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Legislators Request a Unified Valley Voice

By Scott Hamilton,
President, Hamilton Resources Economics

The challenges associated with achieving groundwater sustainability were abundant at a regional meeting of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) held in Visalia on October 14. But water leaders might be making the problem worse. Three Valley legislators—Assemblymen Vince Fong, Devon Mathis and Jim Patterson, in the first panel of the day—highlighted the difficulty in attracting state funds to the San Joaquin Valley given the small percentage of the state population that the Valley comprises, but when different representatives are being asked to support different projects, the Valley's request becomes splintered and ineffective. They emphasized that

the Valley must be unified and consistent if the Valley is to have an effective voice in Sacramento. Fights between water districts and blaming others for common problems is not helpful. Moderator Jonny Amaral from the Friant Water Users noted that the Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley was formed for that purpose and was gaining momentum.

The legislators also raised the alarm on some issues that might be headed to the Valley. The first was that elements in Sacramento feel the current system of water rights is inappropriate in managing the state's surface water supplies, especially in times of drought, and would like to overhaul the state's water rights system resulting in an attack senior water rights on rivers—an effort strongly opposed by ACWA. While that initiative was defeated in the last legislative session, they expected it to return.

Second, they highlighted a sentiment by some in Sacramento that SGMA did not go far enough nor is it being implemented fast enough.

In the afternoon session, Lauren Layne, an attorney with Baker, Manock and Jensen in Fresno, asked her panel if having the State Water Resources Control Board intervene in SGMA implementation would be a good idea. The question was a relevant one for Stephanie Anagnoson, Director of Water and Natural Resources in Madera County, where there is no common path forward. One subbasin had supported a self-imposed tax to implement measures to achieve groundwater sustainability and a neighboring subbasin has opposed it. She saw three potentially major problems with state intervention: the possibility of immediate mandated groundwater balance, rather than phased-in approach; the imposition of fees, over which landowners



Alexandria (Alex) Biering, Chair of Associated California Water Agencies' Agricultural Committee, who gave an update on the work of the committee at the recent ACWA Region 6 & 7 meeting in Visalia. (Photo: ACWA)

have little say, to achieve SGMA compliance; and administrators who have limited understanding of local issues

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What a Ride! Thanks to All of Our Farmers and Ag Workers This Harvest Season



A farmer harvesting beetroot. (Photo: Maria Bolko / Shutterstock.com)

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

Fall is here, which means harvest is coming to a close as the agriculture industry celebrates the end of another rollercoaster growing season here in Central California.

And what a ride it's been.

The season started this past spring on the heels of the pandemic, with many unknowns still remaining with Russia starting to invade Ukraine, supply chain and shipping challenges starting to snowball, and the cost of nearly every ag input imaginable beginning to soar.

There was little rain, again, which compounded our

never-ending water availability issues, not to mention late-spring frost snaps that crippled some farming operations before the season was really underway.

Drought, historic heat waves, water regulations, and a dwindling labor supply continue to plague the industry, but this growing season will surely be remembered for another major hurdle: the soaring costs of the other key ag inputs (fertilizer, chemicals, and fuel).

As I write this, the average price for gas in California was \$6.25 – more than 65% higher than the national average and up nearly 20% from just a month ago. And these gas and diesel price hikes hit the ag industry where it hurts most, during harvest, when most of our machinery is running – and running hard.

According to a recent UC Cooperative Extension survey, harvesting costs for a full-production operation account

for about 24% of total operation costs, as growers have the pedal to the metal across their fleet of tractors, shakers, sweepers and harvesters, not to mention their pickups and trucks hauling loads to the hullers, wineries and food processors. And with the soaring costs of fuel of late, harvest likely ate up a much larger chunk of farm budgets this year – which means slimmer and slimmer margins for our farmers.

And the rollercoaster ride continues.

Over the past three or four years, we've witnessed the ag industry overcome every setback imaginable, from drought to wildfires, a pandemic to record inflationary challenges, yet the industry continues to rise to the challenge and feed our growing population.

According to the U.S. Farm Bureau, less than 2% of the

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Kern County Fair Auction 2022

By Audrey Hill, Feature Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

The Kern County Fair is one of the largest and best county fairs in the state. Whether you go to meet your yearly calorie intake with some of the most delicious foods locals have to offer, win a Grand Champion buckle, or some mix of it all, Kern's County Fair has a little bit for everyone.

In the livestock barns, students compete in one of, if not the most competitive county fair livestock shows in California. Although FFA, 4H, and independent showmen everywhere work for many months to perfect their showmanship and gain a potent appreciation for agriculture, not many conclude their efforts with the quality seen at the Kern County Fair. However, the competition is not all that drives the entry rates and animal numbers up every year. The dedication to agriculture can almost be smelled in the

air and lives in the youngest fairgoers pulled by wagon, to the oldest through all the barns.

Allie Lumpkin, Sophomore at Kern Valley High School, is an excellent example of the diverse and hardworking students who present at the fair. This year was Miss Lumpkin's first year showing at the fair, but she has been involved with her schools "flock team" since her freshman year where she helps feed, care for, and birth all the lambs of the school's excellent breeding program. She is also a cheerleader and takes pride in her high GPA. Miss Lumpkin's two lambs, Bullet and Athena were both born on her school farm. Before the fair shows, she attended showmanship practice two nights a week with regular feeding and care shifts. At the shows, she won second place in her market class and fifth overall in her weight class. Speaking on her first year showing at the fair, she says "It was a really good experience. I had a really great connection with all of my showing team," and "we helped each other out whenever we needed." One of her lambs will return to the schools' breeding program and she is very happy to

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FARM BUREAU NEWS

The United Voice of Kern County's Farming Community



President's Message

By Patty Poire
President, Kern
County Farm Bureau

November is the month of Thanksgiving; however, it is unclear if the legisla-

tive session that ended in September provided us with anything to be thankful for. I am referring to the legislative bills that Governor Newsom signed into law, including some "climate change" bills that didn't even go through the committee process. It never seems to shock me anymore on what the governors of California think are important and vital to the state's future.

One legislative bill that received the most attention was AB 2183 – known as the "card check bill." Again, nothing shocks me anymore but the process on this legislation came very close. Governor Newsom held closed door meetings with the Labor Unions (United Farm Workers and the California Labor Federation) to discuss the legislation-seeking extensive amendments that are "scheduled" to be made this next legislative session. Adding to the craziness is that those extensive amendments were made public during the press release of the Governor's signing. Typically, when a governor has substantial concerns about any legislation, which he apparently had as evidenced by the extensive amendments, the governor vetoes the legislation with an explanation of said concerns as he has done in previous years when this type of legislation has come to his desk.

Why the process change? Was it because of President Biden and Nancy Pelosi's comments? Was it because of the governor's aspirations of higher political office? What happens if those extensive amendments don't make it to the governor's desk exactly the way that he wants? Or even worse, what if they do? What does that tell the citizens of California? Only time will tell but, in the meantime, the legislation goes into effect January 1, 2023. And let's not forget about the deci-

sion by the U.S. Supreme Court on Cedar Point where the decision was property rights prevail. This legislation was to "give" the farmer the right to waive their constitutional right that was just fortified by the recent Supreme Court decision. If you need information on this legislation, please contact the Kern County Farm Bureau office.

Moving on, there are two "climate change" bills that I would like to bring to your attention. The first, AB 1757, is a climate change bill for natural and working agricultural lands. It gives the California Air Resources Board the authority to develop standard methods for state agencies to consistently track greenhouse gas emissions and reductions (carbon sequestration) and then establish specified carbon dioxide removal targets for 2030 and beyond. The legislation goes on to establish an "Expert Advisory Committee" that will be composed of university researchers, technical assistance providers, practitioners, Indigenous and environmental justice representatives, as well as other experts in the field of climate change and natural and working lands science and management. I find it interesting that the word agricultural was not included in the committee formation so let's hope that "practitioners" means agricultural.

The second, Senate Bill 905, is like the legislation mentioned above in that it deals with carbon sequestration (carbon capture, removal, utilization, and storage). This legislation is a "playbook" of how carbon sequestration projects will be handled to comply with the requirement to establish specified carbon dioxide removal targets for 2030 and beyond. If history repeats itself, as I believe it often does, while also considering the fact that removal targets haven't yet been set, this type of legislation leads me to believe that it will become a mandatory process in some form or fashion on how agriculture is farmed.

One good legislation signed by the Governor was AB 2836 which extended the current authorization for the Carl Moyer Program to fund a broader range of proj-



Executive Director's Report

By Romeo Agbalog,
Executive Director, Kern
County Farm Bureau

This month marks 159 years since President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address on that hallowed battlefield to dedicate it as a National Cemetery. Lincoln's speech, though only a couple minutes long, would have an everlasting impact on generations of Americans.

"It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these honored dead we may take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion - that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom - and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

I have written on matters specific to agriculture, economics, government, and politics before, and I feel compelled to share some thoughts from a political approach again for the reason that the words of Lincoln quoted above dovetails into a national activity that will occur on the second Tuesday in November – Election Day. Lincoln spoke about those who laid down their lives in the interest in freedom.

Today we enjoy many freedoms including the right to free speech. Here we can share political viewpoints and even critique our government, something that

one may not dare do in other countries. Included with first amendment protections is the privilege to vote and participate in a democratic process that determines not just who will represent us in government, but also influence the priorities of government. Remember that part in Lincoln's address that says, "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

In Lincoln's time, 90 percent of Americans lived on farms. Today, obviously that percentage is much less and sometimes it feels as though the input or influence of farmers and ranchers on matters of government and policy has waned along with that percentage. Farmers and ranchers around the country are struggling with the effects of inflation, higher costs on equipment, fertilizer, fuel, labor, seeds, trees, water, and other materials with costly and burdensome regulations to boot. Is it just me or does it feel like more government, by the government, for the government lately? On November 8th we will decide.



Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) delivering the Gettysburg Address at the dedication ceremonies at the Soldiers' National cemetery, Nov. 19, 1863. (Photo: Everett Collection/ Shutterstock.com)

ects that reduce emissions from covered sources until January 1, 2033. This new extended program goes into effect on January 1, 2023. Kern County farmers tend not to seek this program, but you have all contributed to the funds, so please consider doing so. If you need information on the program, please contact the Kern County Farm Bureau.

Kern County Farm Bureau is here to assist you in any of these or other legislative or regulatory issues.

In closing, this is a month that should be for Thanksgiving, therefore, I am very thankful for the opportunity to represent Kern County agriculture, the best in the state, the nation and the world!

Young Farmers & Ranchers

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By Timothy Collins
Chair, Kern County
Young Farmers
& Ranchers

The Young Farmers and Ranchers have been busy as the seasons change. Already this fall we have had a dinner and drinks

social, a workday at the Edible Schoolyard, we sent members to the state YF&R Fall Regional Mixer, and we helped with Kern County Farm Bureau's annual Bounty of the County event.

As a change from several past Saturday meetings and events, we went simple and enjoyed a social together over dinner and drinks on a Wednesday evening. Time spent talking to others in the ag industry is always well spent and getting the chance to meet several new members attending was especially encouraging.

Our Charity Farmers Market back in July benefited the Edible Schoolyard Kern County, and in late September we spent a Saturday morning volunteering at the garden. Using our donation, the Edible Schoolyard built a new raised bed portion of their garden. We spent the morning filling the new beds with dirt and laying gravel around them. We cannot wait to see how the new raised

beds will look full of plants in a few months! We know the Edible Schoolyard will use them for agricultural education for the many students they serve as part of their programs and camps. These programs will instill a love in agriculture in young kids who can continue that path in high school and beyond to our own Young Farmers & Ranchers in the years ahead.

California is a diverse state when it comes to Ag, and the state's Young Farmers & Ranchers continues to give opportunities for YF&R members to see the various agricultural operations across the state. The latest opportunity was the Fall Regional Mixer held in Fresno that our members were able to attend. The group had a fun and educational day touring Sun-Maid's Raisin dehydrator facility, DeGroot Dairy, and Fresno State's campus for a demonstration of an autonomous tractor. All this was followed by dinner at a pumpkin patch. We are all now looking forward to the YF&R State Conference which will be held this December in Monterey and is sure to have more great tours and networking opportunities.

October brought about Kern County Farm Bureau's annual Bounty of the County event. Bounty serves as the Farm Bureau's main fundraiser and is a night to showcase Ag in the community. YF&R members are always glad to volunteer at the event and host a gun raffle that also serves as a fundraiser for us. We all had a great evening recapping the year and looking



YF&R members at the Bounty of the County (left to right): Richard and Kristin Bilak, Amy Mebane, Tim Collins, and Tristan Wieser. (Photo: Kern County Young Farmers & Ranchers)

forward to the next. Every year I enjoy this event more and more as I get to meet new people in the ag industry locally and catch up with those I've known over the years. If you are between the ages of 18-35, don't miss these opportunities and let those years go by without getting involved and being a part of the Young Farmers & Ranchers here in Kern County!

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Facebook: [KernYoungFarmersAndRanchers](https://www.facebook.com/KernYoungFarmersAndRanchers)

FFA Tractor Restoration

By Melissa A. Nagel
Feature Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

Frontier High School senior Madison Spickler took a unique approach for her FFA (Future Farmers of America) project this year at the Kern County Fair. Rather than raising and presenting an animal at the fair, Madison chose to restore a vintage 1942 John Deere Model H tractor that she inherited from her late grandfather Fred Williams. He had mainly used the tractor for Hit and Miss Motor Shows, one of his life's hobbies.

Madison has been a member of Frontier's FFA program since her freshman year in 2019. When asked why she chose to restore a tractor rather than raise an animal, her response was "animals aren't personally my thing." She also cited the fact that after her grandfather passed away the summer before her 8th grade year, her grandmother was left to make the decision on what to do with his beloved tractor. This sparked an idea in Madison's head, and she asked her grandmother to save the tractor for her to use as her FFA project when she began high school.

Madison said she always knew she would follow in

her family's footsteps and join FFA once she got to high school. When the time came, the family had the tractor moved from Greenville to Bakersfield and Madison began restoring the John Deere tractor with the help of her dad and brother. Some of the repairs that needed to be made included replacing the grills that surround the front of the tractor, which had been rigged with old chicken wire from a previous owner.

A new PTO guard, which is meant to keep clothing, arms, and legs safe from being caught while the tractor is in operation, was also installed. The tractor received a fresh coat of John Deere green paint and fitted with new headlights which will be used during the Christmas season as Madison's father gives hayrides while dressed as Santa Claus in Bakersfield's Olde Stockdale area.

Now that the tractor restoration is considered complete and Madison will be graduating with Frontier's class of 2023, the family plans to keep the tractor rather than sell it—which is usually the end-result for most FFA projects. When asked what her plans are for after high school, Madison said she plans to stay local for the first couple of years and likely attend Bakersfield College before moving on to a four-year university. She plans to major in history but also continue her studies into agriculture as well.

TOP: Madison riding the tractor for the first time with the help of her grandfather Fred. (Photo: Spickler Family)

BOTTOM: Madison's dad Michael giving tractor rides for Christmas. (Photo: Spickler Family)



Unified Valley Voice

Continued from PAGE 1 and little sympathy for the plight of groundwater users. Kassya Chauhan, from the Kings subbasin noted that the option for local control was a fundamental element in the SGMA implementing legislation but to maintain local control, plans to achieve groundwater sustainability must be real and those plans need to be implemented effectively. "We can't have it both ways" she said. Either we must prove to the state that local entities can implement SGMA effectively, or the state will intervene.

Surprising to water leaders in Madera County was that, despite numerous, varied and sustained outreach efforts, landowners were caught off guard when they were required to reduce their pumping and were being charged more than \$100 per acre to finance groundwater sustainability projects. The theme of the meeting was clear: farmers should be paying attention to SGMA implementation because it is real and it is happening; if landowners can't resolve their issues, they should not be surprised when the state intervenes, and if state funds are sought to help implement SGMA, that request cannot be inconsistent between regions.



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Kern County Fair Auction 2022

Continued from PAGE 1 continue to work with her and to continue showing as an upperclassman. After graduation, Miss Lumpkin hopes to attend Cal Poly, SLO, or Montana State University to get her degree in agriculture or pediatric nursing.

On September 29th, 30th, and October 1st, the red barn hosted the 2022 Kern County Fair auction which sees more students and sells more animals every year, although numbers are still down since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. Student projects like hand-welded barbecues and hand-crafted wooden tables are sold as part of Ag Mechanics and showcase the tremendous ability of Kern County's students but also teachers and advisors. Of course, most of the three days was spent selling 581 live-stock: pigs, goats, lambs, dairy cows, beef cows, rabbits, and poultry. No sales, however, would easily be possible without the help of auctioneers Justin and Bennett Mebane and the fair thanks them for their efforts.

Those who attend the auction every year know that this year went a little differently than previous years. Formerly, every sponsor form was filled out on paper by showman and sponsor and handed to the livestock office to file and bill. Those stacks of paper built up quickly with roughly 4000 entries every year! This year finally marked the switch to online record-keeping, so sponsors could add funds to showman's online accounts right up to the last minute of the auction. Despite that benefit, this made for some confusion for students and advisors as no one knew exactly how much money students made until everything was filed after the auction.

Another change to the auction processes this year was the absence of the infamous Buyer 9. After so many years as a prominent buyer, the family does not look to be coming back to the auction barn. The buyer would purchase all animals under a certain set price per pound and give the meat to homeless shelters in Kern County to give back to the community. By providing for the homeless and supporting hard working students, the oil producing family made it easier for students to feel confident that they would make a profit on their animal projects at the end of the year. Unfortunately, this year's students were not given such an easy way out and had to orchestrate their own buyers. Although students were taken by surprise at the lack of a guarantee, it was an opportunity for growth. Not every family is able to store a whole animal in their freezer. However, the lack of an assured buyer might change that for some, especially considering the sheer quality of meat that a home-grown animal provides and how beneficial the purchase is for students in Ag. Regardless, students were extremely appreciative of the buyers and thank you gift baskets were everywhere. What an amazing sight! Additionally, the livestock office is trying to plan a buyer lunch for the upcoming years.

Fortunately for students, the agriculture community understood the hardship they faced this year and they banded together to do everything they could to help. Local citizens made efforts to find buyers of portions of animals, and show-stock breeders bought up the sows, does, ewes, and cows. Add-ons, a uniquely frequent action at the Kern County auction where people donate to students without buying any animal, were plentiful at 28,065 add-ons for the entire auction.



McKinnzie Dominguez, Frontier FFA poses with her durc. (Photo: Hill)

Pumpkin Patches Try to Keep Crowd Surge



With life returning to pre-pandemic normal, operators of pumpkin patches who saw their business soar during the past two years try to sustain momentum as they compete with other entertainment venues amid inflationary pressures. (Photo: Ching Lee)

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

With life returning to pre-pandemic normal, operators of pumpkin patches who saw their business soar during the past two years try to sustain momentum as they compete with other entertainment venues amid inflationary pressures.

Pumpkin patches and other agritourism destinations became more popular than ever during COVID lockdowns, offering outdoor activities for cooped-up families when there was little else to do.

Wayne Bishop, owner of Bishop's Pumpkin Farm in Yuba County, said some families came to his farm multiple times in one season during the past two years.

"I don't know if that will hold," he said. "There's more options, more things to do now. Maybe they won't come out as often."

The challenge to maintain attendance comes as farms grapple with higher operational costs, forcing them to raise prices, which Bishop described as "a scary thing to do." Not only has the cost of farming gone up, he said—with fuel, fertilizer and labor among the highest—but the cost of key supplies such as butter and eggs used in his bakery has skyrocketed 80% to 90%.

Even though his farm has been open since Sept. 10—among the earliest for pumpkin patches—Bishop said the jury's still out on what the trend is this year. The heat wave right before opening didn't exactly "put people in a fall mood," he noted. Rain spoiled the second weekend. Visitor numbers so far have not topped last year's, he said, though he described attendance on days with favorable weather as good.

What's helped is the return of school groups, which typically bring some 20,000 visitors each season, Bishop said. He estimated school bookings at 80% to 90% of pre-pandemic levels. That's compared to no school trips at all in 2020 and about a third of normal last year.

Also beneficial are the five weekends in October this year, which Bishop said is "as good as the calendar can be" for pumpkin patch operators. The farm sees 12,000 to 15,000 visitors a day on weekends.

Even before the pandemic, pumpkin patches and other farms that open their doors to the public were already shifting to charging admission, said Rachael Callahan, agritourism coordinator at the University of California, Davis. The popularity of on-farm activities during the pandemic gave agritourism operators "the confidence to start charging or increase their prices," she added, though she noted inflation also plays a role.

"A lot of work and staff resources go into hosting visitors on your farm to ensure that visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience," Callahan said.

Farmers want to keep their farms accessible for families, she said, but they are running a business. As such, "it's a delicate balance," she added, to remain accessible and be compensated for what they do, especially during tough economic times.

Kelly Lester of Sacramento was visiting Bishop's Pumpkin Farm last week with her daughter Ruby and mother Cindy Bishop, who is not related to the farmer. She said it's the "cozy feeling" of agriculture in the region and memories of past visits that bring them back every year. The farm offers plenty for her daughter to enjoy and "eating activities for this one and this one," she said, pointing to herself and her mother.

"It's also a comfort thing," Cindy Bishop added. "It's also tradition, especially during COVID. That's especially important."

PUMPKIN PATCHES TRY TO KEEP CROWD on PAGE 17

COMMENTARY: Intensive Agriculture Evolves in World's Salad Bowl

By Norm Groot, Executive Director, Monterey County Farm Bureau

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The Salinas Valley is known as the Salad Bowl of the World—mainly because we produce much of the fresh produce that Americans and many others around the globe put on their dinner tables each night. These days, healthy diets may inevitably include fresh veggies, leafy greens and berries produced nearly year-round in Monterey County.

Farming in Monterey County has evolved considerably from the days of the rancho haciendas. What we produce here barely compares with where commercial farming started more than 150 years ago with grain crops and then sugar beets.

That's because our farmers and ranchers know how to adapt. The crop selections here have undergone constant evolution, changing with new agronomics and varying market conditions. Monterey County Farm Bureau is proud to have played a part in this adaptive change over the last 105 years.

Improved irrigation technologies and infrastructure and better agronomics for producing quick-turn crops

such as lettuce, broccoli and spinach have driven that change. Advances in vineyard production technology have yielded better winegrapes while using fewer resources such as water.

We are similarly known for our outstanding berry production fields and the bounty of strawberries produced locally each year. We have also taken food-safety practices to a higher level, ensuring a safe, fresh food supply.

All this change requires innovation on the part of our farmers and ranchers, as well as those who support us with research and field trials. Yes, that's a shout-out to our excellent farm advisors at the University of California Cooperative Extension.

We are constantly moving forward with sustainable farming practices that profoundly improve our efficiency and yield. We care for the resources in our working environment. And now, innovation is taking many of our farms into regenerative practices that seek to take improvements in food production to the next level.

We call this our brand of intensive agriculture because we can produce nearly year-round with the resources of soil, water and climate that make the Central Coast a high-value, food-production region.

We harvest almost continuously due to crop rotations and market-supply demands. It takes a lot of hands to harvest those fresh-food items simply because it is difficult to develop robotic harvesting tools that replace skilled hand-eye coordination. Farmworkers are treated with dignity and respect in the workplace because their employers care for their well-being. Many farm employees earn well above the minimum wage, in tune with their valued skills and endurance in physical labor situations.

We are fortunate to have numerous startup companies providing leading-edge technologies and equipment to further advancements in farming. Production agriculture—indeed, our intensive agriculture—is attracting significant innovations to provide better crop yields, improve soil health and irrigation efficiency, and ease

the burden of hand labor. Innovation will eventually figure out how to harvest a strawberry, an artichoke and a head of lettuce using robotics.

Another example of resource management that is hardly recognized is the increase in our local crop yields by 45% in the past 25 years while using almost 20% less irrigation water. This has been accomplished through a will to improve efficiency and development of technologies such as microirrigation and fertigation. Farmers look at this as their investment in the future in that it allows them to use the same resources each year for outstanding crop production yields.

Continual improvement is also driven by market forces, and ultimately, by the consumer. Innovation has led to more value-added products such as bagged leafy greens, providing convenience for those of us with busy lives. Add in veggie trays and complete salads with proteins, and the consumer benefits from the innovation provided by intensive agriculture in the Salinas Valley. Not a week seems to go by without a new convenience item being introduced in response to market demand.

Many in the public may be quick to unfairly criticize our working environment and our brand of intensive agriculture as harmful and a drain on resources. Yet, this working environment is the place where farmers have been effectively managing their resources for 150 years. They have done so in an evolutionary manner that allows continued production on the same fields with decreasing inputs—meaning we continue producing more with less.

As we consider our food security in the coming decade and the importance of a reliable, safe and affordable domestic food supply chain, let's not overlook the great accomplishments of our farmers and ranchers each year.

We all need to eat, and Monterey County produces food for America and beyond with ever-increasing efficiency. Our brand of intensive agriculture is what puts fresh food on our tables each and every day. Yes, our approach to farming is unique. It is also essential.



Monterey County commercial farms such as this continue to adapt and innovate to enhance food production with improved soil health, irrigation efficiency and new products for consumers. (Photo: Norm Groot)

YF&R Member Tracks Water Supplies, Groundwater Rules



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

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from California Farm Bureau
Federation*

(This is the first of a three-part series highlighting individuals in California

Farm Bureau's Young Farmers & Ranchers program.)

Drought in California means water is scarce. Yet for farmers and ranchers, there is no shortage of local, state and federal water regulations with which they must comply or face fines and/or penalties.

To navigate complex water rules, some of which are in various stages of implementation, many in agriculture are hiring help. This is where Trelawney Bullis of Fresno comes in. As manager of water, sustainability and geographic information system mapping for AC Foods in Dinuba, she oversees compliance of regulations for the business, which grows blueberries, citrus fruit and table grapes.

"I'm not scheduling irrigations or checking drip lines, but a big part of my job is keeping up with regulations and making sure our farms are in compliance and that we're following the rules and tracking that water," Bullis said. "It's a lot of maintaining relationships and just making sure our voice, as an interested party, is heard in meetings."

A focus for AC Foods, which grows crops from Arvin to Stockton in the San Joaquin Valley, is the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The state legislation, which took effect in 2015, lays out a process and timeline for local groundwater sustainability agencies, or GSAs, to manage water use and conservation for groundwater basins.

"I know which ranches sit in which GSAs," she said. "I talk to our farming directors and ranch managers and make sure they understand the rules and regulations and what's happening. I tell them I need X, Y, Z to make sure we're still in compliance, so whether that is well logs or monthly water tracking, so that they know, OK, this is our allocation."

AC Foods' ranches sit within five different subbasins, and Bullis must attend meetings and keep track of information and regulations for as many as 12 GSAs.

"A ranch can sit in multiple boundaries. For example, I have a ranch that is in two irrigation districts and

two GSAs but only one water-quality coalition, so just because a ranch is farmed together doesn't mean each block has the same water entities governing it," Bullis said. "For many farmers, whether the issue is time or money, it is difficult for them to stay up to date and informed, while at the same time, they are trying to operate a business and grow crops."

Her work overseeing water involves short- and long-term planning. However, she said, "It's hard to do long-term planning when you don't know what the rules are going to be, but you have to make some assumptions to be able to plan for your crops for five, 10, 15, 20 years."

Bullis grew up in Grass Valley, participating in 4-H and FFA. She said these youth organizations and her grandfather, an engineer, served as inspiration and steered her to a career in agricultural engineering. She earned a bachelor's degree in bioresource and agricultural engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

"I was always very interested in math and how things worked, and that led me to the ag engineering field," she said. "I'm not that creative person, but give me a Sudoku, give me a puzzle, and I love it. I attribute that to my grandfather. He was an engineer, and I loved going over there and seeing his new inventions, and it was wonderful talking that through with him."

After college and before her time at AC Foods, Bullis took advantage of other agricultural engineering opportunities in the Fresno area. At that time, Bullis said a friend introduced her to the California Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers, a leadership program for agriculturalists between the ages of 18 and 35.

"I am really involved with that and absolutely love it," said Bullis, second vice president of the California Farm Bureau State YF&R committee who serves on the Fresno-Madera YF&R. "The program has provided me with so many opportunities that I can honestly say I would not be where I am today without it."

Bullis said she is thankful for the various opportunities that the program offers.

"The advocacy opportunities are unlike other organizations, and I feel like my voice is being heard even though I am young and still relatively new in the water world," Bullis said. "You truly get out what you put in, and I would encourage anyone to participate."

Through YF&R and her participation locally in counties and as a member of the state committee, she said the group includes "a great community of people eager to see the agricultural industry succeed and persevere."

"I have been able to learn so much from other members about their side of the industry and expand my knowledge to better inform people outside of the industry," she said, adding that water is a common topic.

"Things are always changing. I talk about water all the time," Bullis said. "I keep learning every day. I have a set of water people that I call, and we brainstorm and talk things through. I cannot emphasize enough the key role relationships play in my job."

Bullis said she believes people increasingly look at water in the state as a commodity and as the top consideration on decisions for growing crops.

"It's going to be, OK, how do I get the water to then produce the crop and how do I best utilize the water," Bullis said, adding that she anticipates increased collaboration among farms for meeting regulatory requirements. "Farming is all about relationships, and a lot of it is about being good to your neighbors."



An agricultural engineer and water manager for AC Foods in Dinuba, Trelawney Bullis of Fresno says good relationships and sharing information are key to navigating water regulations. (Photo: Christina Souza)

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Newsom Advisor Warns of Climate Threats to Farming



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

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California is preparing for a drier future.

Climate impacts affecting the state, such as drought, a shrinking snowpack, higher temperatures and wildfires, were central to a discussion last week by California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary Karen Ross and members of the state board of food and agriculture.

“California’s water supply strategy focuses on developing new water supplies, expanding storage, reducing demand and improving overall data and management,” Ross said. “As we look at a hotter and drier future, I know that California’s farmers and ranchers will continue to adapt and lead the nation in water-use efficiency and conservation.”

Speaking at the Oct. 4 board meeting, Kayla Ungar, CDFA special advisor for climate, water and drought, discussed Gov. Gavin Newsom’s water-supply strategy released in August. The plan outlines the state’s priority actions to adapt and protect water supplies in the face of a hotter, drier climate, she explained. She suggested that “more impacts are coming” from climate change.

Anticipated impacts, she said, include a temperature increase of up to 4.4 to 5.9 degrees, more heat events and a one-third decline in snowpack, even if precipitation remains stable. That would result in a 10% reduction in the state’s existing water supply by 2040. In addition, California expects to deal with rising sea levels and more wildfires, she said.

“Together, these impacts are an existential threat to



Amid continuing drought, Lake Oroville in Butte County stood at just 34% of capacity on Oct. 5, when this photo was taken. Scientists say droughts are now more frequent and persistent. (Photo: Christina Souza)

agriculture and in particular, eight out of the 20 major crops grown in California, including almonds, wine grapes, table grapes, strawberries, hay, walnuts, free-stone peaches and cherries,” Ungar said. “California’s managed water supply is currently 60 to 90 million acre-feet per year. The impact of a drier climate means the disappearance of about 6 to 9 million acre-feet of water supply.”

Newsom’s water-supply strategy prioritizes actions to capture, recycle, desalinate and conserve more water, and includes increasing storage by creating space for up to 4 million acre-feet, so the state can capitalize on big storms and store water for dry periods.

Other goals include building the water-storage projects voters approved in the 2014 Proposition 1 water bond, plus raising San Luis Reservoir and expanding groundwater recharge.

“To match the pace of climate change, California must move smarter and faster to update our water systems,” Ungar said.

Climate scientist Jonathan Overpeck made a presen-

tation to the board about aridification, or the gradual change from a wetter to a drier climate. “I think things are changing dramatically,” said Overpeck, the Samuel A. Graham dean of the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan.

“It turns out, though, that warming is making the droughts a lot worse, more frequent and persistent,” Overpeck said. “The same warming is what’s leading to more wildfires, more heat waves and much worse tropical cyclone or hurricane disasters.”

While the severity of the warming is not the same everywhere, Overpeck said, warming has increased by about 1 degree Celsius or 2 degrees Fahrenheit. A failure to rein in climate change means warming could increase even more.

“In much of the West, much of the planet, the growing season has lengthened,” Overpeck said. “Spring comes earlier, winter comes later in the year, and that means, for example, in the headwaters of the Colorado River that the growing season is six weeks longer than it used to be. If it’s hot and dry enough, long enough, or it’s not raining, then you’re actually going to wilt and kill plants.”

California forests are experiencing more tree mortality due to warming, he said, adding that the snowpack is being lost to the atmosphere, and groundwater aquifers are becoming depleted.

“We have to cut our water use, but it’s not enough,” he said, adding that water security risks are affecting the entire planet.

“It’s going to be overwhelmed by climate change, so the sooner we get everyone acting on climate change just as aggressively or more than California, the sooner we are going to stabilize our sustainable water supplies and keep them from shrinking,” Overpeck said.

Newsom’s 2020 Water Resilience Portfolio called for voluntary agreements, a collaborative approach and

an alternative to the 55% unimpaired flows for tributaries sought by the California State Water Resources Control Board.

David Guy, president of the Northern California Water Association, said “there’s a ton of momentum” for the voluntary agreement framework for the Sacramento River tributaries.

“We’ve actually already completed some projects under the voluntary agreement process, and there’s several more that are already in the pipeline under construction in all four rivers,” Guy said of the agreements, which include a portfolio of flows and projects to reactivate the landscape.

“All of this works in harmony,” Guy added. “Those of you who are farmers, you can farm in the spring and summer and in the fall. You put some water out for decomposition or for some other purposes that can really help birds in the Pacific Flyway.”

Guy said a governance proposal for the effort was submitted to the state water board. Once approved, he said, the plan would be an eight-year agreement with the potential for an extension to 15 years.

During the meeting, the board heard from California recipients of federal climate-smart commodity programs that will be implemented in state. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is investing up to \$2.8 billion in 70 selected projects under the first pool of funding. Projects from the second funding pool will be announced later this year.

Looking ahead to the 2023 water year, California State Board of Food and Agriculture President Don Cameron said “California agriculture must do its part to reduce overall demand, while maintaining family farms, markets, communities and our overall food security.”

“We remain hopeful for a drought-ending season,” Cameron added. “But understand that business as usual is a not a path forward.”

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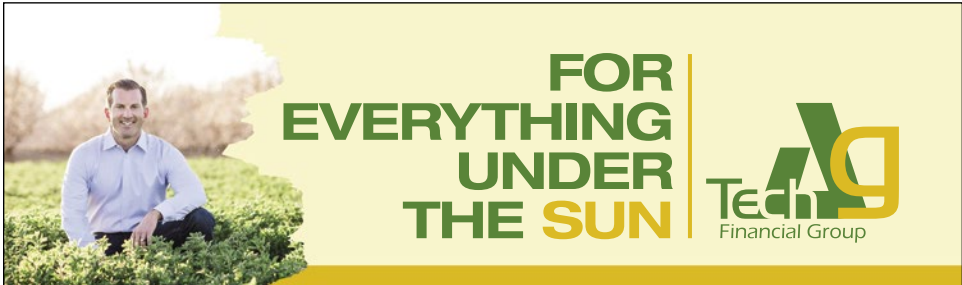
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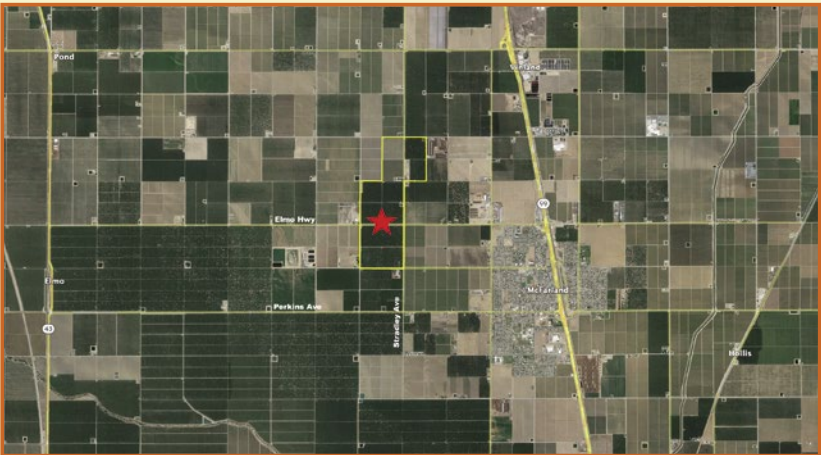
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New Water Year Begins Amid Preparations for Continued Drought

Press Release provided by California Department of Water Resources

Conserving water has become a way of life in California, especially as projections forecast warmer, drier conditions. The State's new water year has begun and with it comes fresh concerns about a fourth year of extreme drought for the state.



Aerial photo of Lake Oroville on Aug. 4, 2022 at 41 percent of total capacity. (Photo: DWR)

California's water year runs from October 1 to September 30 and is the official 12-month timeframe used by water managers to compile and compare hydrologic records.

Water Year 2022 ended on Friday and featured continued extreme drought with historically dry months and a record-shattering heatwave. Now, the focus shifts to the months ahead with state officials preparing for a fourth dry year.

Over the past 12 months, California saw extreme swings between record-breaking storms and dry conditions driven by our changing climate. In October 2021, parts of Northern California experienced the highest single-day rain totals ever, followed by a dry November and then a record snowfall in parts of the Sierra in December. Conditions took a turn again with the driest January, February, and March in over 100 years.

Despite some rain recorded in parts of California in September, uncertainty remains about what the new water year may bring. Long-range forecasting suggests warmer and drier than average conditions to persist.

"This is our new climate reality, and we must adapt. As California transitions to a hotter, drier future, our extreme swings from wet and dry conditions will continue," said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. "We are preparing now for continued extreme drought and working with our federal, state, local, and academic partners to plan for a future where we see less overall precipitation and more rain than snow."

Water Year 2022 ended with statewide precipitation at 76 percent of average. Statewide reservoir storage is 69 percent of average for this time of year. Lake Oroville,

the State Water Project's largest reservoir, sits at 64 percent of average for this time of year.

The current drought from 2020 to 2022 is now the driest three-year period on record, breaking the old record set by the previous drought from 2013 to 2015. This extended, extreme drought is having an impact on all Californians, especially the State's most vulnerable communities. California is aggressively addressing the urgent need for financial and technical support for water resilience projects across California. To date, DWR has provided over \$480 million in grant funding through its Small Community and Urban and Multi-benefit Drought Relief programs. This summer, the Legislature approved hundreds of millions in additional funding and programs to support these communities.

Californians can all do their part to adapt to the hotter, drier future by making water conservation a way of life. Governor Newsom has asked all Californians to reduce water usage at home by 15 percent. Learn more at [SaveOurWater.com](https://www.SaveOurWater.com). DWR also recently announced a series of actions to make water conservation more affordable through financial assistance and tax exemptions.

Californians can access current water conditions in real time at California Water Watch, a new website launched by DWR. This website will help Californians see their local hydrological conditions, forecasts, and water conditions down to their address or their local watershed. The site presents data from a variety of sources and allows the public to obtain a quick snapshot of local and statewide water conditions. Complete data for Water Year 2022 is available now.

COMMENTARY: When a Governor Has Substantial Concerns With a Bill, He Usually Vetoes the Bill



**By Chris Micheli,
Aprea & Micheli Inc.
& Adjunct Professor of
Law at the University of
the Pacific McGeorge
School of Law**

While the media has covered all of the political and legislative dynamics of Governor Gavin Newsom signing Assembly Bill 2183, concerning agricultural workers unionizing efforts, what stands out for some Capitol observers was the press statement issued by the Governor's Press Office.

In announcing the Governor's signature of AB 2183,

including photos from the signing ceremony, the Governor announced an agreement with the bill's proponents that substantial changes would be made to this new law in the 2023 Legislative Session to address the Governor's concerns. Why is this unique? There are several reasons:

First, when a Governor has substantial concerns with a bill, as evidenced by the extensive amendments that will be made to this bill next year, the Governor usually vetoes the bill (rather than signs it, as with AB 2183) and explains the requested amendments and suggests that the author and sponsor work with the Governor's Administration next year to get an acceptable bill that the Governor will sign.

Second, the press release included a link to the amendments that were agreed upon to get the Governor's support for the bill. And the link was not included






See **WHEN A GOVERNOR HAS CONCERNS** on PAGE 10



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Farmers market with various colorful fresh fruits and vegetables. (Photo: Aleksandar Mijatovic/ Shutterstock.com)

New State Report Finds Vast Majority of Fruits and Vegetables Sampled in CA Meet Pesticide Safety Standards

Press Release Provided Department of Pesticide Regulation

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) today released a 2020 report finding that the vast majority of fruits and vegetables sampled in the state meet federal pesticide safety standards.

The California Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program Report shows 95% of domestically grown and imported produce samples collected in 2020 had either no detectable pesticide residues or had residues within the allowable tolerance, based on federally established thresholds. In addition, more than 97% of produce samples labeled as “grown in California” had no residues or allowable tolerances. These results, compiled annually, are consistent with the last several years of produce residue monitoring, and emphasize the strength of California’s pesticide regulatory program.

The 2020 report’s findings are based on 2,892 produce samples collected by the department at nearly 500 locations.

The monitoring program is a critical element of DPR’s mission to protect people as well as the environment. Federally established tolerances determine the maximum residue level of a specific pesticide allowed on food in the United States. In setting a tolerance, a safety finding must be made that the pesticide can be used with “reasonable certainty of no harm.”

“The Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program helps ensure the safety of California’s supply of fresh fruits and vegetables grown in and outside of our state,” said DPR Director Julie Henderson. “The 2020 report reflects the work of our environmental scientists, enforcement team and staff who continued sample collection and testing during the height of the pandemic to protect the health of California consumers.”

DPR scientists throughout the year visit food distribution centers, stores and outdoor markets to collect

samples of foreign and domestically grown produce. The samples are tested by California Department of Food and Agriculture labs for more than 500 pesticide residues and breakdown products.

U.S.-grown produce continues to have significantly fewer illegal pesticide residues than imported produce. Imported produce accounted for nearly 78% of illegal pesticide residue samples. Of the imported commodities sampled, cactus pads and cactus pears originating from Mexico and dragon fruit primarily from Ecuador and Vietnam continue to show high percentages of illegal pesticide residues.

When illegal residues are detected, DPR investigators trace the suspect crop through its lines of trade – from store shelves, to shippers, importers or growers. Tainted products and crops are quarantined and subject to reconditioning or potential destruction. Forms of reconditioning may involve rinsing tainted produce or cutting a tainted crop back down to ground level to be regrown and harvested later. In addition to potentially losing their inventory, growers and distributors whose produce exceeds tolerances can face fines and other penalties.

During 2020, DPR issued 142 quarantine notices for more than 70,000 pounds of produce carrying illegal pesticide residues. In addition, DPR referred 27 cases of illegal California-grown samples to local County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs) for investigation of potential illegal pesticide uses. CACs issued statutory fines against growers in instances where produce sources were able to be identified.

As part of enforcement activities, DPR staff provide guidance to growers and importers for ways to prevent sales of illegal produce.

For previous reports and more information about the department’s residue testing program, please visit DPR’s Pesticide Residue Monitoring Program webpage.



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US Department of Labor Announces Final Rule to Improve H-2A Visa Program

Regulations bolster H-2A, US workers' protections; improve employers' application process

Press Release Provided by US Department of Labor

The U.S. Department of Labor today announced a final rule to amend H-2A temporary labor certification regulations to protect agricultural workers better, and to update the H-2A application and temporary labor certification process. The final rule will be published in the Federal Register on Oct. 12, 2022.

The H-2A program allows employers to address temporary labor needs by employing foreign agricultural workers when there are not sufficient workers who are able, willing, qualified, and available, and when doing so will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of workers similarly employed in the U.S.

After the department proposed changes to the H-2A program's regulations in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in July 2019, employers, employer associations, agents, business advocacy groups, state agencies, federal and state elected officials, worker advocates, labor unions, public policy and academic organizations, farmworkers and others submitted tens of thousands of comments. After considering them, the department will publish the final rule, which becomes effective on Nov. 14, 2022.

"By improving H-2A program regulations, we are strengthening worker protections, meeting our core mission," said Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh. "Today's new rule makes several improvements to enhance the integrity of the H-2A program and provide employers and other stakeholders greater clarity."

The new rule includes the following important elements:

- Improves safety and health protections for workers housed in rental or public accommodations.
- Streamlines and updates bond requirements for labor contractors to better hold them accountable and clarifies joint-employer status for employers and associations.
- Clarifies the housing certification process to allow state and local authorities to conduct housing inspections.
- Establishes explicit authority to debar attorneys and agents for their misconduct, independent of an employer's violations.
- Makes electronic filing mandatory for most applications to improve employers' processing efficiency.
- Modernizes the methodology and procedures for determining the prevailing wage to allow state workforce agencies to produce more prevailing wage findings.

The changes in the final rule will also support the enforcement capabilities of the department's Wage and Hour Division to address H-2A program fraud and abuse that undermines workers' rights and hurts law-abiding employers.

Read the unpublished final rule to amend H-2A temporary labor certification regulations at the Federal Register.

Throughout the U.S., Wage and Hour Division violations of H-2A regulations and recovery of back wages have increased significantly over the past five years. In 2021, the Wage and Hour Division found H-2A violations in 358 cases and collected more than \$5.8 million in back wages for more than 7,000 workers.

For more information about H-2A rules and other worker protections enforced by the Wage and Hour Division, contact its toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (866-487-9243). Calls can be answered in over 200 languages.

When a Governor Has Concerns

Continued from PAGE 8 once, but three different times in the press release. In most circumstances, requested amendments are described (usually in the veto message). In this case, they were actually publicly provided. And having the amendments shared three times in unusual.

Third, based upon the amendments, those amendments were prepared in advance and finalized by the Office of Legislative Counsel the day before the Governor signed the bill. The proposed new bill includes 21 pages of amendments. The following is the Title of the bill:

An act to amend Sections 1149.3, 1160.3, 1164, 1164.3, and 1164.5 of, to amend, repeal, and add Sections 1142, 1156, 1156.5, and 1157 of, to add Section 1160.11 to, to repeal Sections 1156.35 and 1156.36 of, and to repeal and add Section 1156.37 of, the Labor Code, relating to employment.

Fourth, in addition to the links to the agreed upon bill language, the press release contained a link to a letter that was signed by the heads of the United Farm Workers and the California Labor Federation, the main sponsors of AB 2183. This has not happened in recent memory.

That letter reads as follows:

September 28, 2022

Assembly Bill 2183 (Mark Stone) – Request for Signature
Dear Governor Newsom,

We write to request your signature on AB 2183, the Agricultural Labor Relations Voting Choice Act, authored by Assembly Member Mark Stone. Conversations with your office have led to an agreement with

you on additional legislative language, as written in the attached RN 22 21856 from 2:15 pm on September 27, 2022. The language in RN 22 21856 will allow for easier implementation than some provisions of AB 2183.

We look forward to your signature on AB 2183 (Stone) and the subsequent passage by the Legislature of the language from RN 22 21856. With the signing of AB 2183 (Stone), this letter articulates our commitment to help lead and support passage of the attached legislation to replace what will be enacted through the signing of AB 2183 (Stone). Collectively we will move the legislation, without amendment, to your desk as quickly as possible in 2022 or in 2023.

Sincerely, Teresa Romero President United Farm Workers and Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher Executive Secretary-Treasurer California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

Fifth, this letter commits these two organizations to actively support the exact language contained in the thrice-provided bill language that they agreed to do with the Governor.

Sixth, the amendments substantially re-write AB 2183. For example, the deal to amend the law next year caps the number of card-check unionizations on farms at 75 from 2024 through 2027, as the bill sunsets on January 1, 2028.

Seventh, this bill was vetoed just last year, and most indications were that the same outcome would occur with this year's version as well.

What makes this bill an interesting case study, and much more detail could be added to the above points, is that the bill's signature occurred with two very public statements being made: a letter from the bill's sponsors that they would get the agreed upon language to the Governor's Desk next year, and the actual bill amendments were made available to the public well in advance of the new Session beginning.



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- 9:15 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.**
Irrigation Management – Presented by JAIN
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.**
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- 10:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**
Irrigation/Fertigation Control – Presented by WiseConn
- 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 p.m.**
Using ET for Making Irrigation Decisions – Presented by Tule
- 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**
Lunch (Lunch will be provided)

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Administration Announces New Steps for Drought Mitigation Funding from Inflation Reduction Act

New program will increase water conservation and water efficiency within the Colorado River Basin

Press Release Provided by Department of the Interior

On October 12th, the Department of the Interior announced new drought mitigation funding opportunities to improve and protect the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River System.

A newly created Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program, funded with an initial allocation through the Inflation Reduction Act and managed through the Bureau of Reclamation, will help increase water conservation, improve water efficiency, and prevent the System's reservoirs from falling to critically low elevations that would threaten water deliveries and power production.

"The prolonged drought afflicting the West is one of the most significant challenges facing our country. I have seen firsthand how climate change is exacerbating the drought crisis and putting pressure on the communities who live across Western landscapes," said Secretary Deb Haaland. "Thanks to historic funding from the Inflation Reduction Act, the Interior Department is committed to using every resource available to conserve water and ensure that irrigators, Tribes and adjoining communities receive adequate assistance and support to build resilient communities and protect our water supplies."

"This significant investment from the Inflation Reduction Act enables the Bureau of Reclamation to improve water management and conservation efforts in the Colorado River Basin today – and for the future," said Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton. "The Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and

Efficiency Program provides both new opportunities for system conservation and more durable long-term solutions for areas experiencing drought."

The availability of this new funding supplements the actions announced in August 2022 as part of Reclamation's release of the Colorado River Basin August 2022 24-Month Study, which sets the annual operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead in 2023. It also builds on new and urgent actions recently announced by Department leaders to improve and protect the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River System.

The Inflation Reduction Act includes \$4 billion in funding specifically for water management and conservation efforts in the Colorado River Basin and other areas experiencing similar levels of drought. Today's announcement focuses on near-term actions to protect the Colorado River in the Lower Basin. The Department is also working to invest in long-term system efficiency improvements across the Basin, including at least \$500 million in the Upper Basin states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico, that will result in additional water conservation for the entire system.

New Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program

The newly created Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program will select projects for funding by Colorado River water delivery contract or entitlement holders that mitigate drought, protect important natural resources, and ensure a reliable source of water and power for those who live in communities across the West.

The program funding opportunity has three components. Two of the three components are open for proposal submissions from Oct. 12 to Nov. 21, 2022 and require

confirmation of water conservation and system benefits.

For the first component, eligible applicants may submit proposals for system conservation resulting in wet water remaining in Lake Mead at a set price of:

- One-year agreement: \$330 per acre-foot
- Two-year agreement: \$365 per acre-foot
- Three-year agreement: \$400 per acre-foot

A second component of the program will accept proposals for additional water conservation and efficiency projects that could involve a variety of pricing options.

The third component allows for proposals to be submitted in early 2023 for long-term system efficiency improve-

ments that will result in multi-year system conservation.

Information on the program and proposal submission details will be available later today on Reclamation's Inflation Reduction Act webpage.

As the Department implements this historic funding opportunity, it is focused on the need for continued collaboration and partnerships across the Upper and Lower Basins, with Tribes, and with the country of Mexico. The agency's approach will continue to seek consensus support and will be based on a continued commitment to engage with diverse stakeholders to ensure all communities that rely on the Colorado River will provide contributions toward the solutions.

New UC Study Helps Growers Estimate Cover Crop Costs and Potential Benefits

Press Release Provided by UC Cooperative Extension

Cover crops offer many potential benefits – including improving soil health – but not knowing the costs can be a barrier for growers who want to try this practice. To help growers calculate costs per acre, a new study on the costs and potential benefits of adding a winter cover crop in an annual rotation has been released by UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, UC Cooperative Extension and the UC Davis Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Led by UC Cooperative Extension farm advisors Sarah Light and Margaret Lloyd, the cost study is modeled for a vegetable-field crop rotation planted on 60-inch beds in the lower Sacramento Valley of California. Depending on the operation, this rotation may include processing tomatoes, corn, sunflower, cotton, sorghum and dry beans, as well as other summer annual crops.

"This cost study can be used by growers who want to begin cover cropping to determine the potential costs per acre associated with this soil-health practice," said Light, a study co-author and UC Cooperative Extension agronomy advisor for Sutter, Yuba and Colusa counties.

"Based on interviews with growers who currently cover crop on their farms, this cost study models a management scenario that is common for the Sacramento Valley. In addition, growers who want to use cover crops can gain insight as to what standard field management practices will be from planting to termination."

At the hypothetical farm, the cover crop is seeded into dry soil using a grain drill, then dependent on rainfall for germination and growth.

"Given the frequency of drier winters, we included the cost to irrigate one out of three years," said Lloyd.

A mix of 30% bell bean, 30% field pea, 20% vetch and 20% oats is sown in the fall. Depending on winter rainfall, soil moisture and the following cash crop, the cover crop is terminated in mid to late spring. The cover crop is flail mowed and disced to incorporate the residue into the soil.

The study includes detailed information on the potential benefits and the drawbacks of cover cropping.

Another consideration for growers is that multiple programs such as CDE's Healthy Soils Program, various USDA-funded programs (EQUIP, the Climate-Smart Commodities, etc.), and Seeds for Bees by Project *Apis m.* offer financial incentives for growers to implement conservation practices, such as cover crops.

"This study can provide growers with a baseline to estimate their own costs of using winter cover crops as a practice. This can be useful to calculate more precise estimates when applying for some of these programs and/or weigh the costs per acre with expected benefits in terms of soil health, crop insurance premium discounts or other benefits provided by the cover crops," said Brittney Goodrich, UC Cooperative Extension agricultural and resource economics specialist and study co-author.

"Last year, the USDA's Pandemic Cover Crop Program gave up to a \$5/acre discount on crop insurance premiums for growers who planted a cover crop, and there is potential this will get extended going forward," Goodrich said.

A list of links to resources that focus specifically on cover crops is included in the study. Five tables show the individual costs of each cultural operation from ground preparation through planting and residue incorporation.

The new study, "2022 - Estimated Costs and Potential Benefits for a Winter Cover Crop in an Annual Crop Rotation - Lower Sacramento Valley," can be downloaded from the UC Davis Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics website at CostStudies.UCDavis.edu. Sample cost of production studies for many other commodities are also available on the website.

This cost and returns study is funded by the UC Davis Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

What A Ride! Thanks

Continued from PAGE 1 U.S. is made up of farming and ranching families. Yet those farmers and ranchers produce a majority of the food and ag products (86%) we consume here in the U.S.

On average, an American farm feeds 166 people annually. And with the global population expected to increase by nearly 2 billion by 2050, the Farm Bureau projects farmers will have to produce about 70% more food to meet the world's growing population demands.

From August to October, more than 450,000 farm

employees work California's harvest season, and every one of them is an essential part of our nation's food supply chain.

The fall harvest season is a wonderful time to enjoy the fruits of our labor, but also thank those farmers and ag workers who help put food on our tables.

So, THANK YOU to everyone in the ag industry for making another rollercoaster-ride-of-a-season a success, and here's hoping there's fewer ups and downs in seasons to come!

Brian Milne is a Vice President for The Holloway Group. Learn more about Holloway's products and services at HollowayAg.com.

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TABLE GRAPES **PRICE REDUCED**
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119.92± & 150.27± acres, Delano Earlimart Irrigation District, Lower Tule River Irrigation District, Quality Varieties, Productive Soils

WALNUTS **SALE PENDING**
149.33± acres, Lindmore ID and Wells, Productive Soils, Lindsay, CA.

ALMONDS **\$34,000±/AC**
155.73± acres, Wasco Area, 2 SOURCES OF SEMI-TROPIC WSD CONTRACT WATER, 1 Well, Solar, Class 1 soils, Almonds in full production.

FARMLAND **PRICED REDUCED** **\$12,000±/AC**
156.96± acres, Wasco Area, Semi-Tropic WSD non-contract water, 1 well, Productive soils, and Perfect for permanent crops

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TABLE GRAPES **PRICE REDUCED** **\$32,000±/AC**
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ALMONDS AND FARMLAND **\$21,790±/AC**
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Walnuts Meet the Criteria for “Healthy,” According to a New Proposed Definition by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration



Walnuts are extremely versatile in meals and make for a simple, convenient snack. (Photo: Mariana Sedyńska / Shutterstock.com)

Press Release Provided by California Walnut Board

Walnuts meet the criteria for a “healthy” food based on the important nutrients they provide, according to a long-awaited announcement from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) detailing a new proposed definition and criteria for healthy foods. This announcement, released in conjunction with the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, marks the first time the criteria for “healthy” has been updated since the 1990’s. Walnuts supply 4g of protein, 2g of fiber, and are the only nut to provide an excellent source of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the plant-based omega-3 fatty acid (2.5g).

“Walnuts are highly versatile, accessible and play a valuable role in a variety of recommended dietary patterns. We are delighted to see FDA’s proposed new definition for “healthy” would officially recognize walnuts as a healthy food,” shared Robert Verloop. “The FDA’s new

proposed rule affirms decades of nutrition research to reinforce the important contribution of walnuts in a healthy lifestyle, providing additional reason to move walnuts beyond the baking aisle and highlight them among other healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables.”

According to the latest 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines, more than half of Americans do not meet the recommended intake for nuts. However, nuts, such as walnuts, are advised for consumption to help support the reduction of saturated fat by substituting in unsaturated fat. The total fat in walnuts (18g) is mostly comprised of good polyunsaturated fats (13g/oz) and omega-3 ALA (2.5g/oz), an essential fatty acid that may play a role in heart health.

Walnuts are also acknowledged by governmental and leading scientific institutions, including the American Heart Association, for helping Americans build healthier diets. The FDA granted a qualified

heart health claim for walnuts in 2004 and included walnuts in a general qualified heart health claim for nuts. Additionally, the 2020 U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans encourages consumers to choose foods that are nutrient-dense such as walnuts.

The California walnut industry has a longstanding commitment to ensuring the public has access to accurate information about the nutritional value and health benefits of walnuts. Since 1991, California walnuts has supported research resulting in more than 200 publications in the areas of heart health, cognition, cancer, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, body weight/composition and reproductive health.

Walnuts are extremely versatile in meals and make for a simple, convenient snack. For more information about the nutritional benefits of California walnuts along with delicious recipe inspiration, please visit Walnuts.org.

California Citrus Growers Optimistic for the Upcoming Navel Orange and Mandarin Season



Ripened Mandarins (Photo: Tommy Lee Walker / Shutterstock.com)

Press Release Provided by California Citrus Mutual

The California Citrus Mutual Marketing Committee (Committee) – comprised of growers, shippers, and marketers – anticipates the 2022-23 Navel Orange crop will be approximately 10% over the previous season’s utilized production. At below average, the upcoming season crop is expected to be very similar to the previous season with excellent fruit quality and sizing. Preliminary maturity tests show that the crop is progressing very well with high sugar content that well exceeds the “California Standard” for sweetness.

The Mandarin crop – including Clementines, Tangos, Murcotts, and other seedless varieties – is also progress-

ing well in terms of quality and fruit size. The Committee estimates that the Mandarin crop will be up by as much as 30% over the previous season, but still well below average production levels and nearly 30% below the 2020-21 record-breaking large crop.

“The high quality of this crop is the silver lining of a very costly growing season,” says CCM President Casey Creamer.

“Like many Americans, growers are faced with rising inflation and increasing costs. The cost to grow and ship California citrus has more than doubled in the past ten years. Since 2020, growers’ costs have increased over \$1,000 per acre and in the last year alone, costs have gone up 25% with fertilizer, fuel, and water being the main drivers. We also expect higher costs on the packing and shipping side this season largely due to increased transportation and labor costs.

“Despite these challenges, the industry is optimistic for the season ahead. The 2022-23 crop will deliver what consumers have come to love and expect from California citrus – a delicious, sweet Navel orange and Mandarin that is unrivaled by the rest of the world,” says Creamer.

The California Navel orange crop will start by the end of October followed by Mandarins in early November.

Kaelyn Peterson Joins Grimmway Farms as Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement

Press Release Provided by Grimmway Farms

Grimmway Farms today announced that Kaelyn Peterson has been named Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement. She joins the company from the Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce, where she headed public affairs and policy initiatives.

In her role, Peterson will be responsible for the creation and management of internal and external communications, including supporting the company’s Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting. As a member of Grimmway’s External Affairs and Corporate Responsibility team, she will work across all departments and with senior leadership to advance the company’s community engagement, communications and brand priorities.

“Kaelyn’s strong background in local, state and federal public affairs and knowledge of the Central Valley’s business ecosystem make her a perfect fit for this role,” said Dana Brennan, Vice President of External Affairs and Corporate Responsibility. “We are thrilled to have her community and communications insights, as we continue to grow our business and our team.”

Prior to her role with the Chamber, Peterson served as



Kaelyn Peterson, Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement

a legislative aide to former State Senator Jean Fuller. She holds a Master of Business Administration from California State University, Bakersfield, and a Bachelor’s degree in Communications from the University of California, Los Angeles.

“I look forward to advancing Grimmway Farms’ mission, vision and values through a communications and policy lens,” Peterson said. “It’s an honor to work alongside colleagues I have known for many years, and for an organization I have long-admired.”

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DWR Now Accepting Applications for \$510 Million in Financial Assistance to Support Water Supply Reliability, Yard Transformation, and Migratory Birds

Press Release provided by California Department of Water Resources

As California prepares for extreme drought to extend into a fourth year, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) is gearing up to provide \$510 million in financial assistance to help communities, water agencies, and farmers prepare for a hotter and drier future.

"All communities are impacted by climate change and several years of extreme drought conditions. California is moving aggressively to transform the way we use and manage water so we can thrive in a hotter, drier future," said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. "Thanks to the leadership of Governor Newsom and the state Legislature, we are deploying much-needed funding to support communities, farmers and wildlife as we stretch existing supplies and build climate resilience."

DWR's funding efforts include:

\$300 Million in Financial Assistance for Water Infrastructure Improvements, Yard Transformation, and Improving Water Supply Reliability

DWR is offering \$300 million through the 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Grant Program under a new "Go Golden" program that provides financial assistance and resources to help large organizations, water agencies and communities build resilience, replace thirsty lawns with California native landscaping and promote water conservation as the golden standard of life.

This financial assistance supports projects that build climate resiliency and emphasize water conservation efforts. This follows the award of \$268 million under DWR's 2021 Urban and Multibenefit Drought Relief program. Eligible projects include water infrastructure repairs, water conservation programs such as yard transformation, well rehabilitation, emergency water interties, and fish and wildlife protection. Approximately \$85 million of the available funding will be set aside to support underrepresented communities and Tribes. Funding is also available for public agencies, public util-



Key construction components of the Savory Pond Expansion project in Fresno, California funded by DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program. The project will capture surface water to recharge the underground aquifer to improve the drinking water supply for domestic well owners and for residents of a local disadvantaged community. (Photo: DWR)

ities, special districts, non-profit organizations, mutual water companies, colleges, and Integrated Regional Water Management groups.

The 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief program is one of DWR's newest efforts to advance water conservation in the commercial, institutional, and industrial sector and in California's communities. DWR will begin accepting applications on October 10 and interested parties can visit the 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Funding webpage for more information about the program guidelines and additional resources. Communities with 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. These contacts can then facilitate requests for state funding.

\$10.7 Million in Financial Assistance Available for Farmers to Support Water Conservation in the Delta and Aid Migratory Birds

DWR partnered with the Sacramento San-Joaquin Delta Conservancy to offer \$10.7 million in a second

round of funding through the Delta Drought Response Pilot Program. The program works with farmers in the Delta to implement measures expected to conserve water, protect Delta water quality, promote soil health, and mitigate drought impacts on fish and migratory birds.

The Central Valley is one of the major wintering grounds for migratory waterbirds, supporting wintering waterfowl and attracting millions of birds to seasonal marshes. With California's extended drought and climate change resulting in less water and habitat for wildlife, farmers could receive a bonus of \$75 per acre for short-term shallow flooding or \$40 per acre for providing nesting habitat through delayed harvest. The Delta Conservancy will conduct the 2023 program through a reverse auction. Bids, which can be submitted through the Delta Conservancy's website, will be accepted through October 18, 2022.

For questions about the Delta Drought Response Pilot Program and future solicitations, please contact the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy at Contact@DeltaConservancy.CA.gov.

\$200 Million in Financial Assistance for Communities That Rely on Groundwater

California's warming climate means that changes in precipitation, reduced snowpack, and the ongoing extreme drought are likely to increase the demand on groundwater sources, risking overdraft and decreased water quality. Understanding that many municipal, agricultural, and disadvantaged communities rely on groundwater for up to 100 percent of their water supply needs, DWR is offering \$200 million in funding through a second solicitation of

the Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program. The funding will help regional groundwater agencies comply

with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and follows the release in May of \$150 million to groundwater agencies in California's 20 critically overdrafted basins.

The \$200 million solicitation will support planning efforts and projects in medium and high priority groundwater basins to help local agencies reach their groundwater sustainability goals. Eligible projects include groundwater recharge projects, projects that prevent or clean up contaminated groundwater supplies that serve as a source of drinking water, and other projects that support water supply reliability for people, farms, and the environment. The funding will also support revisions or updates to an existing groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) or Alternative to a GSP.

Visit the Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant program webpage to view the program guidelines and additional resources.

In addition to the \$510 million in grant funding announced today, DWR will also unveil a new program this fall to provide \$50 million to protect drinking water wells in vulnerable communities. The program will create a financial incentive for farmers to temporarily fallow agricultural lands to reduce pressure on shallow drinking water wells and groundwater basins. The program will promote the acceleration of the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. In the coming weeks, DWR will engage farmers, groundwater agencies, and other agricultural interests to roll out this program.

As California enters a possible fourth dry year, it is critical that we all do our part to use water wisely. Water conservation should continue into the fall even during possible rain events. More information and water-saving tips are available at SaveOurWater.com. For information about other DWR and State of California drought response efforts and funding programs, visit: Drought.CA.gov.

Pumpkin Patches Try to Keep Crowd

Continued from PAGE 4 Since opening his pumpkin patch on Sept. 23, Stanislaus County farmer Ron Macedo, who operates RAM Farms in Turlock, said he's seen his pumpkin sales increase 10% to 15%. But corn maze participants have dropped 10%. With current gas prices at more than \$6 a gallon, he said he thinks people's disposable income "is being used up" and that his farm may be feeling impacts of inflation.

On the farm, he noted the cost of labor and "supplies across the board" has surged, forcing him to adjust his prices, including on the corn maze and certain varieties of pumpkins.

"You get into that fine line where you price people out of the market too, so you're trying to walk that tight rope," Macedo said.

With "extremely good production" on pumpkins this year, he said he's trying to keep prices low so that he can sell more pumpkins and get people to come to the farm multiple times. Except for the corn maze, attractions are free. He expanded the playground and other areas so they're "more conducive to parties," he said.

"The idea is...once they're here, then they're either going to buy pumpkins or they're going to buy from our snack bar," Macedo said.

With schools feeling "a lot more comfortable" doing field trips again, Merced County farmer Scott Hunter said it's

the first time in two years that he's filled up his reservations for the season. Still, attendance so far has not been as high as the past two years, he said.

"It's definitely a little slower start than we've had in the past couple of years, but there's also a lot more activities for people to do," Hunter said. "There's competing events, and soccer's back, and there's a lot of things going in people's lives, people back in school."

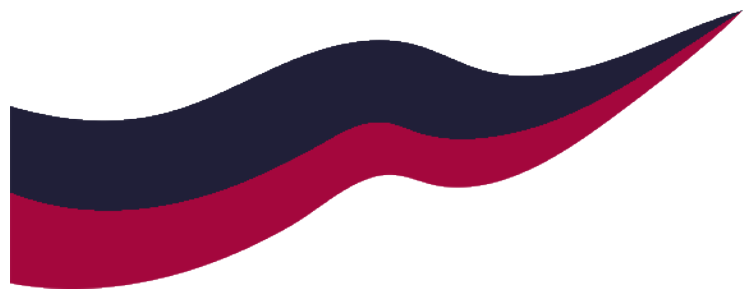
Unlike with his almond and pistachio crops, in which he's a price taker, Hunter said he has more flexibility to pass on the higher costs of the pumpkin patch, "as long as you stay competitive in the marketplace." He charges \$7 admission to the farm, but the fee is applied to the purchase of a pumpkin. This way, "we're making sure you buy a pumpkin," he said. "It stops people from using us as a daycare."

Not all pumpkin patches were able to return to their pre-pandemic level of business. Yolo County farmer Ray Yeung chose not to open the past two years because of the pandemic. He planned on reopening this year and planted pumpkins. But he had trouble finding enough seasonal employees to work the pumpkin patch, so he decided to stay closed for another year.

"It's hard to get reliable people to come out here to just work four weeks a year," he said. "You have to prepare; you have to spend several thousand dollars to get everything ready. All it takes is one rain or windstorm" to wreck the season.

All is not lost, he said, as he plans to sell his pumpkins wholesale.

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What Do You Believe?

By Joshua Stevens
Faith Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

What do you believe? If someone were to ask you what you believe, what would you say? I was speaking with a friend, and I asked her if her daughter were to ask, “Who is Jesus?” how would she respond? She laughed and said she would call me. We often find ourselves surrounded by many conflicting messages from core issues like the personhood of Christ to mundane and silly topics like does pineapple belong on pizza. And while it would be impossible and naive to implore us all to have an answer to every question, it is vital that we know the answers to the foundational questions.

There are many reasons why it is important to know what you believe, Paul says in **Ephesians 4:14**, “so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”¹ We should know what we believe because

it keeps us
on track.
Regard-

less of what's being said or proposed, we have a foundation of truth to rely on. It helps to keep us on that road so narrow.

What other reasons would there be to go through such an exercise of figuring out what you believe? Well, for one, it would be an excellent time to model to children *how* to go about the process, how to exegete scripture, what makes a good argument and a bad one. What are the standards we have for belief? All of these are important conversations to have with loved ones, and this is a prime opportunity to not just talk about it but to do something together about it. In doing so, we can fulfill what was said, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”¹ **Hebrews 13:7**

A third reason would be to grow closer to God. While going through a foundational process on what does one believe, we find ourselves, inevitably, going to the creator in prayer and asking for guidance. Search-

Jesus Christ, praying during the last supper, with his apostles. (Photo: Jesus Cervantes / Shutterstock.com)

ing His word for answers and looking throughout history to see what others have said on the matter. In so doing, we find ourselves discovering more of God's nature, creation, and glory. So that we may fulfill what a wise man once wrote, "Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you!"²

What are these foundational questions that should be answered? They are the same questions that you would find across many churches' "what we believe section."

1. Who is God?
2. Who is Christ?
3. What is the Trinity?
4. How does Salvation occur?
5. What happened at the resurrection of Christ?
6. What is the gospel?

Certainly, this may seem overwhelming, and it is fortunate that none of us are alone in this journey of answering any of these questions. Not only do we

stand on the shoulders of giants like Athanasius of Alexandria or Augustine of Hippo who wrestled with similar questions, but we also have brothers and sisters in Christ surrounding us who have studied and would love to help you answer these questions along the way. Do not be afraid to reach out to your elders or pastors to help you answer these, as I'm sure they'd love to have these discussions with you about not only what they believe but why it's so important.

I pray that as we wrestle with these questions that we cling to the grace of the cross and the work accomplished there. That God would guide our hearts and minds towards answers that reveal Himself to us and to the world around us. I hope we find the courage, words, and ways to answer these questions and to go boldly proclaiming that gospel with which we have been entrusted. In Jesus name I pray,

Amen.

¹ **Crossway Bibles.** (2001). *The Holy Bible English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Good News Publishers.

² **Augustine, V.J.** (1974). *The Essential Augustine*. In V.J. Burke. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

DPR Announces Public Workshops on Development of Statewide Pesticide Application Notification System

Press Release Provided Department of Pesticide Regulation

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) will hold three public workshops on Nov. 7, 9 and 10 to collect feedback and provide an update on the development of the statewide pesticide application notification system.

The workshops are designed to gather public feedback on the notification pilot projects in Riverside, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus and Ventura counties and the statewide notification system. DPR staff will answer questions and share planned next steps regarding the statewide notification system. Feedback received during the workshops will inform the continued development of the statewide system.

The UC Davis Center for Regional Change will facilitate all three workshops. Each workshop will be conducted in the same format. Spanish interpretation will be provided at all workshops and Mixteco interpretation will be provided at the Oxnard workshop. Registration is not required to attend.

The workshops are scheduled at the following times and locations:

- **In-person:** Monday, Nov. 7 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center in Ventura County: 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, CA 93030
- **In-person:** Wednesday, Nov. 9 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Orosi Memorial Hall in Tulare County:

41645 Road 128,
Orosi, CA 93647

1001 I St., P.O. Box 4015
Sacramento, CA 95814

- **Virtual:** Thursday, Nov. 10 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Zoom via link ([US02Web.Zoom.US/j/85867200295?pwd=ZGNlMjJOVnFCTEp4VVVsRzRnbmnpQQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85867200295?pwd=ZGNlMjJOVnFCTEp4VVVsRzRnbmnpQQT09); Meeting ID: 858 6720 0295; Passcode: 750189; Call In Number: +1-669-900-9128)

In addition, the department invites the public to submit written feedback on the county-led notification pilot projects for the UC Davis Center for Regional Change to incorporate into its independent evaluation of the pilot projects. The department requests feedback by Nov. 11, 2022, via email to ProjectNotify@CDPR.CA.gov or written mail to the following address:

DPR – Notification

California will be the first state in the nation to develop a system of this scale to provide the public more transparent and equitable access to information in advance of pesticide applications. DPR began developing the statewide notification system in mid-2021, after the state budgeted \$10 million to DPR for system development. The department partnered with four County Agricultural Commissioners to conduct pilot projects in communities within Riverside, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus and Ventura counties to inform the continued development of the statewide system.

For more information and updates on statewide notification and county-led pilot projects, please visit DPR's website.



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