



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

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What “They” Don’t Know Can Hurt You

By Scott Hamilton,
President, Hamilton Resources Economics

“Life is full of uncertainties. Your food supply should not be one of them.” That was the theme of a \$97,000 full-page ad in the Wall Street Journal. Why? In 1860, 58% of the labor force worked on farms. Now the number is closer to 1.5%, although 10% of the workforce in the United States is directly involved in the agricultural and food production industries. That means there are now many more people in America with little understanding of where their food comes from and what it takes to produce it. For farmers, that lack of reality is a little hard to comprehend. How can people not understand where their food comes from? How can they not

understand why water is so essential in food production? As the poet Banjo Patterson said, “townsfolk have no time to grow, they have no time to waste.” Countering the lack of understanding is critical to ensure that farmers get the necessary resources and political support. That is the goal of the California Farm Water Coalition (CFWC), as said by Executive Director Mike Wade in his address at the Annual Meeting of the Water Association of Kern County. Wade’s research has found that when people understand the linkage between the water supply and their food supply, they support farmers in getting what they need.

The California Farm Water Coalition continues to embark on a multi-faceted approach to educating an increasingly urban population. Their “Food Grows

Where Water Flows” campaign has received wide recognition. Less well known is the “Cultivate California” campaign that is helping to share not only factual information about local food and farms with consumers but fosters opportunities to share in their excitement. More information about CFWC activities can be found on their website FarmWater.org. While CFWC strives to reach a diverse audience, the CFWC has found that younger urban mothers with kids in the home are receptive to the organization’s messages. That demographic is concerned about a safe, reliable, nutritious, sustainable, and affordable food supply.

CFWC has been adapting to the advances in communication technology. Social media has created new opportunities to reach people and target specific audiences. Taking



Mike Wade, Executive Director, California Farm Water Coalition (CFWC)

advantage of the shifting tendency for people to get detailed information from bloggers rather than traditional news media, CFWC has invited influential bloggers to tour farms.

This opportunity allows them to see first-hand what it takes to grow food, and the pride farmers take in producing food, and the families and communities that depend on agriculture for their livelihood. They are putting faces on food production and making it personal.

See **WHAT “THEY” DON’T KNOW** on PAGE 7



Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*). (Photo: Peter L. Coffey, University of Maryland Extension, 2017–2021)

By Audrey Hill, Feature Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

In 2021 California enacted a state exterior quarantine that prohibits the entry of many articles from any area infested with the invasive Spotted Lanternfly into

Spotted Lanternfly Provokes Action in California

California. These prohibited articles include plants and firewood exposed to the environment, shipping and storage containers, and outdoor household goods such as furniture, vehicles, and agricultural equipment. Currently infested areas within the U.S. include Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, and Maryland. The pest has also been reported in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and North Carolina.

The Spotted Lanternfly was first found Berks County, Pennsylvania, in 2014. Since then- despite many county and state quarantine efforts- the insect has spread throughout the Northeast, worrying many that California could be next. The Spotted Lanternfly has successfully avoided

human intervention partly because of human transport. Transport by humans was most likely how the pest got to the U.S., and it is likely the way it continues to travel through the states. The Spotted Lanternfly cannot withstand long flights. Still, they lay eggs on a vast spectrum of surfaces, hence the reason for the many prohibited articles in the continuing California quarantine.

What harm can they do?

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture states on the *PDA Spotted Lanternfly Alert* page, “The economic impact could total in the hundreds of millions of dollars and hundreds of thousands of jobs for those in the grapes, apple, hops, and hardwood industries.” The Spotted Lanternfly lays 30-50 eggs during each reproductive cycle which will hatch and feed on the host plant. They feed on a wide range of woody plant species; however, they

prefer Tree of Heaven or grape vines. Other common host plants are hardwoods and stone fruits.

Their feeding produces honeydew, a sweet sticky fluid that decreases the host plants’ photosynthetic abilities, attracts other pests, and promotes sooty mold growth. The mold is harmless to humans but can kill plants.

Furthermore, the Spotted Lanternfly can affect more than just agriculture. According to an article written by Kelly Oten, an assistant professor and extension specialist in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources at the North Carolina State College of Natural Resources, entitled *Ask an Expert: How Will the Spotted Lanternfly Impact North Carolina?* the “[Spotted lanternflies] aggregate in large numbers and have been known to swarm restaurant doors, enter local businesses, fly up people’s shirts, and amass on outdoor furniture, toys, and trees.” These pests affect agriculture and tourism, forestry, and land-

See **SPOTTED LANTERNFLY** on PAGE 8

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2022 California Agricultural Aircraft Association (CAAA) Convention

Jon Slikker Jr., Aerial Applicator, Vince Dusters

Pilots from all over California attended the CAAA 73rd Annual Convention, October 24-26, 2022, for regulatory updates and the latest in aerial application technology. Much like our ability to accurately apply crop protection materials to fields, we must expertly navigate our way through political pressure and regulatory brick walls. Monterey, California seems to be an excellent location symbolically.

Aerial Applicators (or Ag Pilots) attended informative sessions to expand their knowledge about the crop protection materials to better protect our food supply and the environment. We received updates in wireless GPS and guidance systems to increase application accuracy and learned about new spray boom technology to allow us



Pilots from all over California attended the 73rd Annual CAAA Convention, October 24–26, 2022. (Photos: Jon Slikker, Jr.)

to make those more precise applications that improve coverage and minimize off target movement. The new

See **2022 CAAA CONVENTION** on PAGE 4



FARM BUREAU NEWS

The United Voice of Kern County's Farming Community



President's Message

By Patty Poire
President, Kern
County Farm Bureau

Here we are at the end of 2022 and beginning to look forward to 2023.

Unfortunately, I am writing this article on election day, November 8th. I don't have my crystal ball polished enough to know the outcome of the elections, but I am hoping for a huge change! A change from moving agendas by executive orders instead of legislation and changing scientific results to fit the narrative. And yet, those changes may not even be possible. One can only hope!

Although I don't know the election's outcomes, I know what is coming at the beginning of 2023. In my November article, I wrote about AB 2183, the "card check bill" that Governor Newsom signed into law when he should have vetoed it based on his actions of seeking extensive amendments. That legislation goes into effect on January 1st, 2023. As an agricultural employer in the state, you shall have the option to indicate to the Agricultural Labor Relations Board whether you agree to a labor peace compact. Since this is the first effective year for this legislation, you, as the employer, have to make this declaration between January 1st, 2023, to February 1st, 2023. For all subsequent years, you will need to make this decision 30 days before January 1st of the following year.

The Kern County Farm Bureau sent out an overview of this legislation. I included it in my December article because this is the most impactful legislation hitting first in 2023. Please see below.

AB 2183 discards the existing secure process, replacing it with two options for ag employers.

First Option:

- An employer annually chooses "labor peace," agreeing (1) not to express to its employees or publicly any opinion about union representation and (2) to give union organizers access to the workplace.

- Employer forfeits constitutional protection of private property affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Cedar Point Nursery*.
- Employees vote in an insecure mail ballot election that permits union involvement in acquiring, completing, and returning ballots, with ample opportunity for union agent coercion and intimidation of employees.
- Employers choosing the "labor peace" option will do so online, thus allowing unions to see that they agreed to a labor peace election campaign. That knowledge might increase the likelihood that one or more unions will target those employers for unionization.

Second Option:

- An employer not opting for "labor peace" retains free-speech and private-property rights but can be unionized through a "card check" process.
- No ballot box election, as required under current law, or mail ballot election is held among the employees.
- The union can choose a ballot box election but almost certainly will instead initiate a card-check campaign.
- The union gathers authorization cards signed by employees and petitions the ALRB for certification, showing majority support at the employer's 1/2 seasonal peak employment.
- The employer then must submit to the ALRB and union a list of employees in the pay period before the petition's submission.
- If the ALRB finds the union has not demonstrated majority support, the union has 30 days while in possession of the employee list to coerce, intimidate, or trick enough employees into signing authorization cards to demonstrate majority support.

This is not the Christmas present I was hoping to give you all this year, but if you need any assistance with this legislation, please contact the Kern County Farm Bureau. Providing as much information as possible enables you to do what all farmers do best, FARM, and provide the food and fiber that this county, state, and country rely on! I keep asking myself, "When will the legislators understand that the people they repre-



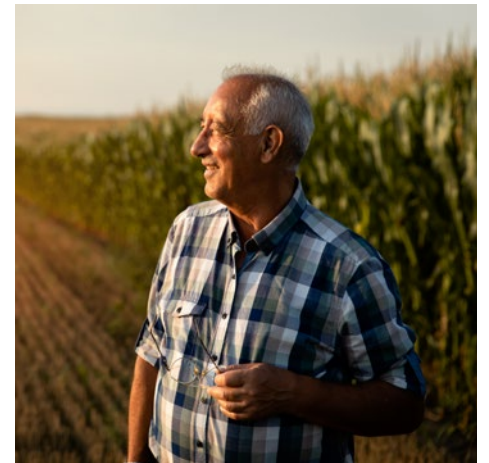
Executive Director's Report

By Romeo Agbalog,
Executive Director, Kern
County Farm Bureau

Kern County was recently ranked as the number one crop-producing county in the nation with a total value topping over \$8 billion. This figure represents gross values and does not consider the cost of production, equipment, fuel, fertilizer, labor, and other related expenses that have increased exponentially, nor does the figure suggest net income or loss for Kern's producers.

While the annual output value is impressive, I would like to invite you to join me and take a deeper dive into the value of Kern's agriculture and its economic impacts on the community that you might also find impressive. Did you know that one in every five jobs in Kern County is directly related to agriculture? According to the Kern Economic Development Corporation (Kern EDC), there are 66,300 jobs in Kern County in ag production and ag processing combined. Kern EDC figures show that for every one job in ag production, .92 additional jobs are created. Also, for every \$1 of income, \$1.19 is generated in the local economy. The industry multiplier for ag processing jobs is 2.26 additional jobs created for every 1 job, and \$1.75 is generated in the local economy for every \$1 of income.

In addition to producing the food and fiber America needs, farmers and ranchers help generate sales tax revenue used by local jurisdictions to help fund essential public services when equipment, supplies, trucks, and other goods are purchased. Likewise for ag employees when they spend their hard-earned wages on food, recreation, and other wares. Much of the latter is occurring now as families prepare for Christmas. With Kern County consistently ranked as



Take a deeper dive into the value of Kern's agriculture and its economic impacts on the community. (Photo: Zoran Zeremski / Shutterstock.com)

one of the top ag-producing counties in the country, what I described is common practice. But regulations like the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act or SGMA, drought, and other burdensome and costly government regulations that threaten our industry makes one wonder how much longer can we be leaders in production.

As we approach Christmas and join with family to celebrate the birth of our Savior and give thanks for the many gifts and blessings we have received throughout the year, please take a moment to reflect on the many gifts that local agriculture provides to our families and community at large. From the meal at the dinner table, the ugly Christmas sweater you purchased for a least favorite relative, or the ag job that provided the income used to purchase said sweater, or the friends that are like family that we have met through the ag industry, we have much to be thankful for. \$8 billion is a huge number, but the value of ag is much deeper and bigger to us, at least here at home. *Merry Christmas!*

sent need and rely on the food and fiber that California farmers do better in producing than any other farmers in the world?" Kern County agriculture is ranked number

#1 for a reason!

Merry Christmas to you and your family, and a Happy New Year!

Young Farmers & Ranchers

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CONTACT US AT Info@ValleyAgVoice.com



KERN COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Romeo Agbalog, Executive Director
661-397-9635 • RAgbalog@KernCFB.com

*Articles or commentaries are not direct opinions of
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By Timothy Collins
Chair, Kern County
Young Farmers
& Ranchers

As I reflect on 2022 and start to think about next year, I've been asking Young Farmers & Ranchers members what they like

about the group and what keeps them coming. I hear a range of answers but the one that nearly every member says is that they like the farm and industry tours we often do as part of our monthly meetings. This year we toured Lakeview Farms Dairy, Poncetta Farms/Maggiotti Show Goats, Murray Farms, Temblor Brewing, and Semi-Tropic Almond Huller. With our new officer team, we are already planning another great round of tours for 2023.

My interest in ag tours started very young. I was home-schooled up through junior high and my family was part of co-op and charter school groups that gave me the opportunity to do many field trips from a young age. Over the years, I remember touring Grimmway Farms, Bolthouse Farms, Frito Lay, a sugar beet farm, a cherry orchard, Farmer John Eggs, an apple orchard, a



The picture is me, Tim Collins, second from left and not looking at the camera at Farm Bureau's Farm Day in the City in 2001. (Photo: Kern County Farmers Bureau)

nursery, an almond huller and Farm Bureau's Farm Day in the City back in 2001. These instilled a knowledge of and interest in agriculture that continues today by means of Young Farmers and Ranchers. Many were not able to have that experience as a child but anyone ages 18-35 can join us today at YF&R and learn about ag through more in-depth industry tours.

In 1900, about 40 percent of Americans lived on farms

with about 60 percent living in rural areas. Now, 122 years later, only about 1 percent live on farms and 20 percent in rural areas. The fact that such a small percentage of people actually produce food for us to eat is a very new development in history. Never before has most of society been so distant from agriculture. We may not know what exact effect this will have, but what we do know is that people are no less dependent on food and farming than in the past.

This is reflected in Young Farmers & Ranchers where our group is not mainly composed of the less than 2 percent of Americans that live on a farm or ranch. However, what we have been able to learn through our YF&R tours is how diverse and complex the agriculture industry is today in Kern County where we grow a wide variety of crops that we eat every day. Knowing where your food comes from is as important for someone in ag as anyone else. For most of us, the ag industry is far too vast to see it all through our job, so make joining YF&R part of your career. Our Christmas party is December 16th, and it is a great event to attend as a first timer to get to know the group. For more information, look us up on social media or reach out to us via email.

Email: KernYFR@KernCFB.com

Instagram: [@Kern_YFR](https://www.instagram.com/Kern_YFR)

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



Following harvest and winter sanitation is an ideal time to make nutrient and soil amendment applications. (Photo: Alex Parsons, The Holloway Group)

The Time Is Now for Post-Harvest Soil Amendment Applications

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

Harvest season is over, so it's time to take some time off and get some much-deserved vacation time in, right? Think again.

Now is the time to get back into the field, orchard or vineyard and ensure our soils and our crops are getting the irrigation, nutrients and amendments needed to ensure optimal health through the winter months on into next spring.

Harvest is an extremely stressful time of year for our crops, particular our trees and vines that were starved of water and nutrients for weeks, undergoing a strong "shaking," or two, as harvesting equipment passed through to collect its bounty of nuts and fruit.

"The tree is played out at harvest. It's tired. It's done," said Holloway Director of Agronomy Steve Lenander. "So, I like to come in with a big nutrition at that time, as well as whatever amendments we need. Because don't forget, just because harvest is over, that tree is going through bud differentiation for next year's crop. It's starting to tell itself where the blooms are going to be next year. So, if you don't have proper nutrition, proper irrigation, that's going to be affected.

"You don't want to forget about applications until the following year, and find yourself wondering 'Why is my bloom so bad?' Or, 'Why was my set bad?' Well, you forgot about that stress you had on the tree last fall when you went on vacation or something and forgot about it."

Once that first post-harvest fertilizer application is taken care of, Lenander recommends growers assess soil samples and look at applying soil amendments such as gypsum.

So, when is the ideal time to apply gypsum, compost, and other amendments?

"The short answer is, I'd like to do it as early as I can in the year, post-harvest," Lenander said. "But depending on the type of irrigation system that an orchard has, there are many cultural operations that have to be done first. For example, I don't want to band gypsum and compost on, then have to come back

and shake the trees, and sweep them, then you're moving all of those materials out of the banded area you want those (amendments and nutrients) in."

In almonds, for example, many growers are concerned with staving off navel orangeworm (NOW) this time of year, having crews go back through the orchard for winter sanitation purposes.

While every region and operation is different, mummy shaking typically takes place in November and December in the Central Valley, with growers preferring to shake in damp conditions during fog or a light rain in the morning, when nuts tend to fall off easier and NOW mortality rates are higher.

So, depending on the weather, winter sanitation can occur at different times depending on region, with South Valley growers typically starting to shake again by early December, versus growers in the North Valley who might wait until later in the year.

This can push back soil amendment applications until the first of the year, when the sanitation process is completed.

"I would like to have amendments on as early as possible so we can take advantage of winter rains," Lenander said. "Plus, it's just out in the field working, instead of sitting in piles. So we try to get it in as early as we can, but we have to think about the reality of cultural operations that happen and the ability to leave it in place where we need it up by the trees."

The sooner the better for soil amendment applications, Lenander adds, so amendments and nutrients can move through the soil profile with winter rains, breaking up hard soils and breathing new life into the rootzone.

He also recommends taking soil, water, and tissue samples throughout the year, and addressing crop needs and deficiencies with amendments and nutrients in season.

"The trees don't really sleep. We think they do, but they really don't," Lendander concluded. "They're always doing something, even when they're completely defoliated, they're still working underground. So, the happier we can keep that tree, in all time frames, the better off we're going to be when it comes to total yield."

Interested in learning more about soil health? Watch videos about soil amendment application timing and other agronomy-related topics at HollowayAg.com/FromTheField.

The Cattleman's Corner



The Carrot on a Stick

**By Austin Snedden
Ranching Contributor,
Valley Ag Voice**

We have all heard the saying, and probably many have seen the drawing or picture of an old mule with a stick dangling a carrot out in front, getting the mule to move forward. The saying has become a simile for giving motivation, but it should make us think more of false promises than motivation. We live in the era of a carrot being dangled in front of us but just out of reach and constantly moving. The positive way to think of that old saying is to imagine the person operating the stick and the carrot finally giving that carrot to the old mule when they reach their desired destination, justifying the motivation. All of us in agriculture need to ensure we are not changing course based on the promises of groups that don't keep promises.

The cattle industry has an outstanding sustainability story, and I don't mean the ambiguous, feel-good, woke version of sustainability (which I have covered in another article). I mean the real meaning of sustainability. Good cattle operators have shown sustainability by doing the same thing on the same ground for centuries while at the same time paying bills because society is willing to pay for what we produce. Based on the fact that our industry has proven that we know how to keep doing what we are doing, we need to be cautious when advocacy groups try to encourage us to change course based on a promise of economic reward or a societal pat on the back.

The optimistic version is based on the idea that the carrot stick operator has a destination in mind, and the mule gets the carrot when the destination is reached. What if the carrot stick operator is never happy with a destination and never intends to give the old mule

the carrot? The old mule burns endless calories based on a false promise. We, as ranchers, need to ensure we don't change course to appease an unappeasable group. The environmental zealots have shown themselves to be unappeasable across many industries, but as mules, we keep jumping through hoops because of the carrot they dangle on the other side. With every hoop we jump through, we give up a little ground. Occasionally, a mule will get a piece of a carrot. But with every hoop we jump through, we notice there are less and less of our fellow mules.

We have no excuse for being naive because the model has been displayed repeatedly. Across all industries, the example has been shown, from mitigation ground for development to climate hurdles we use to regulate our vehicles. The list goes on and on with no sign of the ability to appease these folks. Many folks in our industry were silent on cap and trade because a bogus carrot was dangled that said cattle producers would get carbon credits for their rangeland. This regulatory burden was heaped on productive society, and many were silent based on a false promise from folks with dishonest intentions. Selling conservation easements has been a carrot to many that have unfortunately resulted in many hoops to jump through with often very little carrot.

The examples are numerous, and chances are many of you could think of several off the top of your head. The fact of the matter is, we jump through hoops and chase carrots not only for economic gain but primarily because we think we can make a group of zealots happy and therefore get them off our back, this is a false premise. We have a true story of sustainability in our industry; it needs to be told, and we should be proud to tell it. We need to make sure we are not giving up ground jumping through hoops chasing a carrot that no one intends to give us. We must tell our story of true sustainability and fight false narratives aimed at our industry because appeasement has not been shown to pull environmental activists away from their regulatory pulpit.



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Short Supplies Could Hold Up Pima Prices

Pima cotton, the main variety grown in the state, is harvested in Fresno County. With practically no carryover inventory for pima cotton, California growers remain upbeat about the market outlook for the high-end fiber, even as global prices for upland cotton have fallen from their historic high.

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

With water shortages limiting the amount of cotton farmers grew this year, those who planted acreage say they remain optimistic about the market outlook for the fiber, even as global prices have softened from their record highs last spring.

Cotton harvest is well underway in the San Joaquin Valley, and dry conditions so far have been favorable to farmers. Weather for growing cotton also has been decent this year, even with the extended heat wave in September, said Roger Isom, president and CEO of the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association.

But the multiyear drought left some farmers in the state's prime cotton-producing region with no surface-water supplies to grow the crop, even when prices soared and market signals told them to plant more cotton.

"The biggest issue is just a lack of water," Isom said. "We didn't have water to really increase the acreage."

Most of the cotton grown in the state is the higher-end pima variety, valued for its extra-long fiber. Supplies of pima cotton remain depleted, with virtually no carryover from last year. California grows most of the nation's pima cotton, with some production in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Considering the price, Isom said "we'd be wall to wall pima cotton if we had the water."

California farmers planted 131,801 acres of cotton this year, about 17% more than they grew last year,

according to the California Department of Food and Agriculture. A total 113,858 acres went to pima, a 20% increase over 2021. Plantings of the more widely grown upland cotton climbed 11%, to 17,943 acres.

After earning his "biggest returns on cotton" last year, Kings County grower Ted Sheely said he thinks the market outlook for pima remains good. He noted that Supima, a trade association that promotes American pima cotton, told growers "this year's crop will be all committed and sold by June or July of next year."

"That means there's going to be demand for whatever we can grow," Sheely said.

The market outlook for upland cotton is more uncertain. Isom said even though prices have fallen from their historic high levels seen earlier this year, much of the U.S. Cotton Belt crop "is not looking good" due to hurricane, drought and other weather-related production problems.

With pima, Isom said people in the cotton business are more confident that stronger prices will hold into next year and even 2024. But with the economy slowing, demand for apparel and other products made with luxury fibers such as pima cotton could retreat, driving prices down, growers said.

Tom Pires, general manager of West Island Cotton Growers in Kings County, said the cooperative cotton gin is just starting to gin this year's cotton, so it's hard to know what the total yields and quality will be. There's also not much pima cotton being traded, but he noted earlier prices were double what they were last year.

"We're in a transition period right now trying to determine where the true value is," he said.

Meanwhile, competition remains fierce among seed companies, canneries and other processors looking to sign contracts with growers who have access to water to grow crops such as processing tomatoes and planting seed, including for cotton.

Sheely said these companies are already scouting for contracts for next year's crop, "bidding up the ground." They're willing to pay more to get more acreage, he said. Even so, he said his cropping decisions going forward will be determined by water availability. With restrictions



With water shortages limiting the amount of cotton farmers grew this year, those who planted acreage say they remain optimistic about the market outlook for the fiber, even as global prices have softened from their record highs last spring. (Photo: Ching Lee)

on groundwater pumping next year, he said he expects to be "more conservative on what I'm going to grow."

For example, he said he already decided he won't grow any organic pima cotton next year because of the high risk of a crop failure. He also has not committed to growing the amount of upland acres a seed company wants to contract because of water uncertainties.

"What water we have, we're going to put it to the permanent crops first," Sheely said, referring to his pistachios and winegrapes.

Rick Worth, who farms in Fresno and Kings counties, did not grow any cotton this year because he received no surface-water allocation. With almond prices dropping, he said he's removing older orchards and "making choices on what to grow" depending on what he thinks is most profitable.

"We're not going to go back into a permanent crop; we're going to go back into row crop—tomatoes or possibly even cotton, especially if the price comes up," he said.

Tulare County farmer Geoff Toledo, who finished cotton harvest last week, typically grows an equal amount of pima and upland. Even though pima prices are higher, the longer-season crop is risky as harvest moves into the rainy season in November.

Rain can delay harvest and wreck crop quality. Upland has a shorter season and typically yields better than

pima, but prices have tumbled from where they were six months ago.

Even with the lower prices, Toledo said he will make out OK, as part of his upland acreage was contracted for seed, which pays him a price closer to what he would earn on pima. He also presold a third of his upland at higher prices. But he said he fears the weakening economy will affect consumer spending on cotton products such as clothes and sheets, further lowering grower prices on the fiber.

Merced County farmer Gino Pedretti III was about 70% done with cotton harvest last week. He described his yields as "a little off compared to last year," blaming unfavorable planting conditions in April. He planted 60% of his acreage to pima and 40% acala, a higher-quality upland variety grown mostly in California and the Southwest.

After "really good" yields last year and historically high prices, he said he was able to make "a decent profit" despite rising production costs. With fuel, fertilizer, labor and other costs even higher this year, he said he hopes cotton prices will remain firm enough to cover those costs. What's being grown and what's being consumed still look "pretty promising" for stronger cotton prices, he said.

"But everybody's worried about what the world economy does," Pedretti added. "If it crashes and people stop buying clothes, then that's going to mess up the fundamentals."

2022 CAAA Convention

Continued from PAGE 1 and experienced pilots participated in the ComPAASS Rose and PAASS sessions. These sessions are developed by the National Agricultural Aviation Association. ComPAASS Rose helps new pilots to better understand the complexity of the job with advice and mentorship of the older generations of pilots. The PAASS program is a 4-hour session developed by Ag Pilots to increase application accuracy and safety.

Along with all the learning and education opportunities, there is plenty of time to play and socialize. The exhibit

hall was filled with exhibits that showed off the new advancements in technology while providing a great environment for reconnecting with pilots and friends from different regions in California.

Like many ag-related industries, we are facing the challenge of the consolidation of businesses and a need for new pilots as our experienced pilots are retiring. Businesses and pilots alike are rallying to cover the shortfall coming. You may see fewer Aerial Applicators available in your area, but rest assured the surviving businesses are equipping themselves with the necessary tools and equipment to maintain a timely high level of service.

The fragile habitat the otters in Monterey Bay thrive in is like California agriculture to us aerial applicators. We are environmentalists, business professionals, community members, and families. We depend on agriculture and a safe and sustainable method of providing a high-quality food supply to our fellow Californians and others around the world. When you take a trip to the grocery store, please know that an aerial applicator was instrumental in providing that quality food item and that the farmer worked hard and thoughtfully to provide a safe product for you.

If you'd like to know more about becoming an aerial applicator, feel free to contact Jon at Jon.SlikkerJr@gmail.com or call 1-661-979-7503.



Along with all the learning and education opportunities, there is plenty of time to play and socialize. (Photos: Jon Slikker, Jr.)



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Dairy Digesters Use Cow Power to Make Clean Energy



Robbie Macias, from left, vice president of biogas for Aemetis, with company President Andy Foster and CEO Eric McAfee stand on top of a covered lagoon where biogas is made at AC Machado Dairy in Crows Landing. (Photo: Ching Lee)

By Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

Reprinted with Permission from California Farm Bureau Federation

With more than 100 methane digesters operating in California—and more than 100 others in various stages of development—the Golden State has become a leader in harnessing so-called “cow power” to produce renewable fuels and other clean energy.

In doing so, California dairies are reducing methane emissions from their farms and well on their way to becoming climate neutral—that is, getting to a point where they no longer cause additional warming, said Frank Mitloehner, an air quality specialist at the University of California, Davis.

“The whole world views us right now as a role model,” he said.

Mitloehner made his remarks to a group of mainly legislative and state government staffers on their way to look at two Central Valley dairies with digester technology and a company that makes biofuels from dairy manure and other agricultural waste. The tours were arranged by the California Farm Bureau, California Bountiful Foundation and California Cattle Council.

Even though dairy manure digesters have been around for decades, their numbers have exploded in recent years thanks to state funding aimed at helping dairy farmers reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The building of digesters is a key part of the state’s strategy to cut methane emissions produced by dairies and other livestock. As required by Senate Bill 1383, the sectors must produce 40% less methane than they did in 2013.



With more than 100 methane digesters operating in California, the state has become a leader in harnessing so-called “cow power.” (Photo: Ching Lee)



Members of a tour group walk through Fiscalini Farmstead in Modesto. The dairy farm built its first methane digester in 2008 and is now building a new one to produce renewable biofuel. (Photo: Ching Lee)

To date, state digester projects have reduced emissions coming from some 200 dairy manure lagoons. They do this by placing covers over the lagoons to trap biogas that previously went into the air. This biogas is then turned into usable biofuel.

In covering the lagoons, the state’s dairy sector has cut 2.2 million metric tons of its total contribution of 7.1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent greenhouse gas, Mitloehner said.

Researchers also continue to study ways to reduce the main source of methane from dairies—enteric emissions from cow belching. Mitloehner noted a handful of feed additives have been shown to be “quite effective in reducing dairy methane without affecting performance of milk quality” when added to the cow’s diet.

“If we continue on the current trajectory, we have calculated that we will achieve climate neutrality in this decade in our dairy sector,” he said.

Fiscalini Farmstead in Modesto, which also operates a cheesemaking facility, was one of the state’s first adopters of digester technology. It installed its first digester in 2008 and is now building a new one. Dairy farmer Brian Fiscalini described the old and current generations of digesters as analogous to the BlackBerry and the latest iPhones.

Before 2002, fewer than five dairies operated digesters, according to the California Environmental Protection Agency. In those days, the biogas produced by the older digesters ran engines that powered generators to produce electricity for use on the farm.

Today, Fiscalini’s manure management and methane digestion remain about the same: The farm uses a flush

system to collect the manure in a covered lagoon. The manure is then piped to the digester to produce methane gas. But rather than creating electricity, the biogas is now converted to low-carbon fuel. Eventually, the fuel can be injected into a natural gas pipeline.

Fiscalini said renewable fuels production tax credits available for this type of system are “far better” than for converting methane gas to electricity. Back when the farm built its first digester, there were no such credits or programs available.

“Producing electricity was kind of the only option that we had,” he said.

Back then, the technology to convert methane gas to natural gas wasn’t proven or readily available, Fiscalini said. Also, the nearest natural gas pipeline was more than 2 miles away from the farm, and putting one in the ground would have cost \$1 million a mile, plus an additional \$2 million one-time fee to connect to Pacific Gas & Electric Co., he pointed out. While those costs haven’t changed much, the tax credits have changed to make such an investment feasible today, he added.

By shifting to making low-carbon fuel, he said, the dairy could potentially power a fleet of trucks and “work directly with somebody versus working with the utility grid system.”

“California’s already pretty good at producing electricity,” he said. “For a dairy farm to try to become a utility doesn’t really make a whole lot of sense.”

The tour group then visited Aemetis’ ethanol biorefinery in Keyes, where biogas produced by Central Valley dairies is transported via its 40-mile underground

pipeline. The biogas is then upgraded to renewable natural gas and goes to PG&E via another pipeline. The biogas can also be used as a replacement fuel for diesel or converted to electricity to fuel electric vehicles, said Aemetis President Andy Foster.

The company’s goal, Foster said, is to build 66 dairy digesters. About 30 dairies have signed up. Digesters on two dairies—with 1,800 cows and 3,700 cows—have been online since 2020. Five more are expected to come online by the end of the year, with five new ones starting construction next year, he said.

One of the company’s most recent operational digesters is located at AC Machado Dairy in Crows Landing, the final stop on the tour. The 1,800-cow dairy completed construction on its digester in March.

That Aemetis was able to get permitting for its 40-mile biogas pipeline in about a year “was a pretty remarkable feat,” Foster said. Working with Stanislaus and Merced counties, the company was able to put the pipeline in the public right of way alongside of the road with other utilities, which “saved us a lot of hassle of having to try to get easements from individual landowners,” he added.

“By being in the public right of way, we have to be safer. We have to follow the same standards that the utilities have to follow,” Foster said.

The first four miles of the pipeline cost \$1 million a mile, with the last 40 miles costing \$465,000 a mile, according to CEO Eric McAfee.

Biogas pipelines are currently not regulated, said Robbie Macias, Aemetis’ vice president of biogas. But he said the company has “taken all the steps” through third-party engineering inspections and testing to have a utility-grade pipeline “in the name of public safety.”



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Efforts to Protect Groundwater Are Tested by Drought



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

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from California Farm Bureau
Federation*

Balancing the state's groundwater supplies for a sustainable future may not be easy due to severe

drought and ongoing economic challenges facing farmers.

"We've got the lowest prices and highest production costs and the least-reliable water supply that we've had since I've been farming," said Bill Diedrich of Firebaugh, who farms row crops and permanent crops on the west side in Madera and Fresno counties. "We've had one or the other but not all three at the same time."

Diedrich, who relies on groundwater for irrigating farmland in Madera County and surface water for ground in Fresno County, said farming at this time "is very difficult." He said the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, which tasks local agencies to balance groundwater supplies in affected basins by 2040 and 2042, means farmland must come out of production.

For his Madera County farmland, which is entirely groundwater dependent, he estimates that he will need to fallow 150 acres.

"What we're looking at in SGMA is we're just going to be taking land out of production; there's just no other way around it," Diedrich said. "Those of us in ag are concerned about the domestic food supply. We don't want to see a bunch of government money coming in



Balancing the state's groundwater supplies for a sustainable future may not be easy due to severe drought and ongoing economic challenges facing farmers. (Photo: Christina Souza)

to shut down farms. We would rather see that money put towards water-supply infrastructure, changing some of the regulatory issues harming our water supply and bringing in more water."

The 20-year effort to balance groundwater supplies and develop groundwater sustainability plans is a regulatory process managed by the California Department of Water Resources. The department oversees SGMA implementation and provides oversight through evaluation and assessment of local groundwater sustainability plans, providing guidance and technical and financial assistance.

Paul Gosselin, deputy director of the state department of water resources SGMA management office, told the California State Board of Food and Agriculture last week that 65 plans for 63 medium- and high-priority groundwater basins were submitted in January 2022 and are being evaluated. For 21 of the most critically overdrafted basins, DWR evaluated 46 plans submitted in January 2020. Of these, Gosselin said, the department approved plans for eight basins.

Plans for 12 basins were found to be incomplete. The department deemed the plans for the Tulare Lake subbasin inadequate.

For incomplete plans, Gosselin said agencies have six months from the date of the determination to resubmit and address inconsistencies or methodologies, such as issues related to subsidence, water quality, drinking water impacts, depletion of interconnected surface water and lack of coordination among plans.

"We are in the process of unpacking those (plans resubmitted in late July) and evaluating whether they met the deficiencies or not," Gosselin said. "There is no statutory deadline for us to complete the review, but we're intending to do the lion's share of it by the end of the calendar year. Some of the multiplan basins are probably not going to get a determination done until the first quarter of 2023."

The Tulare Lake subbasin, which covers most of Kings County, was dropped to inadequate status because the two submitted plans did not have a required coordination agreement, Gosselin said. Plans found to be inadequate fall under the authority of the California State Water Resources Control Board.

Gosselin said the state water board "asked us to complete our evaluation and to notify them whether the basin addressed all the deficiencies or not. In the meantime, the board notified us they would sit tight and not hold hearings and wait until they received notification on that plan."

Dusty Ference, executive director of the Kings County Farm Bureau, said the inadequate determination by DWR comes as no surprise.

"The GSAs in the Tulare Lake subbasin had agreed on an updated plan after they were all essentially deemed incomplete back in January. When the GSAs needed to

adopt their updated plan to address those deficiencies, one GSA accepted everything with one addition," Ference said, adding that the addition means that the basin no longer had a coordinated plan.

"We thought we had a plan that made sense to most growers; it was going to hurt a little bit, but everybody could live with it, and then boom—everything comes to a screeching halt," he said.

As SGMA plays out, Ference said, "Farmers are frustrated, they are worried, and they don't know what to do." He said with agriculture driving 25% of the county's workforce, those in agriculture remain concerned about rural communities.

Gosselin said DWR has awarded \$400 million during the past two years to help local groundwater agencies comply with SGMA requirements.

Last May, each of the critically overdrafted basins received \$7.6 million to implement SGMA. The state is also advancing actions and projects, such as groundwater recharge projects.

"We have a vested interest in ensuring that with the rains that are hopefully starting outside the window now and through the winter, that those projects that come in, we'll be able to capture that water and start recharging basins," Gosselin said.

For projects that bolster the state's water supply and related infrastructure, Diedrich said, many farmers are concerned that there may be only a few wet years between now and the 2040s, when groundwater agencies must achieve sustainability.

Diedrich said the state must be ready to capture excess flood water. He said agencies "are trying to develop projects locally, but these will be a very small amount compared to the amount of water that we need.

"We're talking about new canals and conveyance on top of new water rights," he said. "It's a very long-range project, longer than the amount of time we have to comply."

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Nutjobs Wins AgSharks Pitch Competition



Nutjobs earned a record equity investment offer of \$6 million from the event's judges. (Photo: Western Growers)

Press Release Provided by Western Growers

Western Growers and S2G Ventures have announced the winner of the 2022 AgSharks Pitch Competition, with Nutjobs earning a record equity investment offer of \$6 million from the event's judges.

Nutjobs transforms nutshell waste into bio-benign plastic alternative products that are bio-based, compostable and derived from secondary agricultural waste. By transforming nutshell waste into bio-benign plastics, Nutjobs creates plastic substitutes that are cost effective and environmentally sustainable.

"We are thrilled to win the AgSharks competition, among such a strong group of finalists," said Paul Kephart, Founder, CEO and CTO of Nutjobs. "It is opportunities like these that not only help companies spread the word about new ag-focused technologies, but also support our efforts to innovate further and scale our business. The network of growers, investors and industry leaders at this event is incredible, and many of these conversations are just the beginning of partnerships that will make a long-term difference across the food supply chain. We are grateful to S2G and Western Growers for hosting an outstanding event."

In addition to investment capital, Nutjobs will receive international recognition, mentoring from WG and S2G, potential access to farm acreage to pilot their technologies and exposure to WG's expansive network of leading fresh produce companies.

"Once again, the AgSharks competition has brought together top growers and entrepreneurs making advancements in the agriculture sector," said Aaron Rudberg, Managing Director and COO at S2G Ventures. "We congratulate Nutjobs on being selected as the winner of

this year's competition. With increasing concerns about plastics in our soil systems, along with the prevalence of wasted food byproducts, Nutjobs' upcycled solution addresses these issues in a unique way. We look forward to partnering with Paul and the team as they continue to make inroads in the space."

"I'm excited because Nutjobs got a chance to pitch in front of the entire Western Growers membership, to show off their wares and brag about their tech," said Walt Duflock, VP of Innovation at Western Growers. "That will accelerate their success - and we know that they are ready."

The funding offer was awarded by S2G Ventures after Nutjobs competed against two other finalists inventing new technology solutions to solve agriculture's most pressing issues. Besides Nutjobs, the finalists were:

- **En Solucion** works in the agtech sector to improve food safety through development of novel methods for cleaning and sanitizing. Current projects include exploring the feasibility of employing nanotechnology to replace traditional post-harvest chlorine wash.
- **SWAN Systems** helps water managers make the most out of every drop of water. The company's configurable water and nutrient management software helps farmers make data-driven decisions about how much and when to irrigate; enabling them to apply only what is needed for optimal plant growth.

These startups pitched their inventions in front of an audience of more than 300 fresh produce farmers and industry leaders during the 96th WG Annual Meeting in Las Vegas on Nov. 2-5, 2022. In addition, Nutjobs was the Audience Choice Winner, as determined by the votes of those in attendance.

The competition was hosted by Stuart Woolf, President and CEO of Woolf Farming & Processing, and judged by Neill Callis, the General Manager of Turlock Fruit Company; Audre Kapacinskas, Principal at S2G Ventures; Rudberg; and Kristen Smith Eschaya, President of JV Smith Cos.

AgSharks was first held in 2017, and through the competition, past winners Hazel Technologies and Burro have since brought their products from development to market. Hazel Technologies has raised over \$87.8 million in funding over six rounds and is advancing the industry with sachets that extend the shelf life of fresh produce by as much as three times. Burro raised a \$10.9 million Series A round in September 2021 led by S2G Ventures and Toyota Ventures and continues to help solve farmers' labor woes with the expansion of its fleet of autonomous robots to farms across the west.

Sheridan Nicholas, manager of Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District, Gene Lundquist, director on the Kern County Water Agency Board, and Peter Nelson with the Wonderful Company.

At their annual meeting, the Water Association of Kern County honored Gene Lundquist with their Legacy Award. Gene has dedicated much of his life to advancing water supply and management. His service spans more than three decades as a board member, not only on the California Farm Water Coalition Board but also on the Kern County Water Agency Board and the Board of the Water Association of Kern County. He is justifiably proud of the infrastructure and water management within the county. In addition, he is apt to point out that the kind of resources and skills in Kern County are found in few other places in the world.

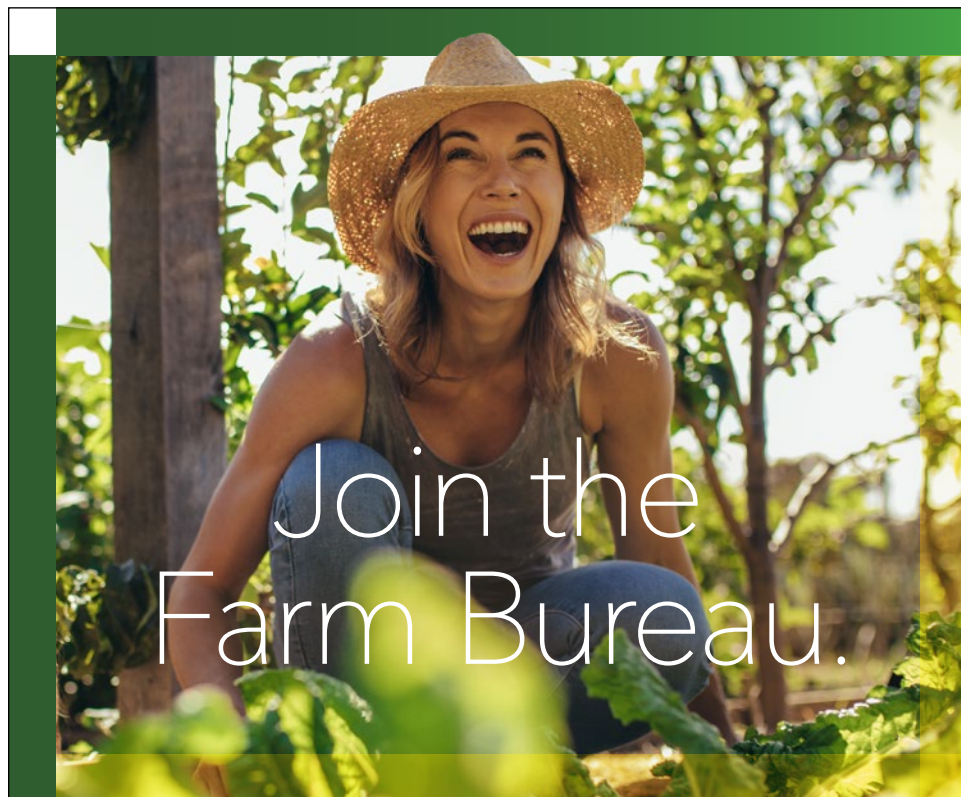
Also honored at the annual meeting with the Water Leader of the Year award was a fourth-generation farmer and Semitropic President, Dan Waterhouse. With the challenges of SGMA, Dan is devoted to resolving differences within the county to achieve ground-water sustainability.

What "They" Don't Know

Continued from PAGE 1 CFWC has local roots. Engineer Dick Schaffer, from Visalia, and Milo Hall, past CEO of Sunworld, were instrumental in establishing the California Farm Water Coalition. Since then, Kern County continues its strong presence on the Board with representatives



Mike Wade, addressing the audience at the Annual Meeting of the Water Association of Kern County, November 9, 2022. (Photo: Scott Hamilton)



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Western Grower's headquarters in Orange County. (Photo: Western Growers)

Western Growers Announces Results of Board of Directors Election

**D-11 Monterey
County**

Press Release Provided by Western Growers

Western Growers is pleased to announce the results of the 2023-2024 Western Growers Board of Directors elections. The following members have been elected by the membership to serve a two-year term starting in November 2022 at the 96th Western Growers Annual Meeting:

D-1 All Arizona except Yuma County

Steve Martori, Martori Farms

D-2 Yuma County (Arizona)

Craig Alameda, Topflavor Farms, Inc

Robert Barkley, Barkley Ag Enterprises, LLC

D-4 Imperial County and Blythe

Lawrence Cox, Coastline Family Farms

J.P. LaBrucherie, LaBrucherie Produce

D-5 Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego Counties

A.G. Kawamura, Orange County Produce

D-6 Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo

George Adam, Innovative Produce

John Jackson, Beachside Produce LLC

Craig Reade, Bonipak Produce Co

Ryan Talley, Talley Farms

D-7 North San Joaquin and Northern California

Stephen Danna, Jr., Danna Farms, Inc.

Ronald Ratto, Ratto Bros, Inc.

D-8 Ventura County

Stephen Barnard, Mission Produce, Inc.

George Boskovich III, Boskovich Farms, Inc.

Thomas Deardorff II, Deardorff Family Farms

D-9 Kern County

Catherine Fanucchi, Tri-Fanucchi Farms, Inc.

Bob Giragosian, Kern Ridge Growers, LLC

Brandon Grimm, Grimmway Farms

Kyle Richardson, Garry Richardson Farms

Rob Yraceburu, Wonderful Orchards

D-10 Watsonville, Gilroy, Hollister, Santa Cruz

Dominic Muzzi Jr, Muzzi Family Farms, LLC

Eric Reiter, Reiter Affiliated Companies

Chad Amaral, D'Arrigo Bros of California

Bardin Bengard, Bengard Ranch, Inc.

Rodney Braga, Braga Fresh Family Farms

David Gill, Rio Farms

Tom Nunes V, The Nunes Company, Inc.

Bruce Taylor, Taylor Farms California, Inc.

D-12 East San Joaquin Valley

Brian Bertelsen, Cove Ranch Management

Carol Chandler, Chandler Farms

Harold McClarty, The HMC Group Marketing, Inc.

Thomas Mulholland, Mulholland Citrus

D-13 Riverside and San Bernardino

Albert Keck, Hadley Date Gardens, Inc.

John Powell Jr, Peter Rabbit Farms

D-14 West San Joaquin Valley

Stephen F. Patricio, Westside Produce

Stuart Woolf, Woolf Enterprises

Affiliated Directors

Sonny Rodriguez, The Growers Company, Inc.

Bruce Talbott, Talbott's Mountain Gold

Directors at Large

Alexandra Allen, Main Street Produce

Kevin Andrew, Vanguard International

Edwin Camp, D.M. Camp & Sons

Tim Escamilla, DOLE Fresh Vegetables

Jack Vessey, Vessey & Company

Mike Way, Prime Time International

The Western Growers Annual Meeting is the premiere event in Western agriculture, and this year is being held from Nov. 2-5, 2022 at The Venetian Hotel and Resort in Las Vegas. Attended by key decision-makers from Western Growers member companies, the Annual Meeting brings growers, shippers and processors together with allies and suppliers in the fresh produce industry.

The 2022 event will celebrate agricultural icon John Harris by giving him the Award of Honor, the organization's highest honor, and Pinnacle Claims Management President David Zanze, who will be recognized for his nearly 38-year tenure with the company.

Spotted Lanternfly

Continued from PAGE 1 scaping as well.

How to stop this pest?

Although the pest has not reached California, it has the potential to do a lot of harm to agriculture and public well-being. The CDFA *Spotted Lanternfly* page states, "The public will play a key role in detecting spotted lanternfly and the success of stopping its spread depends on help from the public to look for and report signs of the pest."

Therefore, if a lanternfly is identified, it is highly recommended to take photos, notify the CDFA at 1-800-491-1899, and kill it. Other ways to help reduce the risk of infestation are by removing or destroying any life cycle of the pest, removing their favorite host tree, the Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), or even using pesticides.

Information in this article was compiled from the CDFA Spotted Lanternfly overview page, Cornell CALS "Spotted Lanternfly Range in the U.S." and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Spotted Lanternfly overview page and alert page.

California Almonds and Shereen Pavlides Share Why Almonds Are the Food You Need This Holiday Season and Beyond

Press Release Provided by Almond Board of California

From bubble baths to face masks, there are countless self-care routines out there, and it can be challenging to decide where to begin. When it comes down to it, wellness starts from the inside out—what we eat can have a profound impact on everything, from skin health to our moods and overall well-being. A recent survey from California Almonds conducted among 6,000 U.S. adults (18+ years) found that the majority of survey participants agree that healthy eating (73%) is a top priority to maintain overall wellness, and they're spot on. Finding foods like almonds with nutrients that are proven to benefit our whole self, from our energy levels to mental wellness, is a great jumping off point for our wellness routines. To help others improve their wellness routines through the foods they eat, chef and cookbook author Shereen Pavlides has partnered with California Almonds to share some seriously delicious inspiration for this holiday season and beyond.

Shereen believes that self-care starts in the kitchen. When Shereen is developing recipes, her goal is to create dishes that do it all— they taste delicious and are good for you. She utilizes ingredients like almonds that are versatile and can be easily incorporated into recipes for a nutritious boost, or to have on hand as a grab-and-go snack. Shereen is confident that with the right ingredients and guidance, everyone can cook flavorful and healthy dishes. Alongside her recipes, Shereen feels mealtime can be part of your wellness routine too:

- **Get out of your comfort zone!** In the kitchen and in life, Because you Can! Begin your day with good foods, you'll feel energized to accomplish anything you put your mind to. A smart breakfast and feel-good snacking, like almonds (which are filled with 6g of plant-based protein and 4g of fiber, and 13g "good" unsaturated fat and 1g saturated fat in each handful), along with fresh fruit, throughout the day is the start to feeling inspired to push yourself to pursue your passion and be all that you want to be.
- **Pick better-for-you ingredients:** I've been cooking since I was 13 years old and I understand how food



Chef and cookbook author Shereen Pavlides has partnered with California Almonds to share some seriously delicious inspiration for this holiday season and beyond. (Photo: Almond Board of California)

impacts my well-being. I notice a shift in my mood and how my day goes when I pick good, quality ingredients. Yes, the foods you eat make a difference in how you feel, your attitude and energy. You should never feel full. You should feel satisfied when eating meals and never super-size it. Portion control and choosing good quality, real ingredients matters. You matter! Try incorporating plant-based ingredients like almonds, almond milk and almond butter into your dishes. The earthy, nutty, salty, crunchy or creamy texture gives a variety of flavors to constructs a restaurant-quality dish, fueling your body with good nutrition, because you're fancy.

- **Fuel with nutrient-rich food:** As a professionally trained chef, recipe developer and social media video creator, it's my job to create delicious recipes that will fuel our bodies. I create dishes from scratch, using good quality, real ingredients to energize you while feeling satisfied. With 6 grams of plant-based protein, 4 grams of fiber, 13 grams of unsaturated fat and 1 gram of saturated fat in just one serving (23 almonds), almonds are my go-to convenient, feel-good snack, when I need an energy-boost mid-day. They're easy to take on-the-go and versatile to pair with something sweet or salty, with a satisfying crunchy texture to fulfill cravings, for an energized feeling to power through the day.

"Almonds are my go-to snack choice when I am working furiously in the kitchen, and they are also an extremely versatile food that I can use in a variety of ways in my recipes, whether it be whole almonds, almond butter, or almond milk," says Pavlides. "The nutritional benefits of almonds are unmatched, so I know that when I include them in my dishes, they are not only going to taste good, but also make me feel great from the inside out."

Although there are many approaches to wellness, prioritizing your wellbeing is essential to feeling your best. As a first step to incorporate wellness into your routine this holiday season and beyond, Shereen recommends choosing nutrient-rich ingredients like almonds. Whether serving in an appetizer or adding some crunch to an entrée, almonds are a great way to infuse wellness into your cooking.

For more information and resources about California Almonds, please visit [Almonds.com](https://www.almonds.com) and follow California Almonds on Instagram and Twitter.

Survey Methodology

A custom survey was conducted among a census-balanced sample of U.S. adults (18+ years) in late September to uncover insights statistically projectable to the general population as well as key audience segments. Areas of exploration included:

- **Wellness rituals and regeneration**
- **Snack habits**
- **Health benefits**
- **Almond attitudes**
- **Pandemic & beyond**

The study yielded a total sample size of n=6,000 with a margin of error of $\pm 1\%$ at a 90 percent level of statistical confidence. Subgroup analysis was conducted to understand nuances across audience segments, with a priority on the following:

- **Millennials** (n=1,573)
- **Almond eaters** (n=1,884; defined as weekly+)
- **Millennial almond eaters** (n=595; almond eaters defined as weekly+)
- **Families with children in the household** (n=1,641)



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AFIA Hosts Facility Inspection Package Training with APHIS



Hear directly from APHIS how to better prepare export health certificate packets and ready facilities for inspections. (Photo: AEK Toton / Shutterstock.com)

Press Release Provided by American Feed Industry Association

The American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) is hosting an interactive training and question-and-answer session with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Titled, "Facility Inspection Package Training by USDA-APHIS," attendees will hear directly from APHIS staff on how to better prepare export health certificate packets and ready their facilities for inspections. The training will

take place on Jan. 25, 2023, in conjunction with the 2023 International Production & Processing Expo, taking place Jan. 24-26.

"Anyone who is preparing export certificates or facility inspections for rendered products, animal-based feed or pet food, will find this program to be valuable," said Mallory Gaines, AFIA's director of market access and trade policy. "Members will have the opportunity to engage directly with representatives from the APHIS field staff and the Riverdale headquarters staff."

The program will provide an overview of the agency and trade facilitation, a training on facility inspection packages and convene breakout sessions with APHIS staff.

Online registration for IPPE and the Facility Inspection Package Training by USDA-APHIS program is now open. The education program runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET on Jan. 25. Interested individuals are encouraged to register by Jan. 6 to receive the early-bird rate of \$260. After that, the registration increases to \$300. This event is sponsored by the AFIA, Pet Food Institute and North American Renderers Association. Members of these organizations should contact their representatives for a discount coupon to attend the event at the member rate. If a member registers for the meeting without the coupon code, the AFIA cannot reimburse the cost.

Ranch Group Urges USDA Not to Tie RFID Eartags to Livestock Indemnity Regulations

Press Release by
R-CALF USA

In November R-CALF USA submitted formal comments to the advance notice issued in September by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regarding the agency's intention to propose a rulemaking to restructure its livestock indemnity regulations. The regulations apply when APHIS destroys animals infected by or exposed to foreign animal diseases, emerging diseases and program diseases (such as bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis).

In its advance notice, APHIS expressed its intention to require certain animal identification requirements of the animals that qualify for indemnification. The agency stated that for disease programs that do not already have identification requirements, the agency would refer to the requirements under the Animal Disease Traceability regulations.

In 2019, APHIS attempted to circumvent its Animal Disease Traceability regulations by mandating the exclusive use of radio frequency identification (RFID) eartags when adult cattle are moved interstate. R-CALF USA and four of its individual members filed a lawsuit against APHIS for mandating RFID eartags on the grounds that the Animal Disease Traceability regulations impose no such mandate and, instead, afford cattle producers several options in addition to RFID eartags when identifying animals moved interstate.

In response to the group's lawsuit, APHIS withdrew its RFID mandate and has not proposed a rulemaking to amend its Animal Disease Traceability regulations.

Under this backdrop, R-CALF USA stated in its comments that it questions the appropriateness of requiring animal identification requirements tied to the Animal Disease Traceability regulations for determining whether animals qualify for indemnification.

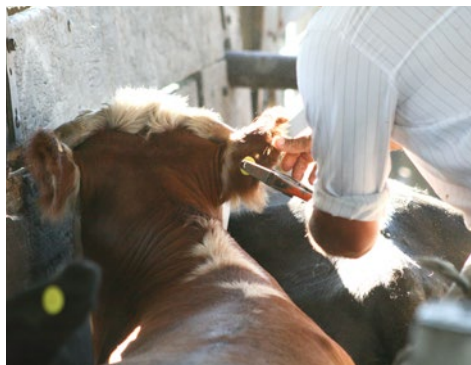
The ranch group wrote: "The agency's Animal Disease Traceability regulations only require identification of certain livestock moved interstate but impose no identification requirements on those certain livestock until

and unless they are moved interstate. Our concern is, therefore, that the agency may inappropriately attempt to expand the scope and purpose of its Animal Disease Traceability regulations by incentivizing livestock owners to incur the expense of identifying their livestock in circumstances not required under current law."

Kenny Fox, R-CALF USA Animal Identification Committee Chair, said, "We will continue monitoring the agency's livestock indemnification rulemaking process to ensure that APHIS does not attempt to use it to impose yet another unlawful mandate on U.S. cattle producers."

In addition to its RFID concerns, R-CALF USA pointed out that livestock indemnity payments are contingent upon the availability of federal funds. Consequently, the group wrote, "The U.S. livestock producer's first line of defense against losses caused by foreign animal diseases is APHIS' prevention of the introduction of foreign animal diseases into the United States."

The ranch group stated it has long been concerned that APHIS' lax import requirements for countries with foreign animal diseases threatens the viability of U.S. livestock producers. As an example, the group stated that U.S. cattle producers are vulnerable to forced depopulations of their herds because of APHIS' ongoing practice of allowing imports from countries where bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis are known to exist.



R-CALF USA questions the appropriateness of requiring animal identification requirements. (Photo: Fernando Lurie / Shutterstock.com)

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Cattlemen's Association Encouraged by Funding Delivered to Local Meat Processors

(Industry Views / Shutterstock.com)



Butchers preparing freshly slaughtered beef for use in sausage.

Press Release Provided by U.S. Cattleman's Association

On Wednesday November 2nd, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced the first-round recipients of the Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program (MPPEP) grants and loans.

Phase I of MPPEP consists of \$73 million in 21 grant projects intended to increase competition across the cattle marketplace and support increased producer oppor-

tunities. Additionally, these grants will work towards strengthening the food supply chain, creating jobs in largely rural areas, and lowering costs for consumers.

U.S. Cattlemen's Association (USCA) President Brooke Miller issued the following statement:

"USCA is pleased to see the breadth and scope of projects supported through MPPEP funding. The importance of this federal investment in our nation's independent meat processors is evident when looking at the individual projects.

"For example, Upper Iowa Beef received a grant that will expand their processing capacity by over 50% while creating new jobs for the community and premium revenue opportunities for independent producers. In North Dakota, South 40 Beef will receive just under \$500,000 to increase cooler and fabrication space which will help them double their processing capacity and workforce. And Lot 279 in Nebraska will use its grant to transition its current operation into a further-processing facility to help local producers add value to their beef products.

"These federal dollars were awarded to individuals and independent processors that can help usher in a new era of U.S. food production. USCA is encouraged by the announcement made today and looks forward to working with Secretary Vilsack and his staff as they prepare for subsequent rounds of funding."

Additional information on the status of the Biden-Harris Administration's pledge to investment \$1 billion to expand meat and poultry processing is available at [USDA.gov/Meat](https://www.usda.gov/Meat).



Panel discussion participants from left to right: Alicia Kirchner - Chief of the Sacramento District Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Jane Dolan - President, Central Valley Flood Protection Board; Chris Elias - Executive Director, San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency; John Cain - Senior Director of Conservation, River Partners; Gary Lippner - DWR Deputy Director, Flood Management and Dam Safety; Kris Tjernell - DWR Deputy Director, Integrated Watershed Management. (Photo: DWR)

DWR Symposium Highlights the Need to Prepare for Flooding Even During a Drought

Press Release by California Department of Water Resources

With California in extreme drought and facing ongoing extreme climate events, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) gathered scientists, water policy experts, and members of communities impacted by drought and floods for a conversation about building climate resiliency, including in the state's water and flood management systems.

More than 500 people from around the world attended the symposium, which was conducted virtually and in person. As highlighted in Governor Newsom's "Water Supply Strategy for a Hotter, Drier Future," California is experiencing large swings between drought and flood, and due to climate change those swings could become more severe, which will require new strategies and partnerships represented by today's panelists and speaker.

"Being prepared has always been a core goal of DWR, and our need to meet that goal has never been more important," said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. "We must take action to reduce both the risk and the consequences of flooding by using nature-based solutions, sophisticated weather forecasting and reservoir operations, and other innovative strategies."

After a keynote address and presentation from F. Martin Ralph, Ph.D., Director, Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, and Daniel Swain, Ph.D., Climate Scientist, Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, University of California, Los Angeles, DWR led three panel discussions on the challenges of extreme climate events and how California is responding.

Bianca Sievers, DWR Deputy Director for Special Initiatives, moderated a panel on the impacts that climate extremes are having on California communities and was joined by:

- **Rey Leon**, Mayor of the City of Huron;
- **Justine Massey**, Policy Manager and Attorney, Community Water Center;
- **Ivan Senock**, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and Cultural Resources Director, Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians;
- **Mark Strudley, Ph.D.**, Executive Director, Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency.

Communities impacted by severe drought and flooding are key partners to make sure assistance for climate resilience reaches Californians who need it the most. DWR has recently awarded \$50.4 million in flood risk protection funding for communities who are at

high risk of severe flooding. DWR's Small Community Drought Relief Program has

also awarded \$190 million for small communities facing water supply challenges because of the current drought.

State Climatologist Dr. Mike Anderson also discussed current efforts to use the latest scientific tools and research to adapt water management tools to our hotter and drier climate using Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO), and was joined by:

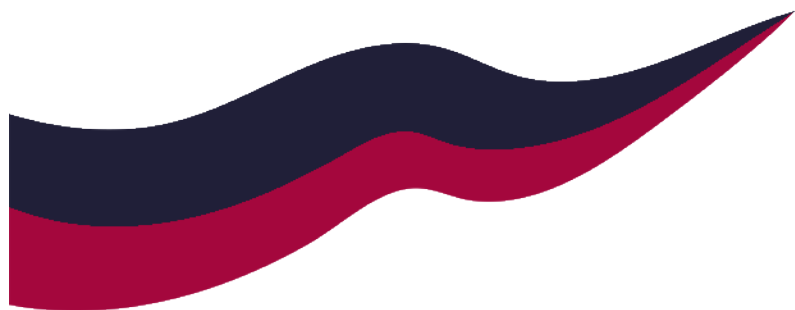
- **Michael Dettinger, Ph.D.**, Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, Scripps Institution of Oceanography;
- **Joe Forbis**, Chief, Water Management, Sacramento District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- **John James**, Director of Natural Resource Planning, Yuba Water Agency;
- **Adam Hutchinson**, Recharge Planning Manager, Orange County Water District.

As climate extremes continue to impact the state, DWR has prioritized projects and partnerships between public and private sector organizations that can simultaneously address water supply, habitat and ecosystem restoration and flood protection. DWR Deputy Director of Integrated Watershed Management Kris Tjernell discussed these efforts with:

- **Jane Dolan**, President, Central Valley Flood Protection Board;
- **Chris Elias**, Executive Director, San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency;
- **Alicia Kirchner**, Chief of the Sacramento District Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- **John Cain**, Senior Director of Conservation, River Partners;
- **Gary Lippner**, DWR Deputy Director of Flood Management and Dam Safety.

The Central Valley Flood Protection Board will soon adopt the 2022 Update to the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP), California's strategic blueprint to improve flood risk management in the Central Valley. This year's update to the plan, which is updated every 5 years, has utilized recent climate research discussed in today's event for its flood risk projections. California Flood Preparedness Week is October 22 through October 29, and it is crucial for all Californians to prepare for flooding, even during drought conditions, as extreme climate conditions mean flooding can happen at any time.

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TABLE GRAPES **PRICE REDUCED** **\$29,500±/AC & \$32,500±/AC**
119.92± & 150.27± acres, Delano Earlimart Irrigation District, Lower Tule River Irrigation District, Quality Varieties, Productive Soils

WALNUTS **\$29,500±/AC**
149.33± acres, Lindmore ID and Wells, Productive Soils, Lindsay, CA.

ALMONDS **PRICED REDUCED** **\$31,997±/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

DRY LAND **PRICE REDUCED** **\$2,250±/AC**
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DWR Provides Funding to City of Coalinga for Emergency Water Purchase

Press Release Provided by Department of Water Resources

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today awarded \$1.2 million to the City of Coalinga for an emergency water transfer to supply the community through the winter months. Though rain is in the forecast for some parts of the state, California remains in extreme drought.

The City of Coalinga, located in Fresno County, had previously notified the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation that it could run out of water by December without additional supplies. In coordination with Reclamation, which supplies water to the city via the Central Valley Project, Coalinga was able to purchase 600 acre-feet of water for approximately \$1.1 million from the Patterson Irrigation District.

To support the city, DWR is providing \$1.2 million to cover the cost of the water purchase plus additional expenses through its Urban Community Drought Relief grant program. This funding will eliminate the financial strain on the city and provide water for the community through February 2023, when further allocations from Reclamation will be available.

“Funding from DWR’s drought relief grant programs is available for this exact purpose, to ensure that no one goes without water during this extended and extreme drought. The City of Coalinga will receive immediate relief from this program for its residents,” said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. “The State will continue to work with the city and other communities throughout

the Central Valley and California to provide available grant funding opportunities for long-term water resilience projects as we adapt to a hotter, drier future.”

“The City of Coalinga appreciates the funding support from DWR and the coordination of all our local, state, and federal partners in ensuring that our community continues to have access to a safe, clean water supply during this extreme drought,” said Marissa Trejo, City Manager for the City of Coalinga.

Earlier this fall, DWR announced \$300 million in available financial assistance through the 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Grant Program to support water infrastructure improvements, yard transformation, and water supply reliability projects. Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis and grant awards will be made in multiple phases. DWR expects to announce

the second phase of awards later this fall.

DWR is administering the Urban Community Drought Relief Program using funds authorized by the Budget Act of 2021. Last year, the program successfully awarded \$268 million to 126 projects over three phases of funding.



An evaporation pond in Kings County. (Photo: DWR)

New Study Reveals Pistachios Are an Antioxidant Powerhouse



Pistachios are high in antioxidants. (Photo: Krasula / Shutterstock.com)

Press Release Provided by American Pistachio Growers

Antioxidant-rich foods are regularly encouraged as part of a healthy lifestyle, and research suggests that a diet high in antioxidants may even help to reduce the risk of death. While certain fruits and vegetables are often thought of as high-antioxidant foods, a new study conducted by Cornell University and published in the journal, *Nutrients*, produced surprising results. Pistachios have a very high antioxidant capacity, among the highest when compared to values reported in research of many foods commonly known for their antioxidant capacity, such as blueberries, pomegranates, cherries, and beets.

Researchers from Cornell University wanted to better understand the potential mechanism behind the health benefits that have been linked to pistachios in recent studies. They analyzed pistachios to determine:

Pistachios have a high antioxidant capacity that rivals that of popular antioxidant-containing foods

- The makeup of pistachio phytochemicals – compounds within plants that may help to lower the risk of chronic diseases and keep the body working properly.
- The antioxidant power of pistachios.
- Whether pistachio extracts can help to inhibit the growth of tumor cells (breast, liver and colon cancer cells) in a laboratory setting.

The researchers used the two different methods to measure the antioxidant potential of pistachios – Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) and Cellular Antioxidant Activity (CAA) – and found that pistachios have very high level of antioxidant activities.

“We were excited to see that the antioxidant capacity of pistachios measured so high in our study,” said Dr. Rui Hai Liu, Professor of Food Science at Cornell University. “When compared to values reported in research for other common, high-antioxidant foods using the same methods, we see the antioxidant activity of pistachios is higher than that of foods often thought of as antioxidant powerhouses including blueberries, cherries, and beets. We believe the high antioxidant activity of pistachios may be due to the unique compounds in pistachios including vitamin E, carotenoids, phenolics and flavonoids. The combination or interaction of these beneficial antioxidants, bioactive compounds, along with other nutrients in pistachios, is likely what contributes to the many health benefits we have seen in pistachio studies from recent years.”

Normal metabolisms of daily life – everything from eating, breathing, and exercising to the toxins we encounter in the environment – can generate free radicals in the body. Free radicals attack healthy body cells and this damage is thought to contribute to inflammation and aging in addition to chronic health conditions, including heart disease and cancer. Health professionals recommend antioxidants from food sources to help protect healthy cells from free radical damage in the body.

Most people know that antioxidants are beneficial to health, but many don’t know exactly how antioxidants work within the body. To see an informational video on antioxidants, go to AmericanPistachios.org.

A summary of additional findings from the study include:

- Pistachios have a wide variety of important phytochemicals including different members of the vitamin E family (β-tocopherol and γ-tocopherol), carotenoids (lutein, zeaxanthin and beta-carotene), phenolics and flavonoids.
- Pistachios have high antioxidant activities as measured by both ORAC and CAA. CAA measures antioxidant activity in a cell—how the cells take up or absorb the antioxidants—and is a more physiologically relevant assay and considered reflective of what may happen in the human body when compared to the chemical antioxidant assays.
- Pistachio phytochemical extracts showed potent anti-

proliferative activities against human breast, liver and colon cancer cells in vitro with exceptionally high activity

seen against the human breast cancer cells. Pistachio phytochemical extracts were shown to inhibit cancer growth in all three cancer cells (breast, liver and colon) without causing cytotoxicity to the cells. The researchers report that this area of study is worthy of future research to determine how pistachio extracts are blocking the growth of cancer cells as seen in this new study. Interestingly, population studies show an association with high frequency of nut consumption and reduced risk of certain cancers.

“The health benefits of pistachios have been studied over the past 20 years and we are excited to dig further into the specific makeup of pistachios that maybe contributing to overall health,” notes Amber Wilson, MS, RD, Director of Nutrition Research and Communication for American Pistachio Growers. “The results of this study confirm the high antioxidant potential of pistachios, which is great news for those looking to add more antioxidant whole foods to their diet.”

Pistachios used in the Cornell study were grown in California and have a different nutritional profile than those grown in other countries.

Pistachios grown in the U.S. are also a plant-based source of complete protein. One serving of pistachios (1 oz or 49 kernels) is an excellent source of copper and a good source of protein, fiber, vitamin B6, phosphorus and thiamin.

For more information about research on the health benefits of pistachios, visit AmericanPistachios.org/Nutrition-And-Health.

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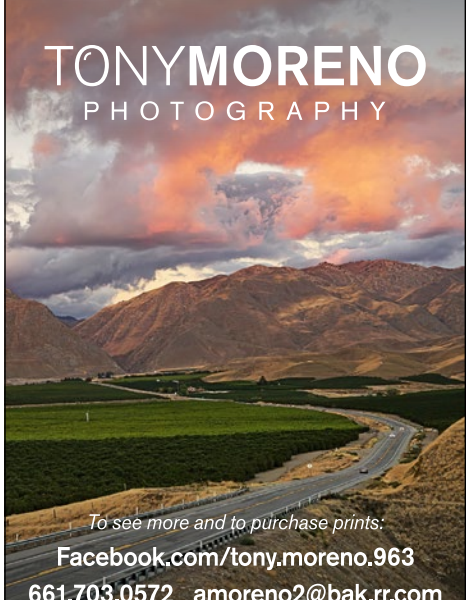
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Amazon packages are sorted by warehouse workers on conveyors. (Frederic Legrand, Studio COM&O / Shutterstock.com)

Amazon Will Pay State Nearly \$5M for Illegal Pesticide Sales in CA

Press Release Provided by Department of Pesticide Regulation

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) has reached a multimillion-dollar legal agreement with online retail giant [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) Services, LLC. (Amazon) for the illegal sale of pesticides in California.

Under the terms of the agreement, Amazon will pay DPR a total of \$4.97 million – \$3.69 million in unpaid pesticide sales assessment fees and related late penalties, and \$1.28 million in civil penalties associated with retail sales of unregistered pesticides into California. Amazon also agreed to register as a pesticide broker, and report and pay the mill assessment associated with all future retail sales of registered pesticides into California.

“It is critical that those selling pesticides in California, especially companies with Amazon’s resources, reach and influence, comply with pesticide laws that protect the health of all Californians and our environment,” said DPR Director Julie Henderson. “DPR’s action should send a message to all pesticide sellers, including online sellers, that California will take action to protect the health and safety of its people and environment.”

DPR’s review of the company uncovered multiple violations. Among them, Amazon sold unregistered pesticides in California, failed to report and pay required

mill assessment fees associated with the sale of registered pesticides in California, and failed to hold a valid pesticide broker’s license.

Under California law, pesticides must be registered by the state before they are sold. DPR evaluates a product’s potential human health and environmental risks and efficacy prior to registration, and as needed, sets state-specific rules limiting use. Sales of unregistered pesticides are illegal and can present human health and environmental risks.

The mill assessment is charged at the first point of sale of a pesticide in California. Mill revenues help fund DPR programs including worker safety training, environmental monitoring and enforcement. The assessment also allows DPR to track pesticides sold into the state. These programs are integral to DPR’s mission to protect human health and the environment for all Californians.

- For more information on DPR’s mill assessment, see our Mill Assessment Office webpage.
- For more on licensing requirements to sell pesticides, see our Broker Licensing page.
- For information on pesticide registration in California, see our Registration Branch webpage.

Grimmway Farms Welcomes John Liu as Vice President of Food Safety

Press Release Provided by Grimmway Farms



John Liu, Vice President of Food Safety

record as a senior food safety leader.

In his role, Liu will be responsible for the development, oversight, implementation, and management of all facility and farming food safety programs and compliance. He will work closely with the company’s Quality Assurance and Food Safety teams ensuring Grimmway continues to meet the highest quality and food safety standards.

“John’s years of experience stewarding impactful

Grimmway Farms announced in October that John Liu has been named Vice President of Food Safety. He joins the company with over 27 years of food safety experience and a proven

food safety programs, operations and regulatory compliance will be a great asset to Grimmway,” said Jeff Huckaby, Chief Executive Officer. “As a leader in food safety, Grimmway is excited to welcome John’s expertise to the team.”

Liu holds a Ph.D. in Food Science and Horticulture from Louisiana State University, as well as both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Horticulture from the Hunan Agricultural University. Prior to joining the Grimmway team, Liu held a senior position with Del Monte Fresh Produce Company, where he was responsible for leading global food safety strategy, operations and programs throughout the world. He also previously worked as a Food Scientist for Giorio Foods.

“I am excited to join the Grimmway team and play a part in Grimmway’s commitment to producing the highest quality products,” said Liu. “I look forward to joining a team that ensures Grimmway continues to maintain the highest food safety standards possible.”

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John Deere Updates, Adds to Its Lineup of Orchard and Vineyard Tractors

Press Release Provided by John Deere

John Deere is widening its lineup of specialty tractors designed for work in narrow orchards and vineyards with the addition of the new 5EN and 5ML Series.

The popular 5EN from the past is back and updated with a 5075EN model available in an open operator station or cab configuration. Inside the cab, operators will find all-day comfort with AC/heat, ergonomic levers and implement controls, cell phone and cup holders, 12-volt outlet, USB port and a pair of service ports. An air-ride seat is optional. With 75 engine horsepower, the 5075EN is the highest horsepower that can be purchased that meets emission requirements without the management of diesel exhaust fluid or diesel particulate filters.

“The 5075EN is an economical, narrow tractor that can be configured to a working width as minimal as 51

inches and can also be outfitted with a front hitch and mid SCVs for the ultimate implement versatility. It’s ideal for fruit handling and hauling, spraying, mowing and any application that takes place within the narrow confines of an orchard or vineyard,” said Greg Christensen, marketing manager for John Deere. “Not only will customers find the 5075EN to be reliable, nimble and easy to use, they’ll be surprised at how much John Deere Precision Ag Technology is available to help them monitor, manage and maximize their farm or business.”

Two proven transmission options are available for the 5075EN – the 12x12 PowrReverser™ and the 24x12 PowrReverser with High-Lo. A creeper option on both transmissions lets operators choose the right speed for spraying, mowing, hauling or any slow-speed application. A left-hand reverser is standard and makes changing directions easy, while freeing up the person’s right hand

for other tractor controls.

Moving up in horsepower and spec level, the 100- to 130-horsepower 5ML Series also gets significant updates.

“The 5ML Series has been a proven tractor in fruit and nut orchards for years, but customers either had to use it as an open operator station tractor or find a cab solution on their own, costing them time and money,” Christensen said. “Now, customers can get a low-profile, feature-packed, John Deere cab that shows up from the factory ready to work.”

The new 5ML cab provides head-to-toe comfort with a flat floor, spacious headroom, and ergonomic, well-placed controls. A reconfigurable in-dash 3-screen LCD display allows operators to customize their view.

On cab versions of the 5ML, two front-axle options are available for working widths as narrow as 71 inches, and down to 61 inches on the 5ML Narrow. Each come equipped with programmable LED lighting, options for a front hitch, and front PTO for added versatility, plus the choice of an easy-to-use PowrQuad™ PLUS or Powr8™ transmission.

Customers can also choose two new dealer-installed kits. A Cat IV filtration system provides an additional level of cab filtration and pressurization. A new Limb Lifter kit can be added to gently move away low hanging branches, reducing the potential for damage to the tree and tractor.

Integrated technology on the 5EN and 5ML Tractors includes JDLink™ – an industry exclusive in this class of tractor that keeps growers connected to what matters. JDLink can be used to remotely track machine data – especially useful for customers who operate orchards or vineyards or manage fleets of tractors. JDLink helps customers efficiently track equipment location and proactively monitor machine health and productivity. JDLink can also be used to provide job details and work direction to operators.



The 5075EN is ideal for applications in the narrow confines of a vineyard. (Photo: John Deere)

For even greater efficiency and productivity, the 5EN and 5ML are AutoTrac™ capable, with AutoTrac Universal available on the 5EN, and Integrated AutoTrac through the in-dash display on the 5ML. AutoTrac guidance gives operators the ability to eliminate implement overlap and optimize machine efficiency when completing jobs such as spraying, planting or mowing.

Dealers will begin taking orders for new 5EN and 5ML Tractors beginning on November 14 with limited availability in 2023.

About Deere & Company

Deere & Company (JohnDeere.com) is a global leader in the delivery of agricultural, turf, construction, and forestry equipment. We help our customers push the boundaries of what’s possible in ways that are more productive and sustainable to help life leap forward. Our technology-enabled products including John Deere Autonomous 8R Tractor, See & Spray™, and E-Power Backhoe are just some of the ways we help meet the world’s increasing need for food, shelter, and infrastructure. Deere & Company also provides financial services through John Deere Financial.

For more information on Deere & Company, visit us at Deere.com/en/News.

POM Wonderful—Now the #1 Seller of Pomegranates and Pomegranate Juice—Celebrates 20 Years

POM Wonderful Kicks Off Pomegranate Season and National Pomegranate Month by Continuing to Showcase the Unique Sweet Taste and Health Benefits of Pomegranates

Press Release Provided by The Wonderful Company

This fall, POM Wonderful is proud to celebrate its 20th anniversary, along with its achievement of making pomegranates and their health benefits more widely-known in the U.S. In 20 years, POM Wonderful has become the world’s largest grower of Wonderful variety pomegranates, the number one supplier of the nation’s fresh pomegranates, and the number one-selling 100-percent pomegranate juice in North America.

November marks the start of California pomegranate season and National Pomegranate Month. Thanks to POM Wonderful, pomegranates are now a household staple and a beloved fruit of the fall and winter months. Before POM only 12% of Americans had awareness about pomegranates. What serendipitously started as 100 acres of pomegranate trees found in the back of a pistachio orchard has turned into a \$200+ million business, now with more than 9,000 acres of pomegranate trees.

“When we created POM Wonderful, it’s hard to believe but pomegranates were essentially unknown in the U.S.,” said Lynda Resnick, co-founder of POM Wonderful and co-owner of The Wonderful Company. “Twenty years later, because of POM Wonderful the world knows how important this amazing, historic, romantic fruit can be to a healthy diet. We take enor-



Thanks to POM Wonderful, pomegranates are now a household staple and a beloved fruit of the fall and winter. (Photo: The Wonderful Company)

mous pride in the part our juice has played in that evolution. We have been uncompromising in leveraging the pureness of the pomegranate, bottling 100% pomegranate juice with no added sugar or preservatives, and in an iconic, bottle recognized around the world. In this milestone year, I am excited to celebrate everything that’s been achieved.”

Jared Diamond, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Guns, Germs, and Steel,” geographer, historian, and professor at UCLA has called Lynda Resnick a singularity in history. He points to her as an example of a business leader who changed the course of history, by creating an entirely new industry and category – introducing pomegranates and pomegranate juice to America 20 years ago.

The full POM Wonderful product line-up includes POM Wonderful 100% Pomegranate Juice, Blueberry Juice and Cherry Juice, Wonderful variety pomegranates, POM Wonderful Pomegranate Fresh Arils and five flavors of POM Antioxidant Super Tea flavors. POM Juice is delicious to sip out of the bottle, but also makes a great addition to cocktails, mocktails, and smoothies and as a culinary ingredient. POM Arils offer a convenient way to enjoy the sweet and tart flavor of pomegranates while adding a festive pop of color to any dish.

For more information about POM Wonderful, to discover POM recipes, and to learn how to open a pomegranate, visit POMWonderful.com.

About POM Wonderful

POM Wonderful is the largest grower and producer of fresh pomegranates and pomegranate juice in the United States as well as the worldwide leader in fresh California pomegranates and pomegranate-based products including our 100% pomegranate juices, healthy juice blends, and teas. We grow, handpick, and juice our own pomegranates to ensure the highest quality. POM Wonderful is part of The Wonderful Company, a privately held company with a portfolio that includes other No. 1 brands such as Wonderful® Pistachios, FIJI® Water, Wonderful® Halos®, JUSTIN® wine, and Teleflora®. To learn more about The Wonderful Company, visit Wonderful.com, or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. To view the current Corporate Social Responsibility report, visit Wonderful.com/CSR.

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Church, What Is It Good For?

By Joshua Stevens
Faith Contributor, Valley Ag Voice

This month many churches across the valley will see a huge bump in attendance as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. This blip will be during a continuous downward spiral of church attendance since the year 2000, dropping below 50% for the first time since Gallop started recording church attendance.¹ However, even with this drop in attendance 64% of people still identify themselves as Christians in the U.S.² So, what has been the source of this decline in recent decades?

“Among self-identified Christians, the predominant reason that non-churchgoers offer for not attending worship services is that they practice their faith in other ways. Upwards of four in ten (44%) say this is a very important reason for not going to church more often.”³

In 2011, pastors Matt Chandler and Steven Furtick sat

across from each other in a discussion centered around the purpose of our Sunday services. Namely, do we focus on reaching the lost or building up believers?⁴ It is amid these discussions that we tend to lose sight of the purpose of the church.

Ephesians 4:11-14 says, “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 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.”⁵ In this passage we see a clear calling for the church and thus our Sunday services. The leaders of the church, as described in verse 11 of the chapter, are to prepare the saints (who are Christians) for the work of ministry (which is the spreading of the gospel). Paul

continues not only to do the work of ministry but also to build up the body, attain unity, and mature in our faith—why do we need these things? So that we won’t fall prey to deceitful schemes, the lazy and rotten fruit of the prosperity gospel, or a works-based faith.

Our churches are called to be in the process of taking believers and making them stronger in their faith so that they may know God and do the will of God. It is then the believer’s job to go out and proclaim the gospel (Matthew 28:16-20).⁵

Over the past two decades, our churches have been allowed to run stale, putting discipleship on the back burner and allowing younger generations with hearts filled with hopes and aspirations for what the Lord may accomplish to be taken over without first checking the depths of their knowledge and faith. In so doing we have allowed our congregations to be tossed and turned in political turmoil, social upheaval, and theological debates. Too many of the churches in the valley have placed such a priority on gospel preaching Sundays that they have forgotten to teach and show the fruit of the spirit.

Lord, I thank you for this season. For you sending your son to be a perfect example for us and to be the perfect propitiation for our sins. Thank you for continuously shining down your glory upon us. I pray that as we celebrate this season in our churches and with our loved ones we will each individually and corporately ask if we and our church are fulfilling the calling you have given us. Are we preparing the next generation for the ministry you have called us to? Are we giving them the knowledge that transforms lives and shines throughout our life? I ask that you meet us here in this place of retrospection and allow us to go forward into a



What is at the root of the decline in church attendance in recent decades? (Photo: Creativa Images / Shutterstock.com)

new year emboldened by your presence so that we may show who you are, where you are, and what you desire with our words and our actions. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

¹ Jones, J. M. (2021, March 29). *US Church Membership Falls below Majority for First Time*. Retrieved from Gallup: [News.Gallup.com/Poll/341963/Church-Membership-Falls-Below-Majority-First-Time.aspx](https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/Church-Membership-Falls-Below-Majority-First-Time.aspx)
² Considered, A. T. (2022, September 15). *America's Christian Population is Shrinking and Could Drop Below 50% by 2070*. Retrieved from NPR: [NPR.org/2022/09/15/1123289466/Americas-Christian-Majority-is-Shrinking-and-Could-Dip-Below-50-by-2070](https://www.npr.org/2022/09/15/1123289466/Americas-Christian-Majority-is-Shrinking-and-Could-Dip-Below-50-by-2070)
³ Pew Research Center. (2018, August 1). *Why Americans Go (And Don't Go) To Religious Services*. Retrieved from PewResearch: [PewResearch.org/Religion/2018/08/01/Why-Americans-Go-to-Religious-Services](https://www.pewresearch.org/Religion/2018/08/01/Why-Americans-Go-to-Religious-Services)
⁴ Matt Chandler, S. F. (2011, March 31). *Elephant Room Round 1, Session 1*, Matt Chandler and Steven Furtick 2011. (J. McDonald, Interviewer)
⁵ Crossway Bibles. (2001). *The Holy Bible English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Good News Publishers.

Districts Agree to Collaborate on Tuolumne River

By Christine Souza, Assistant Editor, Ag Alert

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Modesto Irrigation District, Turlock Irrigation District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission have signed a memorandum of understanding with the state to advance a voluntary agreement for the Tuolumne River.

MID and TID, which jointly operate the Don Pedro Reservoir on the Tuolumne River, joined dozens of other California water agencies in committing to collaborate with the state to finalize agreements that will provide water supply reliability to communities, while enhancing river ecosystems. Contra Costa Water District signed onto the agreement in September.

Details from the agreement signed last week are expected

to be scrutinized more closely as the process unfolds.

“Although not the final step in the VA (voluntary agreement) process, signing the MOU acknowledges that parties have come to an agreement on the major items including flow and nonflow measures, with some technical details to be finalized,” TID General Manager Michelle Reimers said in a statement.

The action by the districts signals momentum towards an alternative to regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board in 2018, as part of the first phase of the state’s Bay-Delta water quality control plan. In the absence of voluntary agreements, the regulation requires districts along the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced rivers to leave 30% to 50% of “unimpaired flows” in the San Joaquin River tributaries to help fish.

In recent years, the districts, farmers and residents in the region protested the state-approved plan, saying it

would do little to restore salmon and other fish populations while cutting water supplies to the northern San Joaquin Valley.

“We need every tool to improve environmental conditions,” said California Secretary for Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot. “This collaborative approach holds the promise to do that more quickly and holistically, while improving water reliability to communities, farms and businesses.”

The department released a Tuolumne River-specific term sheet with details on proposed river flow and habitat restoration efforts. The term sheet outlines details for an eight-year program to provide new flows for the environment in an effort to help recover salmon and other native fish, create new and restored habitat for fish and wildlife, and provide funding for environmental improvements and water purchases.

TID and MID stated that signing the MOU allows the Tuolumne River parties to participate in small workgroups with other water agencies and state agencies charged with working out the voluntary agreement implementation details, including both flow and nonflow measures.

MID and TID said the districts would review the term sheet in upcoming board meetings. Any final voluntary agreement will be presented to and approved by the districts’ board of directors. MID and TID are among a number of districts, municipalities and others that have active litigation over the unimpaired flows criteria.

“We have invested heavily in studying and truly understanding the Tuolumne River, the species and industries that depend on it and developing a realistic and sustainable voluntary agreement,” MID General Manager Ed Franciosa said. “By signing the MOU, we seek to balance water supplies for the benefit and continued success of our urban and ag communities and our environment, while striving to break the paradigm of management through regulation and litigation.”

Lawsuits were also filed by a coalition of environmental and fishing groups, which claimed that the state water board should have directed even larger flows toward fish.

California Farm Bureau and other parties filed a still-pending suit against the unimpaired-flows plan in 2019, arguing the water board failed to follow the California Environmental Quality Act and underestimated the harm the plan would cause to agriculture in the Central Valley.



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