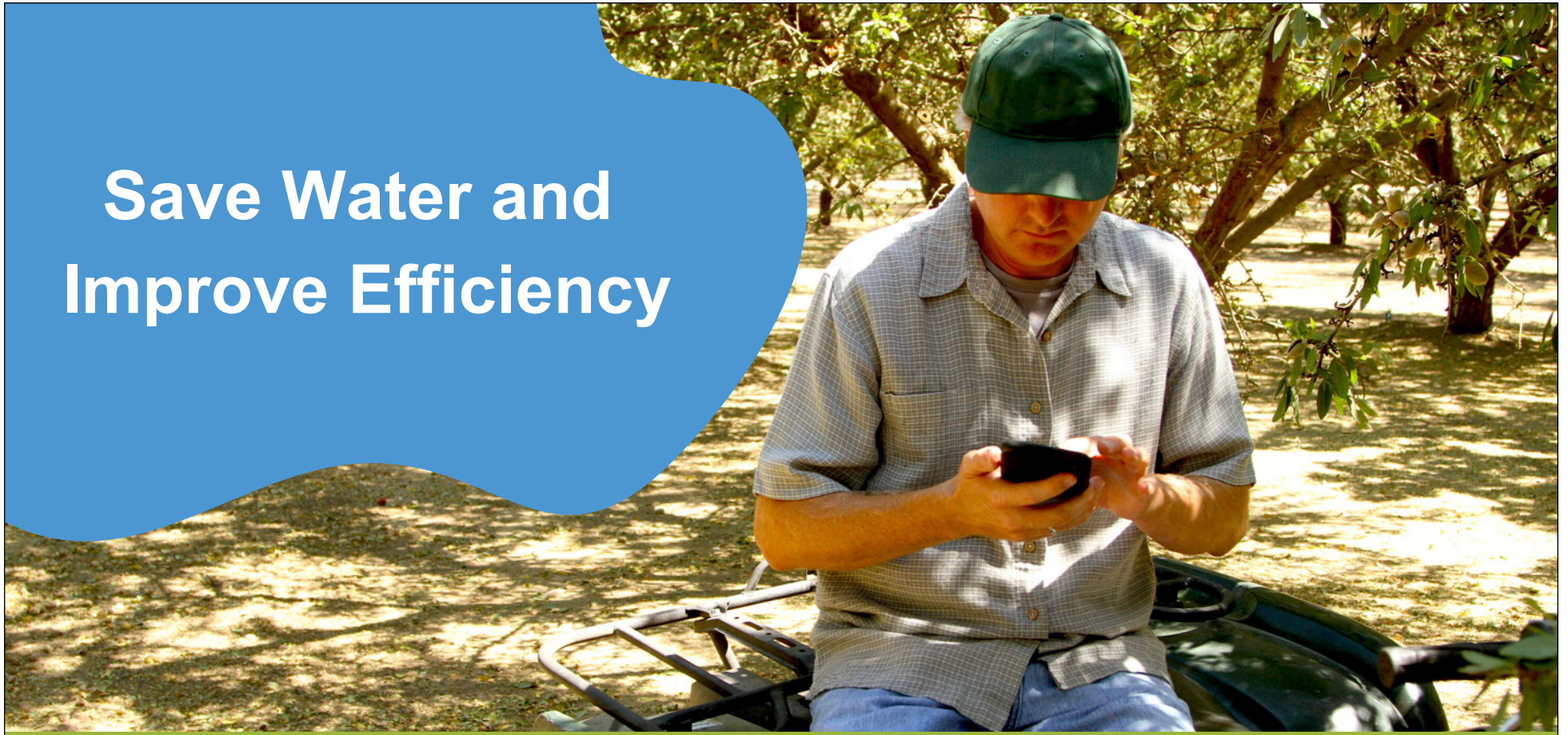
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State Invests \$3.75 Million to Fund Research Into Safer, More Sustainable Pest Management

Press Release Provided by California Department of Pesticide Regulation

On April 21st, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) awarded \$3.75 million to fund 10 research projects that explore Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools for urban, non-agricultural and agricultural pest management. The 2021-2022 DPR Grants Programs funded by the state budget represent a 617% increase from the previous year's funding to accelerate the transition to safer, more sustainable pest management.

"The grant projects we are funding today are critical to developing and expanding innovative practices and biological, non-chemical and physical tools to manage pests in agriculture, urban and other non-agricultural communities," said DPR Director Julie Henderson. "The research will support the state's work to accelerate a systemwide transition to safer, more sustainable pest management and better protect human health and the environment."

DPR's Research Grants Program funds projects that advance IPM, an approach that uses the least-toxic, effective method to solve pest problems. In the last decade, DPR has awarded \$9,702,819 in research grants.

Research projects funded for agricultural pest management:

- Investigating a pesticide-free mating disruption approach using vibrational signals to control the spotted lanternfly, which presents particular risk to grapes, hops, apples and stone fruit, along with maple, poplar, walnut and willow trees. Spotted lanternfly is one of the most damaging invasive insects nationwide and has already caused significant harm to crops and landscapes across 11 states. This research will be led by Dr. Rodrigo Krugner at the United States Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service (USDA ARS).
- Evaluating an IPM approach that will disrupt insect behavior by targeting and interfering with a pest's biological processes and minimizing possible unintended effects to other organisms. The project will evaluate the use of this tool for controlling diamondback moth and western flower thrips that impact California vegetable crops such as lettuce. This research will be led by Dr. Daniel Hasegawa at USDA ARS.
- Assessing a biocontrol system for the management of tadpole shrimp in rice. Tadpole shrimp usefully eat some early season weeds but can cause damage to rice later in their lifecycle. To preserve their role in controlling weeds but diminish the shrimp's later impact on the rice harvest, predator mosquito fish will be introduced mid-season to control the shrimp's population when necessary. This research will be led by Dr. Ian Grettenberger at UC Davis.
- Testing two emerging IPM technologies for agricultural use, the automatic release of biocontrol organisms using flying drones, and precision spray application

technology, which uses much less pesticide than applying pesticide sprays using current techniques. This research will be led by Dr. Ian Grettenberger at UC Davis.

- Developing an IPM software decision-making tool for pistachio growers that helps reduce pesticide use by guiding more precise pesticide applications when chemical use is necessary. This IPM tool leverages smart technology to help growers transition from routine preventative spraying to more limited threshold-based chemical use. This research will be led by Dr. Themis Michailides at UC Davis.

Research projects funded for urban and agriculture pest management:

- Studying the use of a reduced-risk "attract-and-kill" approach as an effective alternative to urban and agricultural pesticide spray programs for managing South American palm weevils, a pest that damages date palms in urban and agricultural environments. "Attract-and-kill" strategies use pheromones that attract the target pest to a small amount of pesticide that kills the insect, as opposed to spraying a large quantity of pesticide over an area to control pest populations. This research will be led by Dr. Mark Hoddle at UC Riverside.
- Studying the impact and potential of using insect growth regulators that target Argentine ants for pest control in urban and agricultural environments. Insect growth regulators are new, safer pest management tools that pose a much lower risk of causing unintended damage to beneficial insects when compared to many traditional insecticides. This research will be led by Dr. Dong-Hwan Choe at UC Riverside.

Research projects funded for urban and nonagricultural pest management:

- Testing non-chemical entrapment methods for trapping, monitoring and eliminating bedbugs, a significant public health pest that disproportionately affects low-income Californians. This research will be led by Dr. Catherine Loudon at UC Irvine.
- Creating a new set of guidelines for effectively identifying and managing biting mites, a common, but poorly understood indoor pest that is often misidentified and incorrectly managed. This research will be led by Dr. Andrew Sutherland at UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR).
- Assessing a baiting system for detecting western drywood termites to reduce the number of unnecessary fumigation treatments in California homes, especially in Southern California where termites represent a significant pest problem. This system would indicate when active termite infestations have returned and if preventative treatment is needed, greatly decreasing the amount of high-risk pesticide use in homes. This research will be led by Dr. Dong-Hwan Choe at UC Riverside.

State Rice Acreage Plummets

Continued from PAGE 10 "We just need more storage and more rain and snowpack next year or else we're going to be in the same boat," he said.

The robust rice market right now may help soften the blow of skyrocketing production costs for farmers, said Yuba County grower Michael Rue, but "in the long term, this is not a good deal." Commercial

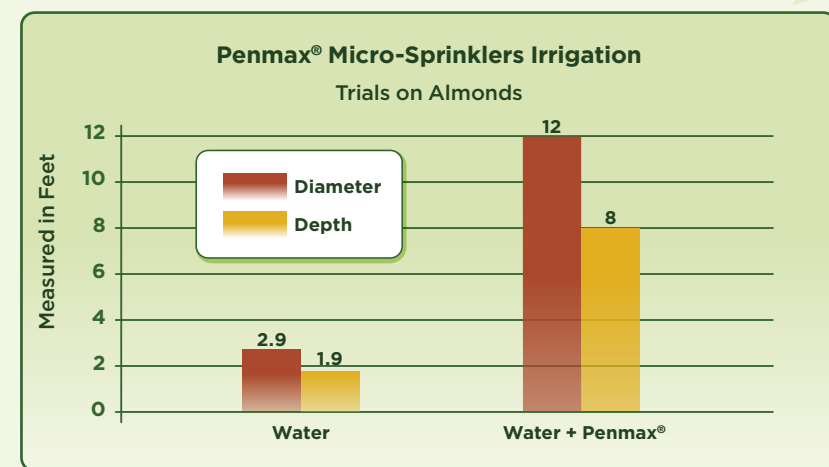
markets often react to higher prices by turning to other producers or by using other types of starches, he said. The only way to win them back is with lower prices, he added.

"It's never good when you lose demand," Rue said. "Then when you have a normal crop and you need those markets, it's not easy to get them back."



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Almond Acreage Increases in 2022 but Pace of Growth Slows

Press Release Provided by Almond Board of California

California's almond acreage continues to grow, but at a gradually slowing rate, according to two new reports released on April 28th. While the number of almond orchards removed also increased over the previous year, it was not enough to offset the overall acreage gains.

According to an estimate from Land IQ, bearing almond orchards at harvest will cover 1.338 million acres across California, an increase of 29,000 acres – or about 2.2% – over last year. This estimate looks at orchards that will be productive and harvested in 2022. In addition, the report estimates 59,732 acres of orchards will be removed before harvest, nearly 12,000 acres more than last year.

These estimates from Land IQ's 2022 Standing Acreage Initial Estimate look at bearing acreage – orchards that have matured enough to produce a crop in the coming harvest of the 2022-23 crop year. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) 2021 California Almond Acreage Report released today gives a comprehensive look at last year.

The USDA-NASS report for the 2021-22 crop year estimated there were 1.32 million bearing acres in 2021, up 5.6 percent from 2020. Total almond acreage in 2021, which includes non-bearing trees, was estimated at 1.64 million, up 2.5 percent from the previous year. It also said the 320,000 non-bearing acres in 2021 is a total down 8.6% from 2020.

The USDA-NASS report gave a preliminary estimate for bearing acreage in 2022 at 1.37 million acres, but cautioned that a major source of data for this estimate is a survey mailed to growers and is unlikely to be 100 percent accurate.

USDA-NASS said nonpareil continued to be the leading variety, followed by Monterey, Butte, Carmel, and Independence.

These reports are being issued side by side by the Almond Board of California (ABC) to provide a complete picture of California's almond acreage.

Neither of these reports offer any estimate on the actual almond yield this 2021-22 crop year. The first look at yield will come on May 12 with USDA-NASS' Subjective Estimate. A fuller picture of crop size will come with USDA-NASS' Objective Report in July.

Bearing acres reflect plantings from 2019 or earlier. The removal estimates cover orchards taken out beginning in 2021 through March 31, 2022, added to acreage projected to be removed through Aug. 31. The projection uses historical data and present conditions.

"These estimates show that California almond production will remain strong," said ABC President and CEO Richard Waycott. "Demand for almonds in California, the U.S. and around the globe continues to grow and California almond growers are prepared to meet that demand."

Land IQ's Initial Estimate and its Final Acreage Estimate in November, along with USDA-NASS's April Acreage Report, May's Subjective Estimate and the Objective Report in July are all commissioned by ABC to provide statistical transparency and a robust picture of California almonds to industry stakeholders around the world.

In 2018, ABC first commissioned Land IQ, a Sacramento-based agricultural and environmental scientific research and consulting firm, to develop a comprehensive, living map of California almonds. The map is the result of nearly a decade of research and has an accuracy of 98% or greater.

Data for USDA-NASS's acreage reports comes from a number of sources including voluntary responses from almond growers' to mailed questionnaires with telephone and field follow-ups. USDA-NASS also uses Land IQ data to fine tune its reports.

NASS Forecasts Smaller Almond Crop Harvest 2022 expected to be down 4 percent from last year

Press Release Provided by Almond Board of California

The 2022 California Almond Subjective Forecast published May 12th, by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) estimates that the crop harvested in 2022 will come in at 2.8 billion pounds, 4 percent below last year's 2.92 billion pounds.

Forecasted yield is 2,040 pounds per acre, 8 percent below the 2021 yield of 2,210 pounds per acre.

"A lower crop estimate was not totally unexpected versus last year's 2.9 billion pounds," said Richard Waycott, president and CEO of the Almond Board of California

(ABC). "Some growers' crops this spring were impacted by frost, while all growers are managing continuing concerns about water availability. However, demand for California almonds around the globe remains strong and California almond growers are prepared to meet that demand."

The Subjective Forecast is the first of two production reports from NASS for the coming crop year. It is based on opinions from a phone survey conducted from April 19 to May 6 of randomly selected California almond growers. The sample of growers, which changes every year, is spread across regions and different sized operations.

On July 8, NASS will release its second production estimate, the 2022 California Almond Objective Report, which is considered more accurate and is based on actual almond counts using a more statistically rigorous methodology to determine yield.

This Subjective Forecast comes two weeks after NASS released the 2021 California Almond Acreage Report, which gave a preliminary estimate for bearing acreage in 2022 at 1.37 million acres, about 3.8 percent larger than its estimate for 2021 of 1.32 million bearing acres.

NASS conducts the annual Subjective Forecast, Objective Report and Acreage Report to provide the California almond industry with the data needed to make informed business decisions. These reports are the official industry crop estimates.



Almond orchard at sunrise. (Photo: Dan Goldberg)

CDFA Accepting Applications for 2022 CA Farm to School Grant Program

Press Release Provided by the California Department of Food and Agriculture

The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) is accepting applications for the 2022 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program, until 5 p.m. PT July 6, 2022.

The program will award competitive grants to support projects that cultivate equity, nurture students, build climate resilience, and create scalable and sustainable change. Applicants may apply to multiple tracks based on eligibility and project type.

To support a systems approach to advancing farm to school throughout the state, the program offers four funding tracks:

- **Track 1:** The California Farm to School K-12 Procurement and Education Grant
- **Track 2:** The California Farm to School Partnership Grant
- **Track 3:** The California Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Grant
- **Track 4:** The California Farm to School Producer Grant

Visit the California Farm to School Incubator Grant



Outdoors learning in the garden. (Photo: Halfpoint / Shutterstock.com)

Program webpage to view the formal request for applications, access the online portal through which applications must be submitted, and register for informational webinars about each funding track.

The California Budget Act of 2021 included a \$60 million, one-time General Fund allocation for CDFA-F2F to sustain and expand the California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program, with \$30 million allocated for fiscal year 2021-22 and \$30 million allocated for fiscal year 2022-23.

For assistance and questions related to the Farm to School Incubator Grant Program process, please email CAFarmToSchool@CDFA.CA.gov.

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"No Rancher Left Behind" is a just-launched rancher/farmer conversation and awareness campaign. (Photo: Christian Griessel / Shutterstock.com)

R-CALF USA, MO Rancher Launch "No Rancher Left Behind" Campaign

Press Release Provided by R-CALF USA

R-CALF USA has announced the launch of "No Rancher Left Behind," a rancher/farmer conversation and awareness campaign. The campaign is a collaboration between R-CALF USA and Coy Young, a Missouri cattle rancher who recently testified before Congress about the stresses he faces as a cow-calf producer during this time of chronically depressed cattle prices and high input costs.

"R-CALF USA stands firm in fighting for the independent U.S. cattle producer in all facets. So many of America's farmers and ranchers are struggling, but it's important for them to know they are not alone in this fight," said Jaiden Moreland, R-CALF USA Marketing Coordinator.

"The chronically dysfunctional cattle market has rendered many independent cattle producers unprofitable for going on eight years. We've lost untold numbers of them even before their input costs began skyrocketing," said Bill Bullard, R-CALF USA CEO.

"This broken market/high input cost combination will create a perfect financial storm for many more independent cattle producers, and we don't want them isolated from fellow producers who have or who are experiencing similar challenges," Bullard said.

"No Rancher Left Behind" is set to feature informational graphics on social media and a resource webpage with hotline numbers and links to other helpful information, but perhaps most notably, weekly support group style, virtual meetings for ranchers to gather and converse in a safe place.

Young came up with the idea for the campaign after struggling with his own market-related financial challenges and recently shared his story with the New York Times.

"If we can help each other when we're hurting and in need, that's the greatest accomplishment that could

ever come from this campaign and these meetings," said Young. "I hope we come together to talk about the issues that farmers and ranchers are currently facing and can be there for one another because we are all going through the same types of things."

According to a 2017 study by the University of Iowa, those involved in agriculture, had the highest suicide rate of all occupations from 1992 to 2010. More recently in 2020, the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention noted that when compared to other occupations, farmers are among the most likely to die by suicide.

Young shared that the CDC also reports that suicide among workers ages 16 to 64 has increased 34% and farmer suicides are 1.5 times higher than the national average. He also learned these numbers could be higher as some farm suicides could be ruled farm-related accidents.

"With the majority of farmers and ranchers being male, there's a lot of things that aren't discussed. Men have their pride and when you're on the verge of losing your family legacy that your father and grandfather had built for multiple generations before you, it's detrimental and some see no other way out," said Young.

Moreland said R-CALF USA encourages ranchers and farmers to participate in these meetings and hopes the meetings will provide a sense of community and provide a space to vent, talk and be surrounded by support from their peers.

"As an organization concerned for our industry's future, we must do all we can to support our nation's cattle farmers and ranchers during these challenging times," said Bullard.

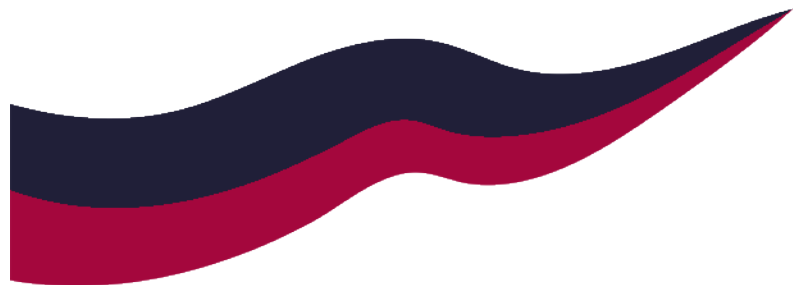
"I was once in a place where I didn't think there was another way out. I was at my end, and to be able to be there and talk with others, that's something," said Young. "The power of conversation and empathy for one another is a great and powerful tool to help lift each other up in times of need."

"When you're going through something as traumatic as having to sell all your cattle and start a different life when raising cattle is all you've done your entire life, it plain sucks and it's hard," said Young.

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Why Then, Should We Pray?

By Joshua Stevens
Faith Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

Why pray if what we say doesn't change the outcome? It's not as if our words, no matter how eloquent we might think they are, can change the Almighty's perfect desire. A sentiment that has, for decades now, prevailed throughout the western church, is the belief that prayer is a tool utilized by Christians to gain access to God. We see this concept often touted in circles proclaiming a prosperity gospel. For example, on Kenneth Copeland's website you can find this under "God hears your prayers" and "God loves you and He is for you! You can pray and get the results you are looking for—because God wants to meet your needs!" (KCM n.d.). We hear it among faith-healing groups like Hillsong Church who believe that *if* you have enough faith you *will* be healed because God wants to and is willing to heal you. (Hillsong Church n.d.).

But when Christ told us how to pray did He say, "So then pray like this – make your every want and desire known to God so He may accomplish it." No, instead

what Jesus says in Matthew 6:5–15 (ESV) is:

5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us

from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,

15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

We can break this prayer into four sections: *praise, reflection, alignment, and yearning*. When we do so, we see that prayer is not a spiritual phone to call on miracles, but a tool used to sanctify us, bring us closer to God, and an opportunity to be an active part of God's plan.

P – Jesus starts his prayer by acknowledging who God is, offering praise to Him, and declaring God's name to be holy. Throughout this prayer we also see Jesus humbling Himself and willfully subjecting himself to the will of the Father. This would be like saying, "God whose name is holy and is seated in heaven." So we see prayer as an avenue to praise God in the quietness of our hearts and we see prayer being used to bolster our faith as we daily stand in the truths of who our God is.

R – We see Jesus reflecting, modeling how we should ask for forgiveness of our sins and forgive those who have sinned against us and asking for strength in our struggle with temptation. This will of course look different for each person but taking time to call yourself out for the sins you have committed is an important part of reflection, as well as taking time to forgive those who have harmed you. In this way, we see prayer used to grow in our relationship with Christ and we see prayer as an opportunity for healing as we let go of those pains that have hindered us from clinging to the Cross as Christ did.

A – We see Christ aligning His desires with the will of the Father. Unlike others who might tell you that God *is here for you*, Christ models coming to the Father in prayer, submitting yourself before Him, asking for His will to be accomplished, and for His kingdom to come. In doing so we are asking for the spirit to mold our minds, hearts,



(Photo: Anastasiia Stihailo / Shutterstock.com)

and words so that we may have a mindset focused on the coming kingdom and the gospel. It allows us the opportunity to sacrifice our desires for the betterment of the kingdom to come and provides perfect practice for sacrificing our desires for our families, friends, and strangers for the gospel they need.

Y – Finally we can see Christ asking for those things which he yearns for. We see Him asking for daily needs, and we see him asking for spiritual necessities. As the final part of our prayer, once we have spent the time praising God, reflecting on our lives, and aligning ourselves with God, we should then ask for what we desire. The hope is by that time what we desire will be the same as what the Lord desires. By this we allow ourselves to be an active participant in God's plan and help to live a gospel-centered life.

So, when you pray, whether it be for a new job, healing, the salvation of a loved one, or just to start your day, remember when you bow your head, **P.R.A.Y.**

Crossway Bibles. (2001). *The Holy Bible English Standard Version*. Wheaton : Good News Publishers.

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KCM. n.d. *God hears your prayers*. Accessed May 11, 2022. KCM.org/Real-Help/Prayer/Believe.

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The Wonderful Company Helps Make Home Ownership a Reality for Twenty Lost Hills Families

New Lomas Lindas housing development provides much-needed affordable housing in the rural Central Valley

Press Release Provided by The Wonderful Company

The Wonderful Company (TWC), a global company dedicated to harvesting health and happiness around the world, today announced that six of 20 families have closed escrow and moved into their newly built single-family homes within the *Lomas Lindas* (Spanish for "beautiful hills") development in Lost Hills, California. The homes address the housing shortage coupled with the heightened need for affordable housing and bring the power of homeownership within reach for qualifying families in California's Central Valley.

Construction began in 2020, following a land and project management donation from Wonderful's co-owners Stewart and Lynda Resnick. To counter the state's increasingly high costs for owning a home and the competitive home buying experience, *Lomas Lindas* helps break down barriers for middle- to low-income families in Lost Hills, where many Wonderful employees live and work.

"Nearly 70% of Lost Hills residents rent at prices near the cost of a mortgage, and over half of the homes in Lost Hills are trailers. The Wonderful Company is committed to creating meaningful change in the communities we serve, including helping our neighbors realize the American Dream of home ownership," said Andy Anzaldo, chief operating officer, corporate social responsibility at The Wonderful Company. "We are proud to play a part in making this dream a reality for 20 families in Lost Hills."

The modern floor plan offers three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a two-car garage. While each home maintains the same floor plan, every buyer can customize floors, cabinets, paint colors, appliances, and exterior areas to ensure their home fits their individual needs. The homes currently start at \$238,000 for qualified buyers with monthly payments as low as \$1,300. All 20 homes are expected to be completed by late 2022.

Lomas Lindas is located between California State Route 46 and the Wonderful College Prep Academy campus in Lost Hills, within walking distance of Lost Hills Park. It is made possible through a partnership with Central Valley developer Ennis Builders Inc. and bilingual lender Supreme Lending, who helped guide families through the financial and escrow process.

"We enjoy our community much more now because of the investment from Lynda and the company; however, the greatest is the [Wonderful College Prep Academy] school," said Daniel Martinez, employee at The Wonderful Company and new homeowner. "My children have excelled academically because of these investments in Lost Hills. Now my family has the American Dream, our own home."

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