



# Merced County Farm News

Have a Happy  
St. Patrick's Day!



## Eager to be vaccinated, California farmworkers face obstacles

By: Ana B. Ibarra, CalMatters

There was a day in early December when Maria Cruz thought she might not make it. “One morning my chest was in so much pain, I began to cry because honestly I panicked,” she said, recalling the cough, body aches and shivers during the grueling weeks she spent with COVID-19.

So when her employer, Monterey Mushrooms in Morgan Hill, offered its employees vaccines allotted by Santa Clara County, she drowned out anything negative she’d heard about the shots and signed up.

The process was easy enough: During a Sunday shift in late February, she walked from her workstation to an outdoor vaccine line. The whole process took less than 30 minutes, including the 15 minutes she sat in observation after her shot.

California has more than half a million farmworkers — and they appear to be eager to be vaccinated. Counties only recently started offering vaccinations to this hard-hit workforce, but agricultural workers are so far accepting the vaccine at high rates.

Large employers like Foster Farms, Pom Wonderful and Terranova Ranch reported about a 90% vaccination rate

in recent, on-site worker vaccination clinics, according to the Fresno County public health department.

“A big part is seeing how much growers really want it,” said Irene de Barraicua with Líderes Campesinas, a nonprofit network of women farm workers based in Oxnard. “Some (growers) weren’t crazy about getting workers tested or bringing doctors to the fields, but vaccines are different.”

Gov. Gavin Newsom has visited farmworker vaccine events in the Central Valley, touting the state’s commitment to the workers who feed America and promising them more vaccines.

But workplace vaccination events are still few and far between in California, so farmworkers face many obstacles getting the vaccine, advocates say. The clinics are sometimes only open to workers of certain companies, and they are reliant on how many doses a county sets aside for them.

United Farm Workers Foundation Executive Director Diana Tellefson Torres said targeting farmworkers at their work sites is the best way to make the vaccine easy for them to get. But success will take more available

*See 'Farmworkers' Page 2*

## Air Resources votes to end agricultural burning in San Joaquin Valley

By: Kristi Gross, Fox 40

March 5, 2021 - SACRAMENTO, Calif (KTXL) — The California Air Resources Board recently voted to phase out agricultural burning in the San Joaquin Valley region by 2025.

It’s a move the board says will improve air quality, but some in the agricultural industry say it’s a shift that will be costly for farmers.

Sprawling vineyards and orchards make up much of the landscape across the San Joaquin Valley region.

After years of harvest, when farmers can no longer use the vines or trees, they burn them to make way to reseed.

“Maybe after 20 years, 25 years

they’re going to be looking at having to go ahead and replace that orchard. So it’s not something that you’re doing every year,” said Bruce Blodgett, the executive director for San Joaquin County Farm Bureau.

Blodgett is frustrated with the recent decision from CARB to phase out agricultural burns by 2025.

“So those wires, those trellises all those metal stakes that are in that field. They get intermingled and basically the vines grow into it,” Blodgett said. “Without being able to burn that, there’s no way to do it. So we’re hauling it off to a landfill is our next best option.”

An option, that he says would be costly for the 1,500 farmers he represents across the county, especially

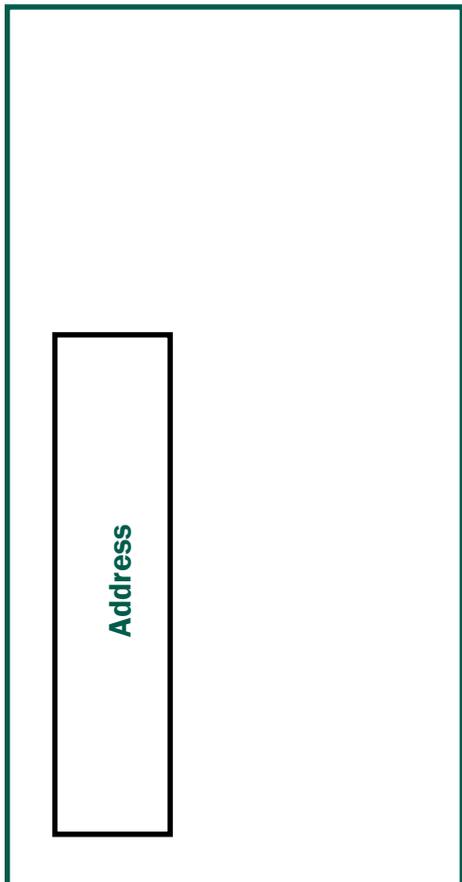
small growers.

“The state wants to put a mandate on a valley, ignoring its own responsibility for the legislation to be economically feasible alternatives, and just wants to right now, dump it all on the farmers in this valley and it’s not right,” Blodgett said.

Blodgett says if the state would have kept its promise to invest in more co-generation plants to give farmers more alternative options to burning, then the move to ban agricultural burning in the region would make more sense.

CARB says phasing out agricultural burns is a public health concern that’s about ensuring cleaner air for the

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*from the*  
**President's  
 Corner**  
**Eric Harcksen**

this and the almonds are in full bloom. The bees are strong and building their colonies strength up well. There is also a change in weather as well as the time. We are gearing up to Spring.

Your staff at the MCFB office has been working hard with local government and agencies to help with

**H**appy March from your president of the MCFB. It's early March as I am writing

**T**hese past few weeks have been heavily dominated with COVID vaccination discussions, but we are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel. Meetings and document readings surrounding water and high-speed rail have started to pick up again, and surprisingly, I am welcoming it. At this point, I am happy when something comes across my desk that is not somehow tied to the pandemic.

To jump right into it, if you are wanting to get the vaccination and need help in finding a location, please give our office a call. As the vaccination for the ag community has become available, we have been connecting individuals with the vaccine sites and clinics. We've worked with other community advocates in asking for age limits to be dropped and for whole house vaccinations. Many discussions have been had with county officials, community groups, etc. on the needs

for the agriculture community and we appreciate your help in aiding in those conversations. Each time you call our office, another community group or the county, you help us in bringing it all a bit closer to an end in sight.

The 2020 California High Speed Rail Revised Business Plan is currently out for review. Articles abound online on cost overruns and delayed timelines which they attribute much to COVID complications. Congressman Costa released High-Speed Rail Corridor Development Act last month. The bill, authored by him, "provides up to \$32 billion to fund projects in federally designated high-speed rail corridors." As provided in his press release, the "bill would directly assist in funding to complete the California project connecting San Francisco to Los Angeles via the San Joaquin Valley." Opposite to this, Congresswoman Michelle Steel of California's 49th District covering Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach and areas of

COVID-19 vaccines and setting up vaccination locations. This has been challenging and always changing, to say the least. At this time, there are vaccines available for farm workers, essential workers and those over 65 in Merced county as well as other counties in our surrounding areas. If you wish to receive the vaccine and need assistance please contact the MCFB office or you can also make an appointment through CVS <https://www.cvs.com/immunizations/covid-19-vaccine>.

Your Farm Bureau Board is still holding our monthly meetings as

scheduled in virtual format. We are hoping to be able to meet in person when we reach the appropriate color tier for Merced County.

Unfortunately, this will be our second in-person annual meeting that we have had to cancel due to COVID-19. We are planning on resuming our in-person annual meetings in 2022 pending COVID-19 regulations have lifted and we are able to do so. For now, please join us for our 103rd Annual Meeting virtually on Thursday, March 25 at 6pm. See page 24 of the Farm News for more information.

*from the*  
**Director's  
 Desk**  
**Breanne Ramos**



Newport Beach has authored the stop the High-Speed Rail Money Pit Act. Her bill was introduced this month and would "prohibit the use of federal assistance for the California High-Speed Rail project."

Although we have not had the opportunity to host any in-person events, we do have some things in the works for you. Our Annual Meeting is typically held in person with 400 people in attendance, this year it will be hosted over Zoom and members will have the opportunity to hear from California Farm Bureau 2nd Vice President, Shaun Crook who is a logger and cattle rancher out of Tuolumne County. In addition, members will hear from Merced County Farm Bureau President Eric Harcksen. Our scholarship recipients, retiring and new directors will be recognized. If you would like to participate, please mark your calendar for Thursday, March 25 at 6pm. Please call the office to register and to receive

the Zoom link. Registration must be made by Tuesday, March 23.

## Farmworkers

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doses, and also more coordination and ingenuity to ensure that vaccines are where the workers are.

"We want to make sure the process is accessible. Just having something on a website isn't going to get farmworkers somewhere because there is limited digital literacy and that

limitation has been a huge barrier," she said.

Some counties like Riverside have sent mobile clinics to agricultural worksites. Tulare County has opened its large International Agri-Center, well-known in its farming community, where growers can send their employees for vaccinations.

Farmworkers, like other essential employees, can also get vaccinated at other distribution sites, like

pharmacies, but that often requires taking time off work, navigating a county or pharmacy website or the MyTurn online form and getting lucky finding an appointment.

In a nationwide United Farm Workers Foundation survey of 10,149 farmworkers — the vast majority in California — 73% said they would get the vaccine as soon as possible while only 5% said they would not. Twenty-two percent said they were neutral.

That's slightly more pro-vaccine than the 69% of all Americans who say they have been or will be vaccinated and the 30% who say they would not, according to a new Pew Research Center survey.

About 46,000 agricultural workers in California have been infected with COVID-19, according to estimates

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## Merced County Farm Bureau's Mission Statement

Merced County Farm Bureau is an independent, non-governmental, grassroots organization that advocates for the men and women who provide food, fiber, and nursery products for our community, state, and nation.

Merced County Farm Bureau exists for the purpose of improving the ability of individuals engaged in production agriculture to utilize

California resources to produce food and fiber in the most profitable, efficient and responsible manner possible, guaranteeing our nation a domestic food supply.

Merced County Farm Bureau supports policies and legislation that promote and protect our Country's number one industry - agriculture for future generations and the security of our nation.

# Join us in welcoming Alexxis Rudich to the MCFB Team!



Cooperative Extension in the Merced County 4-H Program. I graduated from CSU Stanislaus in 2016 where I received my B.A. in Agriculture Studies with a concentration in Agriculture Economics. I was raised in Merced County in the Sweet Potato Capital of the World. I was involved in both 4-H and FFA growing up. I raised sheep and rabbits and was on the Livingston High School FFA State Champion Dairy Products team in 2008. I currently reside in the Merced area with my husband Gabe and our two Australian Shepherds.

My ESJ tasks include assisting growers in completing forms required by the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, entering data from surveys and forms, and reviewing data to ensure completeness and accuracy. As for MCFB, I will be aiding in event planning, and assisting with various office tasks. I look forward to meeting and working with the Merced County Farm Bureau community.

**H**ello! My name is Alexxis Rudich and I am the new Merced County Farm Bureau Project Assistant/East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition Grower Relations Representative. I previously worked for Merced County at the UC

## Calendar of Events

- March 15**  
Capitol Ag Day 2021 Registration Deadline (pg. 17)
- March 16**  
UCCE Merced CE Courses (pg. 5)
- March 18**  
Picking March Sweepstake Gift Recipients
- March 19**  
California Farm Day - CA Ag in the Classroom
- March 22**  
UC Merced hosts *The Fight for Water Panel* (pg. 10)
- March 23**  
2021 Capitol Ag Day (pg. 17)
- March 23**  
UCCE Merced CE Courses (pg. 5)
- March 25**  
MCFB 103rd Annual Meeting - Virtual (pg. 24)
- March 30**  
UCCE Merced CE Courses (pg. 5)
- April 6**  
UCCE Merced CE Courses (pg. 5)

### Merced County Farm News

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Like us on Facebook  
**Merced County Farm Bureau**

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[info@mercedfarmbureau.org](mailto:info@mercedfarmbureau.org)



## Top 5 Things to Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine

- 1 It's Safe and Effective**  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted Emergency Use Authorizations for COVID-19 vaccines that have been shown to meet rigorous safety criteria and be effective as determined by data from the manufacturers and findings from large clinical trials.
- 2 It's Free**  
The vaccine is free for all Merced County residents regardless of insurance status.
- 3 Your Information Will Remain Confidential**  
The Merced County Department of Public Health will NEVER share or sell your personal information.
- 4 You'll Know When It's Your Turn**  
To receive a notification of when vaccine clinics become available and/or when it is your turn to be vaccinated, we strongly recommend you register online at: [VaccinateMercedCounty.com](https://VaccinateMercedCounty.com).
- 5 Keep Following Prevention Methods**  
No one tool alone is going to stop the COVID-19 pandemic. A combination of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, and washing your hands often are all needed.



For more information visit:  
[CountyOfMerced.com/vaccines](https://CountyOfMerced.com/vaccines)

## Know when it's YOUR TURN



- ?** Do you know when you'll be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?
- +** **REGISTER** to be notified when you can get the vaccine and find out what Phase you are in.

### VaccinateMercedCounty.com

Or contact the Merced County Department of Public Health: (209) 381-1180, Monday - Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM



COVID-19 vaccination is one of the most important tools to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Do your part by making sure you're first in line for a vaccine when it is available to you. Remember, your actions continue to save lives. Wear a mask, wash your hands and stay six feet from others.

IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER

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[yosemitefarmcredit.com](https://yosemitefarmcredit.com)





## Farmworkers

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from Purdue University researchers. Their infection rates tend to run higher than the general population — 13% of farmworkers recruited for a study in the Salinas Valley tested positive for COVID-19 between July and November, compared to 5% of the general population, according to a UC Berkeley study published in December.

Like Cruz, Mauricio Chavez of Hollister got his COVID-19 shot at Monterey Mushrooms. Although he works at a different, neighboring mushroom farm, its workers were invited to the vaccine clinic.

“At work they told us this wasn’t mandatory, it was voluntary,” he said. But he didn’t think twice about it. “I haven’t seen my parents in a year, they’re 80 and 82...that’s a year we don’t get back.” Because his parents were also recently immunized, “this

opens up the opportunity for me to see them again soon,” he said.

Chavez said agricultural workers may be more inclined to get the vaccine because so many have either been infected or know someone who was. He has coworkers who have fallen ill, although not necessarily at work, but likely at home because they live in crowded housing.

“You have 10 or 15 people living in one house, and all you need is one person to get infected,” he said.

About four in 10 Californians who live with an agricultural or food processing worker live in an overcrowded home — defined as having more people than rooms, according to a CalMatters analysis of Census data.

Despite some concerns about vaccine misinformation and hesitancy among farm workers, if there is education and access, farmworkers will generally accept the vaccine, de Barraicua said.

Still, rumors and misinformation are common. Cruz said she’s heard that the vaccine is a government ploy to track them, or an attempt to make people sick and reduce the population. Cruz brushes the rumors aside, but knows this type of gossip could discourage some of her peers.

Other concerns are more technical. Some workers think they can’t be vaccinated because they don’t have health insurance, even though shots are free. According to a second UFW Foundation survey of nearly 15,000 farmworkers, 78% of respondents said they did not have health insurance, and 34% had medical conditions that put them at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

There is also a fear about sharing any type of personal information because of their immigration status, de Barraicua said.

She said she’s attended events where some farm workers said they didn’t get any advanced notice about

the vaccination events, giving them little time to ask questions and ease their doubts.

Organizations like the UFW Foundation and Lideres Campesinas have been working with health officials across the state to provide vaccine education to workers in the fields.

Most of the worksite vaccination clinics are a partnership between a county and employers. Tulare County Supervisor Pete Vander Poel said he is concerned that switching to the new vaccine distribution system, led by Blue Shield, could limit how many of these events counties can schedule.

Tulare County recently started receiving double the doses of previous weeks, increasing from 3,800 doses a week to 7,600 doses per week.

But that’s for all eligible residents. “And we have about 42,000 [agricultural] employees ready to be vaccinated,” Vander Poel said. “So that shows you the magnitude we’re dealing with.”

# UCCE Merced County CE Series

*Visit [cemerced.ucanr.edu](http://cemerced.ucanr.edu) to register*

CE for Pest Management Pros Spring 2021 Series: Final schedule- **ALL MEETINGS DPR APPROVED**

Time	March 9	March 16	March 23	March 30	April 6
8-9	Patricia Ann Sabol Environmental Scientist CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife Nutria Eradication Project	Cody Thompson Merced CAC *Pesticide Use Monitoring Inspection *School Site Notifications <b>LAWS</b>	Olivia Guzman Merced CAC *Commodity Fumigation inspection. <b>LAWS</b>	Loren Lamb Merced CAC (Los Banos Office) 4 items found to be overlooked during pesticide compliance inspections. <b>LAWS</b>	Jennifer Dimapasoc Merced CAC Pesticide Safety Information Series(PSIS) <b>LAWS</b>
9-10	Scott Stoddard UCCE Merced Co Peach RKN & Nematode Management in Sweetpotatoes.	Parry Klassen CURES/ESJWQC Pesticide Spray Drift & Protecting Surface Water	Dr. Zheng Wang UCCE Stanislaus Co Screening herbicides for use in basil/herbs	H. Wilson, PhD UCANR & Kadie Britt, PhD Candidate Virginia Tech  Cannabis Pests- What we know and what we don't know.	Jose Carvalho de Souza Dias UCCE Merced Co Herbicide Resistance
10-11	Erin Coffee CA DPR Cannabis: Legal Pesticides and Mgmt Practices in CA <b>LAWS</b>	Beth Boss CA DPR *Top 10 Pesticide Regulatory Violations of 2020 <b>LAWS</b>	Bill Griffin Madera CAC Restricted Materials & Restricted Material Permits <b>LAWS</b>	Colleen Murray Merced CAC School Notification Process In-Depth: Start to Finish <b>LAWS</b>	Linda Pinfold San Joaquin CAC Pesticide Spray Drift Regulations <b>LAWS</b>
11-12	D. Hunger Merced CAC *Hemp in Merced Co *Restricted Material Alternatives *CalAg Permits <b>LAWS</b>	Dr. Michelle Leinfelder- Miles UCCE San Joaquin Co Pest Management in Field Crops.	Karri Reid UCCE San Joaquin Co Pre-Emergent Herbicides in Landscapes	Cari Baughman Stanislaus CAC Stanislaus Co Pest Detection Program	Jorge Garibay, & Cari Baughman Stanislaus CAC BeeWhere and Bee-Safe programs

# Storymapping Project Underway with Merced County 4-H and UC Merced Library

**By: Rebecca Gourevitch, UC Merced Library**

Last December, Emily Lin, Head of Digital Curation and Scholarship at UC Merced Library, announced an exciting new partnership between the Library and the Merced County 4-H Club. After the Library acquired the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) archives, a key objective has been to share this incredible resource with the community. With this aim in mind, we developed the 4-H StoryMapping Project. The project seeks youth engagement with the digitized items of the UCCE archival records for Merced County, a vast collection that dates back to 1916 and includes primary source documents and photographs about irrigation, fires, home economics, crops, dairy, and much more. A large portion of the collection is 4-H material that highlights the extraordinary work the organization has done to create experiences for youth in which they “learn by doing.” Below are just a few of the photographs from the UCCE collection that document 4-H-ers in Merced County.



**4-H girl and cow, c. 1967**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2cj06/>



**Group of girls, c. 1957**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2k74g/>



**4-H members in front of bus, 1959**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2jn0s/>



**Radish garden, undated**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2g45w/>



**Boys give presentation, c. 1957**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2mn1s/>



**Boy standing on rope, 1990**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d2h74v/>

The images show youth participating in a variety of activities that include gardening, livestock shows, rope courses, poster presentations and more. In the midst of the Covid-19 global pandemic, these types of experiences are on hold until it is safe again to gather collectively. So, the 4-H Storymapping Project comes at the perfect time. Project meetings are conducted on Zoom, and content providers from the UCM Library and the Spatial Analysis & Research Center (SpARC) conduct lessons through online tutorials, aimed to engage our youth participants in local historical research – just like historians!

As the Project Archivist for UC

Merced’s California Agricultural Resources Archive (CARA), I have shared with our youth participants the ways that primary source documents can illuminate obscure and forgotten historical information and artifacts. After conducting searches in the digital collection, they have decided on research topics for their StoryMaps, a digital platform that allows users to integrate text, documents, audio-visual materials, and maps to construct historical narratives.

Participants will have the opportunity to present their final projects to 4-H leaders and community members through online venues. We are excited to see what they come up with. Stay tuned for updates!



**Youth participants use online teaching tools to think about research areas found in CARA.**

**Use of stakes in young walnut orchard, undated**  
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86071/d20191/>

<b>Broad Topic</b>	agriculture & crops	pests
<b>Narrow Topic</b>	the history of almond growing and changes in Merced County	pests and sugarbeets in the Central Valley
<b>Research Question(s) / Wonder Statements</b>	I wonder how almond farming has changed in Merced County.	I wonder what pests sugarbeets have been susceptible to and how farmers prevent pests now.

**UC Merced Library staff help 4-H youth to take broad themes found in the UCCE collection and develop research questions for their StoryMaps.**

## Ag Burning continued from page 1

valley, which he says has some of the worst air pollution in the country.

“By taking this action, we’re essentially removing the particulate emission pollution equivalent to taking 4 million vehicles off of the road, so this was a really significant action,” said Michael Benjamin, the air quality planning and science division chief for CARB.

CARB says farmers can find other cost-effective ways of removing waste.

“Chipping of wood waste and incorporation of that waste into the soil results in an increased yield. That’s up to 20% and so that increased crop yield we think can help defray the cost of more, you know, expensive ways of getting rid of this waste,” Benjamin said.

“There’s times you can burn where it won’t have the impacts on the air quality. They need to work with us rather than against us,” Blodgett said.

CARB says they are working to find the funding to incentivize farmers to use soil incorporation and steel and wire alternatives.

# Merced County Launches 'Vaccine Finder' Tool

By: Merced County

March 5, 2021; MERCED—Merced County launched a “Vaccine Finder” tool today in an effort to better connect residents with COVID-19 vaccine options.

The new tool takes the form of an interactive map where users can search for available vaccination clinics in their area by using filters to narrow results by:

- Community
- Appointment vs. walk-in
- Insurance requirements

The Merced County Vaccine Finder is located at [finder.vaccinatemercedcounty.com](http://finder.vaccinatemercedcounty.com). The Vaccine Finder is updated periodically to ensure all public vaccination clinics are included. Clinics listed on this map are open to the general public. Other providers are vaccinating their patient populations. Please contact your primary care provider for vaccine availability first.

“The Board of Supervisors are continuously working with staff to make it as easy as possible to receive vaccines in Merced County,” said Chairman Daron McDaniel of the Merced County Board of Supervisors.

In addition to this new tool, residents are still encouraged to sign up at [www.vaccinatemercedcounty.com](http://www.vaccinatemercedcounty.com) in order to be notified of future availability and appointment options. Anyone who doesn’t have access to

a computer or internet can call the Public Health Information Line at 209-381-1180 to request an available appointment.

As a reminder, it is still a local and statewide mandate to wear a cloth face covering inside of, or in line to enter any indoor public space, or when unable to maintain six feet for social distancing. Merced County health officials strongly urge all residents, even those that have been vaccinated, to exercise the following safety measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Practice social distancing
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer with 60 percent alcohol base when handwashing is not possible
- Stay home and isolate if you are feeling sick

For more information regarding COVID-19 vaccines in Merced County: [www.vaccinatemercedcounty.com](http://www.vaccinatemercedcounty.com).

Follow us on social media for more updates:

- Facebook: Merced County Department of Public Health
- Instagram: @mercedcountypublichealth

For more information regarding Merced County, please visit our website at [www.countyofmerced.com](http://www.countyofmerced.com)

# Anthony James Carlucci

January 9, 1943 - February 22, 2021



LOS BANOS, California - Anthony James Carlucci was a native of Los Banos. Anthony attended Our Lady of Fatima elementary school and graduated from Los Banos High School. He and his wife Gloria had two children, Joey and

Nicole. Anthony spent his life working on the farm and dedicated his life to his family.

Preceded in death by his parents Tony and Rose Carlucci; brother George Carlucci and sister Carol Evans.

Anthony is survived by his devoted wife of 57 years, Gloria Carlucci; Son, Joey (Denise) Carlucci of Los Banos and daughter Nicole (Bob) Mattos of Chowchilla; and the apple of his eye, his granddaughter Lexie Rose Carlucci of Los Banos.

Pavillion services will be held at Los Banos District Cemetery on March 8, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.



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# California Farmland Trust Announces Matching Support to Protect Fiorini Ranch



By: CFT

Elk Grove, CA – March 1, 2021 – Thanks to support from the Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation, California Farmland Trust (CFT) is embarking on a conservation fundraising campaign to protect Fiorini Ranch.

Located in Merced County, the 60-acre almond operation is owned and operated by a multi-generational farming family, the Fiorini's. Currently operated by a third-generation family member, Randy Fiorini, the fourth and fifth generation family members are now engaged, and becoming more involved, continuing the family's legacy. The Fiorini family reached out to the California Farmland Trust to ensure the land and their legacy will remain in agriculture, forever.

The California Farmland Trust has partnered with farmers for over 16 years to protect farmland from being subdivided and developed into homes and shopping centers, while contributing to agriculture's unique role in climate benefits. "Working with the Fiorini family to ensure this land will provide food, open space and climate benefits is essential," said Charlotte Mitchell, CFT Executive Director. The Fiorini family has adopted and embraced sustainable farming practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the biodiversity of beneficial insects, and further reduce soil erosion.

In the coming months, CFT will be pursuing a grant that will provide some of the funding needed to purchase the development right and protect the land with an agricultural conservation easement. CFT is required to source matching funds when pursuing grant funding, which is where the Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation (Foundation) support is focused. In late 2020, the Foundation provided CFT with nearly half of the matching funds needed to meet this requirement.

Funds from the Foundation will be leveraged by CFT to raise the remaining \$85,000.

"The support from the Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation really made this project achievable," shared Mitchell. "It's difficult to obtain the match requirement needed for a grant and the Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation provided funding that will essentially double every other donation we receive for the project, helping us achieve the match requirement."

The first step will be launching a campaign that leverages the Foundation's \$80,000 donation to raise the remaining \$85,000 needed to obtain the match required. CFT will simultaneously pursue a grant for the remaining seventy-five percent needed to fund the easement. Once secured, the easement will ensure the farmland will never be subdivided and will no longer be subject to development pressures from nearby communities for housing or commercial development.

"Our family has farmed this land sustainably, and productively for over 100 years. It is threatened by the potential of urban development and our family wishes to preserve the ability to continue to contribute to our nations healthy food needs," shared Randy Fiorini.

If you would like to learn more or become involved in this project, please visit our website: [www.cafarmtrust.org/protect-fiorini-ranch](http://www.cafarmtrust.org/protect-fiorini-ranch).

# Ag Boosters Give Away 7 FFA Jackets to Members



Gustine FFA students receiving FFA Jackets from Ag Boosters

By: Gustine FFA Chapter Reporter, Austin Bell

A blue corduroy jacket is one of the most widely known symbols for the FFA. It represents tradition, and becoming a part of something bigger than yourself. FFA jacket recipient Alejandra Casteneda says that to her "an FFA jacket represents honor and pride." Dating all the way back to 1933, the FFA jacket has been a staple of the organization for years. Gus Litner who was an agricultural educator in 1933 introduced the jacket to his local FFA band to wear to the National FFA Convention. The design became so popular that it was eventually

adopted to be a part of the official dress for FFA members. Having an FFA jacket gives students the opportunity to go to contests, conventions, and other events that require official dress. As an FFA member myself, I remember when I first got my FFA jacket. As soon as I got it out of the box, the first thing I did was try it on and

go look in the mirror. Gustine FFA believes that this is something that our members should be able to experience, which is why our Ag Boosters Committee decided to give students the opportunity to get their very own FFA jacket. The contest consisted of an application that students had to fill out regarding things such as why they want an FFA jacket, and what they would use it for. In the end, 7 students ended up getting their very own FFA jacket. Gustine FFA wants to give a huge thank you to the Ag boosters and community for constantly supporting our program, and wants them to know that they are making a large impact on the lives of our students.

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# Merced County Farm Bureau Heritage Members

## Platinum Heritage Members



## Gold Heritage Members

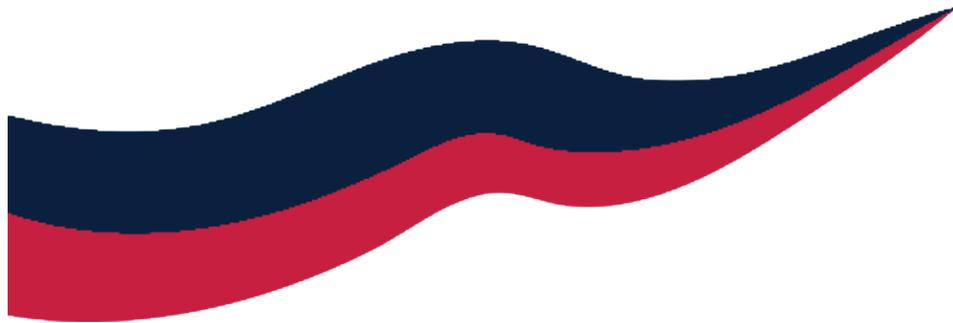
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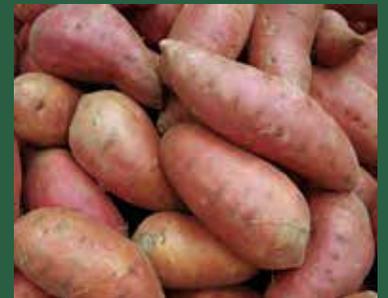
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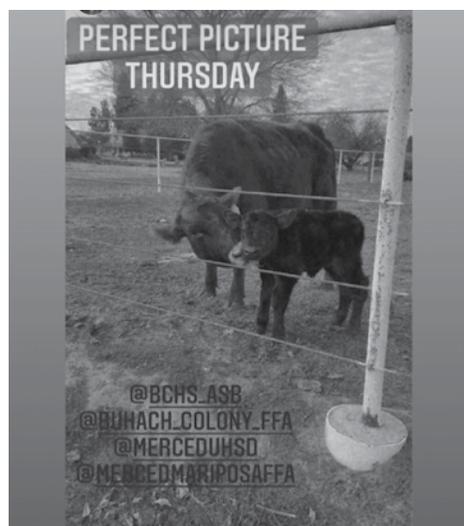
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# BC FFA WEEK Virtual Celebrations a BIG HIT!

By: Buhach Colony FFA

National FFA Week is one of the most anticipated weeks of the year for FFA members and is a time for all members to express their love and knowledge of agriculture, celebrate accomplishment and look to future achievements. Aside from the celebrations, dress up days and really fun activities, FFA Week is also a time for current students, advisors and alumni to spread information and awareness to those on their campus, in their communities and so many others near and far. It is a time when those involved can strive to educate people about the importance of agriculture and bring to light how it is not just about farming, but includes a great deal of diversity ranging from agricultural engineering, computer technology and robotics to forestry and natural resources and of course to the growth and cultivation of food and fiber products. Many FFA clubs and organizations around the world do fun and exciting activities to get the members involved, including dress up days, fundraisers, games, community services and more. This year for FFA Week Buhach Colony celebrated in a much different manner than usual, and worked to make FFA week in the virtual sense the best it could be. Our chapter held virtual dress up days, online games and got to know our members with different zoom time activities. Included in all of this, FFA members advertised and encouraged ALL Buhach Colony High School students to participate daily

and held “cameras on challenges” campus wide! The week’s activities rolled out as follows: Man's Best Friend Monday - where students were able to bring their pets to school and showed their beloved fur babies off to all, Truck and Tractor Tuesday- where students showed love and loyalty to their favorite brands of cars, truck and tractors, FFA Day Wednesday which included a zoom scavenger hunt after our monthly FFA meeting, A Picture Perfect Thursday photo contest where students submitted awesome photos of agriculture taken right around them, and wrapped up with our FFA Friday Highlights and so many of our amazing Ag students were highlighted for their outstanding performances, stand out personalities, work ethic and willingness to persevere through these tough times. Our FFA Week was a success and we would like to send a special thank you to all of the Buhach FFA members, as well as BC students, staff and administration for participating with us. We thoroughly enjoyed celebrating with you and appreciate your efforts to serve the agriculture industry and spread awareness of the importance it has in each of our lives! We hope you enjoyed seeing all that participated as well, as our social media accounts depicted the magnitude of participation daily! Please make sure to follow us on our social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for future activities, information and updates! Thank you all and we are looking forward to an even bigger and better FFA week next year!



# UC Merced to hold film panel discussion on The Fight for Water documentary on March 22, “World Water Day”

The award-winning documentary film, *The Fight for Water: A Farm Worker Struggle*, which documented a water march in the heart of the California Central Valley and put a human face to California's on-going water crisis, will be having a film panel discussion March 22 on “World Water Day”.

In advance of the discussion, the documentary will be streaming for the first time on Youtube for free for the next 60 days. It is also available on Amazon Prime.

The independently produced documentary follows a group of California Central Valley farmers and their farmworkers as they stage a march and voice their concern about a drastic water cutback that affected their farms, their jobs and their ability to provide for their families. The water cutback was due to an environmental decision that was put in place by a federal judge in order to protect an endangered and threatened species, the Delta Smelt. This, in turn, caused a humanitarian disaster to the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley, with the government providing food assistance and relief aid to over 200,000 people, many of whom were migrant workers.

The acclaimed film, which went on to have worldwide screenings at film festivals, was produced, edited and

directed by Juan Carlos Oseguera, a San Francisco State University Cinema alumnus who was raised by parents who were migrant workers and who happened to live in the affected area. This made the film more personal.

Hollywood actor Paul Rodriguez, who helped lead the march and won the Latinos de Hoy Community Advocate Award for his activism, is featured in the film, as well as then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who meets the marchers at the end of their journey.

Along with the film’s producer, the film panel will feature Farmer Joe Del Bosque and Journalist Patrick Cavanaugh. Del Bosque was one of the affected farmers interviewed in the documentary who, consequently, became a spokesperson on water issues and who later was famously visited by President Obama at his farm. Cavanaugh was also interviewed in the film and has been an active reporter in agriculture and water issues in the state of California.

The film panel will be held on March 22, at 4 pm PST via zoom and will be hosted by the University of California, Merced. It is free and open to the public.

To watch the film and register for the film panel visit [www.thefightforwaterfilm.com](http://www.thefightforwaterfilm.com).

# Six California Agricultural Teachers Celebrated as Finalists for Ag Educator of the Year

**One finalist to be crowned California's 2020-2021 Ag Educator of the Year through Nationwide's Golden Owl Award®**



- Brenda Davis-Landini – El Capitan High School
  - Tim Brown – Tulelake High School
- Each finalist will receive an individualized plaque and \$500 to help fund future educational efforts and will be entered into a final selection stage for the chance to be crowned as California's Ag Educator of the

Award nominees make a difference in, Nationwide expanded the 2020-2021 Golden Owl Award even further to include Indiana and New York.

“We’re proud to recognize hardworking teachers in seven states for their dedication to preparing future generations for success,” said Liggett.

Nationwide is also investing \$5,000 in each participating state’s FFA organization, including the California FFA, to further support aspiring agriculture professionals.

The Golden Owl Award is the result

of partnerships between Nationwide, the California FFA, California Farm Bureau, Illinois FFA, Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers, Farm Credit Illinois, Indiana FFA, Farm Credit Mid-America, the Iowa FFA Foundation, New York FFA, New York Farm Bureau, Ohio FFA, Ohio Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania FFA, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and Compeer Financial.

To learn more about the Golden Owl Award, visit [www.GoldenOwlAward.com](http://www.GoldenOwlAward.com).

**D**es Moines, Iowa – Agricultural teachers play an essential and selfless role in the communities they serve. As they prepare future generations for successful careers, many also devote countless hours and often their own resources to make a difference.

To shed light on the contributions of California’s leading agricultural teachers, Nationwide, the No. 1 insurer of farms and ranches in the U.S.1, is honoring six exceptional teachers as finalists for its Golden Owl Award.

In partnership with the California FFA and the California Farm Bureau, Nationwide collected more than 280 nominations from local students, fellow teachers, parents and community members from August to December 2020.

California’s 2020-2021 Golden Owl Award finalists are:

- Carrie Phillips – Bret Harte High School
- Sandy Lovfald – Eureka High School
- Julie Luxon – Madera South High School
- Luis Guerra – Santa Maria High School

Year. In addition to the Ag Educator of the Year designation, the grand-prize winner will also receive a \$3,000 Nationwide-funded check to help bring new educational opportunities to the program and its students and the coveted Golden Owl Award trophy.

“Similar to Nationwide’s mission of delivering extraordinary care, teachers across the country go above and beyond to bring new educational opportunities for their students and help them pursue their passions,” said Nationwide’s agribusiness president, Brad Liggett. “We created the Golden Owl Award in 2018 to honor the contributions of teachers, highlight the growing need for their services, and supply additional resources to help boost their programs and provide students with optimal learning experiences.”

In the award’s second year, Nationwide broadened the program from two states to five, recognizing the efforts of 31 agricultural teachers across California, Illinois, Iowa, Ohio and Pennsylvania with the 2019-2020 Golden Owl Award. As a result of the positive response from the communities that Golden Owl



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# Jerald O'Banion

## March 29, 1946 - February 14, 2021



special man whose two passions in life were his family and community service. Jerald "Jerry" O'Banion, an amazing Husband, Dad, Papa, Brother and friend passed away peacefully on Valentine's Day from heart failure brought on by pneumonia and lung failure complicated by his recent fight with Covid 19. Jerry was born March 29th, 1946 to Emory and Naomi (Shelley) O'Banion in Dos Palos, CA. The 4th of 5 children (Beverly, James, John, and Jeffrey,) Jerry attended schools in Dos Palos, earned the rank of Eagle Scout (Boy Scouts of America) and National Farmer (FFA,) worked on the family farm and graduated from Dos Palos High School in 1964. After graduation, Jerry attended Fresno State and earned his Bachelor of Science in General Agriculture and a Teaching Credential in Agricultural Education in 1969, while also serving in the Army

**D**os Palos, California - He loved his wife, his kids, and his grandchildren. He also loved giving back to his community. On Sunday, February 14th, 2021, the Westside of Merced County lost a

National Guard. After college, Jerry worked for the University of California Cooperative Extension of Fresno County, where he was responsible for running the county 4H Program. Upon the death of his father, he returned to the family business in Dos Palos, as part-owner of O'Banion Ranches, a diversified farming company started by his father in the 1930's. Jerry married the love of his life, Jolynne "Dollie" (McElrath,) his wife of 53 years on August 10, 1968. Together they raised 3 children: Lynnette "Lynn", Carrie, and Jeremy. He was completely devoted to Dollie, and together they built their marriage and their family on a foundation of love, commitment, honor, and respect. Jerry was called to begin his public service in 1980 and was elected to the Dos Palos City Council through 1990, serving 3 years as Mayor from 1987-1990. He was elected to the Merced County Board of Supervisors in 1990 and served 7 terms (28 years total, including serving as Chairman of the Board 6 times) retiring in 2018, and is the 2nd longest-serving Supervisor for consecutive years in the state of California today. He proudly represented District Five, the Westside of Merced County (the cities of Dos Palos and Los Banos and the unincorporated communities of Dos Palos Y, Midway, Santa Nella, South Dos Palos, and Volta) calling it, "an honor and the privilege of a lifetime" to have followed in the footsteps of his father who also served the Westside of Merced County on the very same board. He always took great pride in the role he played, seeing many difficult issues come and go throughout his service, while always

aspiring to be accessible to the public in representing the hard working people of his district without fail. Jerry was a longtime supporter of the 4-H youth program, the Merced County Spring Fair Heritage Foundation, Dos Palos High School Athletic Boosters, the Dos Palos Y Service Club, and Dos Palos High School Ag Boosters, amongst several other organizations. Upon his retirement in 2018, he and Dollie and his children formed J & J O'Banion Ranch, farming almonds where he returned to his love of the land and was able to share that love with his children and grandchildren. Jerry will always be remembered for his great love of family and community. He was preceded in death by his parents Emory and Naomi O'Banion, sister Beverly Morehead, brother John, brother Jeff, and father and mother-in-law Vernon and Peggy McElrath. He is survived by his wife Dollie, daughter Lynn and husband Mike Pastori, daughter Carrie, and son Jeremy and wife Lindsey (Coons); grandchildren Rodney Jr. (Miller), Dazie (Miller), Julianna (O'Banion-Borboa), Kiley (Pastori), Kortney (Pastori), Ace, Cash, and Cannon; brother Jim; and his beloved dachshunds Lily and Chilly. Graveside services will be held on Saturday, February 20th at the Dos Palos District Cemetery at 1:00 PM. Please follow social distancing and mask guidelines. A celebration of life will be held in the future; date to be determined. His family asks that in his memory if you are so moved, donations may be made to the "Jerry O'Banion Memorial Scholarship Fund" 16378 N Fairfax Ave, Dos Palos, CA 93620.



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The Rooted in Agriculture Rewards Program asks teachers to incorporate at least one agriculturally based lesson into their curriculum between February 23, 2021 and April 7, 2021 and submit a completed application for a chance to win \$500 for school supplies.

Please see application for all details and requirements  
<https://www.mercedfarmbureau.org>  
[dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org](mailto:dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org)

**Applications due April 9, 2021**

# The 2021 Merced County Fair Cancelled For A Second Year Amid The Continued Uncertainty of COVID-19 and Restrictions On Large Public Events

*Fair is proceeding with plans to hold a modified in-person livestock show and sale*



**By: Merced County Fair**

**M**ERCED, CALIFORNIA, March 9, 2021 – At its monthly meeting held on March 8, the Merced County Fair Board of Directors and fair CEO unanimously made the difficult decision to cancel its upcoming 2021 Merced County Fair, scheduled to be held June 9-13. The decision was made based upon the ongoing uncertainty of COVID-19 and current restrictions on large public events in the State. However, the fair is moving forward with plans for a modified in-person livestock show and sale that aligns with COVID-19 health and safety protocols to keep this aspect of the fair tradition alive and support the hardworking 4-H and FFA students.

“The decision to cancel the 2021 Merced County Fair was a heartbreaking one to make, but given the ongoing uncertainty of COVID-19 we sadly do not see large public events returning by June,” said Teresa Burrola, CEO of the Merced County Fair. “However, we are focused on finalizing plans that would allow for a modified in-person livestock show and sale – giving our 4-H and FFA kids the important experience of showing their animal projects at our fairgrounds.”

Livestock exhibitions have long been an integral part of fairs and a

pivotal experience; raising, exhibiting and selling their animal projects provides 4-H and FFA members with vital leadership skills to prepare them for career success, personal growth and experience in the Agribusiness. The Merced County Fair is committed to providing this important experience and continues to work on plans for its in-person livestock show and sale, while adhering to the recently updated CDC guidelines that allow for animal activities at fairgrounds. Merced County Fair 4-H and FFA students are encouraged to continue with their animal projects to enter in the fair; the Livestock Exhibitor Handbook will be available April 1, 2021. As more details are available, they will be posted on the fair’s website ([www.mercedcountyfair.com](http://www.mercedcountyfair.com)). Advisors or exhibitors with questions can also email [livestock@countyofmerced.com](mailto:livestock@countyofmerced.com).

“As we approach another year with no in-person Merced County Fair, we greatly miss the sights, sounds and experiences that come with our annual event – especially our Still Exhibits. We are disappointed that we will not have the opportunity to display the hard work of our incredible community for attendees to enjoy,” said Carol Sartori-Silva, Merced County Fair Board President. “These exhibits are what make the Merced

County Fair so unique and is a top highlight for Fairgoers that is greatly missed, along with our other annual fair traditions.”

In support of the fairgrounds and its various programs, Friends of the Merced County Fair will be hosting a drive-thru version of its annual Friends of the Fair Pre-Party dinner fundraiser on April 15. Boxed dinners complete with deep pit beef, beans, salad and rolls – plus Fair treats like kettle corn, cotton candy and corn dogs will be available. Cost is just \$20 per box. If you’re interested in purchasing a ticket and supporting Friends of the Merced County Fair dinner, please contact the fair office at (209) 722-1506.

“Now more than ever the support of the community is critical for our fairgrounds. We are looking forward to this drive-thru fundraiser, which is a great way to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by John Pedrozo and Friends, give a taste of the fair and share a

smile with friends” said Burrola. “The Merced County Fair, along with many other county fairs throughout the country, play a vital economic and cultural role throughout the Valley. We truly appreciate our communities continued support, especially now as we struggle with minimal allowed operations.”

The 2021 event would have marked the 130th Merced County Fair – a longstanding tradition for the community. Through the annual fair and its 220 interim events, more than \$23 million in economic impact dollars are generated for the local economy each year, based on a 2015 report put out by the California Department of Food & Agriculture. The Merced County Fair continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation and work with health officials to determine allowed operations for interim events, as well as a plan for a modified in-person livestock show.



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# FARM WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT

ENSURING A LEGAL AND RELIABLE WORKFORCE  
FOR AMERICA'S AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

## Title I. Earned Legal Status for Certified Agricultural Workers

This title establishes a program for agricultural workers in the United States (and their spouses and minor children) to earn legal status through continued agricultural employment and contribution to the U.S. agricultural economy.

1. **Initial Eligibility.** Applicants must show at least 180 days of agricultural employment over the last 2 years.
2. **Five Year Renewable Visas.** Qualified applicants are provided 5-year renewable agriculture visas. Individuals can renew their 5-year visas by working at least 100 days in agriculture each year. Those who have ag experience but do not meet the criteria for eligibility are provided the option of applying for H-2A visas.
3. **Option for Permanent Resident Status.** Individuals have the opportunity to but are not required to, earn Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status. Those applying for LPR status must pay a \$1,000 fine and meet one of the following criteria:
  - a. If an individual worked in agriculture in the U.S. for at least 10 years before enactment, they must work an additional 4 years in agriculture after enactment before they can apply.
  - b. If an individual worked in agriculture in the U.S. for less than 10 years, they must work an additional 8 years in agriculture before being eligible to apply for LPR status.

## Title II. Improving the H-2A Program

This title reforms the H-2A program to provide more flexibility for employers, while ensuring critical protections for workers. The bill would focus on modifications to make the program more responsive and user-friendly for employers.

1. **Single Portal for Filing.** Employers would now have a *single* filing process through an online portal, which DHS, DOL, and the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) can process simultaneously, rather than three distinct adjudications under the current system. This streamlining of these systems works toward reducing costs and processing time from 75 to 60 days.
2. **Single Petition for Staggered Needs.** Employers would now be able to file one petition reflecting staggered labor needs. For example, under the current program, if an employer needs 10 workers on March 15, another 20 on April 15, and 10 more on May 15 as production ramps up, the employer must file three different petitions. This bill streamlines this process by allowing the employer to file one petition for all such workers.
3. **Streamlined Recruiting.** Employers would now be required to simply file a job posting on an electronic registry rather than filing newspaper print advertisements.
4. **Wage Reform.** The bill reforms H-2A wages to better reflect real-world wages, while protecting against sudden wage increases that disrupt employer planning and operations:
  - a. **More Predictable and Granular Wages.** Rather than one wage determination for all agricultural labor, the bill sets wages more reflective of the primary occupation (e.g., crop workers, livestock workers, machine operators, graders, and sorters, etc). This will ensure that wage requirements better reflect the real-world wages paid to specific types of workers.

- b. **Limiting Wage Fluctuations.** To prevent large fluctuations in wage rates, the bill caps wage increases and decreases, thus providing more stability and predictability to employers. Wages would be governed as follows:
  - i. **2022:** One-year wage freeze—i.e., 2022 wages would be pegged off 2021 rates.
  - ii. **2022-2030:** Wages could not decrease by more than 1.5% or increase by more than 3.25%. Exception: If the resulting wage is less than 110% of the Federal or state minimum wage, then the wage could go up by up to one additional percent.
  - iii. **Beyond 2030:** Wages could not decrease by more than 1.5% or increase by more than 3.25%, and the Secretaries of Ag and Labor will establish new wage methodology with input from stakeholders.

- c. **Limiting Mid-Contract Wage Increases.** Wage requirements would now apply for the duration of the contract, rather than potentially fluctuating mid-contract.

5. **Reducing Housing Costs.** The bill improves the availability of farmworker housing while lowering employer costs related to providing such housing.
  - a. **Preserving Existing Housing.** The bill prevents current farmworker and rural housing stock from serving other constituencies. Among other things, the bill authorizes \$1 billion to rehabilitate housing that is aging out of the USDA incentive program, thus reopening eligibility for rental assistance and preserving housing stock for farmworkers.
  - b. **Incentivizing New Housing.** The bill triples the amount of funding for the USDA 514 loan program and 516 grant programs, which provides 1% loans and grants, respectively, for constructing new housing. The bill would also reform eligibility criteria to expand the use of those programs in more expensive housing markets.
  - c. **Lowering Housing Costs.** The bill reduces grower costs related to housing by increasing funding for the USDA 521 rental assistance grant program, while also reforming eligibility criteria to expand the use of the program in more expensive housing markets.
6. **Reducing the Need for Litigation.** The bill adopts prior compromises in which the Migrant and Seasonal Worker Protection Act (MSWPA) is expanded to protect H-2A workers, while effectively requiring mediation to resolve differences before lawsuits are instigated.
7. **Filling Year-Round Labor Needs.** The bill takes a two-pronged approach to meet year-round labor needs.
  - a. **Increased Access to Green Cards.** The bill dedicates an additional 40,000 green cards per year for agricultural workers. These visas can be used by employers to sponsor workers to fill unmet permanent agricultural labor needs. The bill also creates an option for H-2A workers to apply directly after completing 10 years of H-2A work in the United States. These 40,000 green cards will go a long way to meeting year-round labor needs.
  - b. **Temporary 3-Year Visas.** In addition, the bill creates a new, capped program for employers seeking to bring in temporary workers to fill year-round needs. Although the program would be capped, the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor would be able to increase visa caps if market conditions warrant such increases. Visas would be made available for both dairy and non-dairy needs.

## Title III. Mandatory E-Verify for the Agricultural Sector

This title would establish a mandatory, nationwide E-Verify system for all agricultural employment, serving as the last necessary piece to ensure a legal workforce for the sector. The system would only be made mandatory for the agricultural sector, with a structured phase-in and guaranteed due process for authorized workers who are incorrectly rejected by the system.

## Here are the FACTS about what the Farm Workforce Modernization Act does *(provided by CAFB)*:

- Simplifies H-2A by reducing duplicative paperwork—now only one filing needed instead of three.
- Bureaucracy is reduced even further for many farmers with staggered labor needs. Farmers can file one petition for the entire season, allowing for staggered entry of H-2A workers.
- Modernizes recruitment by allowing employers to post job openings on an online job registry. No classified ads required.
- Reduces labor costs by freezing wages for 1 year and capping wage growth thereafter. The adverse effect wage rate is replaced in later years.
- Makes available 60,000 year-round H-2A visas over the first 3 years, growing annually by 12.5%. Dairy is guaranteed at least half of these visas, and any unused visas are available for other agriculture industries.
- Stabilizes the existing workforce by giving legitimate farmworkers a chance to get a 5-year Certified Agriculture Worker (CAW) visa to work in U.S. agriculture. As long as the worker continues to meet minimum days in agriculture annually, the worker can continue to work in the U.S. with unlimited 5-year renewals. CAWs can cross the border as they need without restriction.
- CAWs can earn the opportunity to apply for a green card by paying a penalty and continuing to work in agriculture for at least 8 years. If a CAW can prove 10 years of prior work in agriculture, they can apply for a green card after 4 years.

MYTH: This bill will codify wage surveys into law and result in multiple wage classes. Under this bill, wages will be much higher than the current Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR).

FACT: This bill provides for greater certainty and granularity in wages. First, this bill applies a one-year freeze of wages across all categories at the current year's rate. After the one-year freeze, all wage rates are then limited in any increases year over year to 3.25% with the ability to decrease -1.5%. (Exception: If the resulting wage is less than 110% of the Federal or state minimum wage, then the wage could increase an additional percentage point to 4.25%.) After year 10, the AEWR requirement ends, and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor must develop a new wage standard with input from stakeholders. If Congress fails to act to control and reform AEWR, some estimates have shown AEWR rates could increase 7-8% annually in the coming years.

MYTH: Adjusted workers are treated immediately as U.S. workers, thus requiring employers to hire them. This displaces previous H-2A workers.

FACT: This bill includes a provision that allows employers to prioritize their longtime H-2A workers over new Certified Agriculture Workers (CAWs). CAWs have a requirement to work in agriculture that no domestic worker has. Because of that requirement and proven experience in agriculture work, CAWs do receive preference over new foreign agriculture workers. There is no expansion of the current workforce; CAW workers are already here and working in agriculture. The bill eliminates the legal chaos farmers and workers face today.

MYTH: This bill does not allow agricultural associations to file as agents on behalf of their members.

FACT: This bill does not affect the ability of associations to file as agents. The bill allows associations to file as agents, or as a joint or sole employer of workers.

MYTH: This bill provides no relief for dairies or year-round agriculture.

FACT: This bill creates year-round access to the H-2A program for dairy and other agricultural sectors that desperately need workers but have previously been unable to utilize the program. Without this bill, year-round agriculture has no access to a legal foreign workforce.

MYTH: This bill would create new funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

FACT: There is no new funding in this bill for the Legal Services Corporation.

MYTH: This bill requires farmworker housing to meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

FACT: Farmworker housing is already required to meet OSHA standards and DOL requires annual approved inspections before approving a certification. The bill makes no changes to that requirement and in fact reduces the inspection to every two years. The bill provides \$11 billion in additional funds to offset costs for grower-provided and other farmworker housing.

MYTH: This bill establishes a new bureaucratic complaint/investigation process that allows anyone to file a complaint.

FACT: There is no new process established in this bill. It simply codifies existing regulations.

MYTH: The bill requires more reporting on employer recruitment efforts.

FACT: There are no additional reporting requirements in this bill, and requirements for recruitment efforts have been simplified and modernized.

MYTH: This bill creates a new private right of action for H-2A workers under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA).

FACT: Currently, H-2A employers must comply with the H-2A program requirements which largely meet or exceed MSPA. The primary difference is that DOL stands in the place of the foreign farmworker in bringing forward cases of alleged violations of the H-2A program, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and a number of other federal and state laws. In addition, any H-2A employer that employs one or more domestic worker who performs seasonal or temporary agricultural work is also currently covered under MSPA. The bill would formally place all employers of H-2A workers under MSPA (impacting only those who currently hire no domestic employees for seasonal or temporary work), while creating a new mandatory mediation requirement for any claim not just filed under MSPA but extended it to claims under the H-2A program, and FLSA. Mandatory mediation could help reduce litigation costs and attorney fees for growers, in part by resolving frivolous claims before reaching the court room.

MYTH: This bill gives workers up to two years to file a legal claim against an employer, even after the worker has returned to their home country.

FACT: Under current statute, H-2A workers already get this. There is nothing new in this bill. Many State based claims have longer statute of limitations.

MYTH: This bill gives the Department of Labor (DOL) a new ability to sue on behalf of an employees.

FACT: Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), DOL already has this ability. Nothing new in this bill.

MYTH: To overcome a denial of labor certification, this legislation newly places the burden of proof on employers to show that domestic workers were turned away for lawful reasons.

FACT: Nothing new in this bill. This provision already exists under current law.

MYTH: This bill permits very limited appeals and does not grant de novo appeals of denials or NODs.

FACT: This bill allows employers to quickly fix application deficiencies, as with current law. The bill, however, improves this process by creating a new emergency procedure for farmers, so issues are fixed faster and workers are not delayed. It also allows for post certification modifications.

MYTH: This bill establishes a new requirement for employers to provide housing for domestic workers outside of a 50-mile distance.

FACT: The bill does not change any current housing requirements. As with current law, the requirement to provide housing applies only to U.S. workers who live outside of the normal commuting distance for the area.

MYTH: The makes no meaningful reform to the high housing costs in the H-2A program.

FACT: The bill makes historic investments in farmworker housing while reducing employer costs in providing such housing, including to H-2A workers. The bill provides \$1 billion to rehabilitate existing housing, triples federal funding for USDA Section 514/516 rural housing and grant programs, and doubles funding for the Section 521 rental assistance program. The bill also reduces the cost of providing housing to H-2A workers by making operating assistance subsidies available to 514/516 property owners who house H-2A workers.

MYTH: Mandatory E-Verify just for agriculture means thousands of year-round employers will have no access to labor whatsoever.

FACT: This bill provides a way for the current workforce to get right with the law, which means they would be compliant with E-Verify. As noted above, the bill provides employers with two avenues for hiring new year-round workers. The E-Verify requirement would only apply to new hires and is phased in beginning three years after enactment.

MYTH: Illegal farmworkers, their spouses, and all their dependents are provided a special, expedited path to legal permanent residence and will move out of agriculture and into other jobs in the economy.

FACT: This bill does not create an immediate path to permanent residence. First, it creates a temporary legal status that can only be renewed with significant agricultural work.

Second, the bill provides the option of earning permanent residence through continued agricultural work, but it would take at a minimum 5 to 10 years to earn such status, depending on the amount of past agricultural work the worker could demonstrate. These significant past and future work commitments would ensure the stability of American agriculture for years to come. Spouses and dependents receive the same protections that currently exist in the H-2A program.

MYTH: The bill puts AEWR into law after 2029 with no increase or decrease in caps. Keeping the AEWR for another ten years and preserving it in statute means employers will see no relief.

FACT: After year 10, the AEWR requirement ends, and the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor must develop a new wage standard with input from stakeholders.

MYTH: The bill provides new authority for the DOL to award back wages, penalties, and damages and/or to debar employers from the program for 5 years or permanently.

FACT: The DOL already has authority to temporarily debar bad actors. This bill would give the DOL new authority to permanently debar individuals who have previously been debarred and are habitual violators of the program requirements.

# MCFB Sweepstakes Winners



Each month MCFB will pick two individuals to receive a gift. This is a token of our appreciation of you! Thank you to all those that donated to our 2020 Annual Meeting, allowing us to use those funds & give back to our community!



## January Winners

Quarterly flowers from Gustine FFA:

**Bill Nunes**

Case International toy tractors and equipment purchased from N&S Tractor:

**Charles Bauer**



## February Winners

\$50 certificate for winner and three friends (\$200 total) for use towards a styling session at Helen & Louise:

**Louie Bandoni**

Mix Bakery cake: **Raymond Rhodes**



# Edna Marie Clendenin

March 6, 1929 - February 20, 2021



**M**erced, California - Our beautiful angel received the wings she so gently prayed for.

Edna Marie Clendenin passed away peacefully at home surrounded by the love of her family on Saturday, Feb 20th.

Edna was born on March 6, 1929 to Dante and Talena (Dalforno) Malacrida in Merced, California alongside her identical twin sister, Irene. She lived a joyful ninety-one years as a resident of Merced. Edna attended Our Lady of Mercy School and graduated from Merced Union High School in 1946. While at school, she enjoyed playing violin and clarinet for the orchestra and band. Her first job was as a bookkeeper for the Merced County Title Company, working there for twelve years.

On June 13, 1953, Edna married William Clendenin, a country boy from the town of LeGrand, CA. They celebrated sixty-one years of marriage, before his passing in July 2014. Edna and Bill farmed tomatoes and bell peppers for 25 years, followed by the development of an almond orchard in 1981. Once the orchard entered production, they handed the operation over to their children, and began their official retirement.

Edna was very social and believed strongly in contributing to the community in which she lived. She was a 73-year member of the Italian Catholic Federation, a parishioner of both Our Lady of Mercy and St Patrick's Catholic Churches, and an active member with Merced Eagles and the Merced County Old Timers. She served as the Old Timer's Secretary-Treasurer for many years and was honored in 2014. While the children were young, she truly enjoyed serving as the 4-H Community leader, a leader for numerous 4-H projects, and supporting the FFA organization.

The retirement years were filled with Edna and Bill's RV adventures traveling with many friends and family

members around the amazing United States, summer fishing trips to Canada and searching out warmer winters, with excursions to Arizona and Mexico. Edna was blessed with many life-long high school friends who she enjoyed monthly luncheons, vicious Bunco afternoon play dates, and the ladies' getaways to local casinos. Once she was confined to her home, she still welcomed many visitors, and was always up for a game of Skip-bo and Bunco with loved ones, Sunday night family dinner, and sharing love and laughter over the latest family antics.

Together Edna and Bill raised four children: Daniel (Carol), Thomas (Debbie), Jimmy, and Karen Clendenin-Stone. They had five cherished grandchildren: Alicia (Kevin) Cerruti, Catherine (Chad) Schwartz, Stephanie (Jay) Mason, Bryan Clendenin (Carissa) and Kailey Marie Stone (Jacob); along with three amazing great grandchildren: Abigail

Cerruti, Varick and Asher Schwartz.

In heaven, Edna will join her cherished parents; Dante and Talena Malacrida, beloved husband Bill, adoring twin sister, Irene and brother-in-law Larry. Our family extends a heartfelt thank you to her loving caregivers: Melissa Smith, Rose De Los Santos, and the amazing ladies of Kohen Care Givers.

A private mass will be held at Our Lady of Mercy, and her final resting place will be among the blooming almond orchards at Plainsburg Cemetery. We will celebrate her life with all family and friends when our world safely permits.

If you would like to honor Edna, in lieu of flowers, please consider donating to OLM School Foundation 902 W 18th St. Merced, Ca. 95340, Hinds Hospice 410 W. Main St. Suite A Merced, Ca. 95340 or the Golden Valley High School FFA 212 E Childs Ave, Merced, Ca. 95341.



**CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU**

Registration for the 2021 Capitol Ag Conference is now open! To register go to: [www.cfbf.com/capitolag2021](http://www.cfbf.com/capitolag2021).

Registration for the speaker portion of the program will be open to all interested members and is free. Members must register to receive access to the program. The deadline to register is Monday, March 15th.

Speakers include CAFB President Jamie Johansson, Secretary Jared Blumenfeld of the California Environmental Protection Agency, Nationwide, Assemblymember Robert Rivas, Agriculture Committee Chair and Senator Andreas Borgeas, Agriculture Committee Chair. Conference attendance links will be sent to all registered attendees one week prior to the conference. Join us March 23rd!

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# Many Californians have just three days of paid leave. What if they get COVID-19?

By: Margot Roosevelt, The LA Times

**M**ARCH 7, 2021 - Millions of California workers are staring down the pandemic with no clear access to an economic safety net if they take time off, a situation that is deepening the state's COVID-19 crisis and galvanizing policymakers to extend sick-leave mandates.

Federal and state measures that required most businesses to offer two weeks of paid leave to recover from the coronavirus, or to quarantine in case of exposure, expired Jan. 1. Golden State employees have since been left with three days of mandated sick leave for any illness, the state minimum, although employers may choose to give more.

With the virus continuing to infect thousands of Californians every week and dangerous variants spreading, the Legislature is set to vote in the coming weeks on whether to reinstate the two-week obligation. That follows weeks of debate in Sacramento that has drawn worker advocates and business groups into unusually broad coalitions, for and against.

The expected vote on a pair of bills now being finalized comes as Gov. Gavin Newsom faces a recall vote over his handling of the pandemic, especially on school and business closures, and as the state's COVID-19 vaccine rollout remains slow and uneven.

For many workers, California's current patchwork of laws and regulations offers little protection beyond the three mandatory days. Some exempt small businesses. Others only cover employees who can prove they caught the virus at work. Several offer leave but with diminished pay or none at all — an option few can afford.

Under Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, most COVID-19 patients are advised to isolate for at least 10 days after the onset of symptoms, and in severe cases up to 20 days. But workers who can't afford to go without pay will "go to work when they are not feeling well and create outbreaks that affect businesses and customers too," said Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), a proponent of renewing the two-week leave.

"Community spread can only be kept down if people who are sick stay

home," she said.

Assemblyman Heath Flora (R-Ripon) calls two weeks an overreach. "We need to focus on getting our businesses back open before we start putting more burdens on them," he said. "We can't keep sticking it to the very people that keep our society moving."

Sick-leave advocates had hoped an updated federal law would make a new California measure unnecessary. President Biden's original \$1.9-trillion coronavirus relief package contained a generous mandatory family and medical leave plank of up to 14 weeks. That requirement was left out of the bill moving through Congress as it would not pass muster under budget bill rules.

Only an extension of existing tax credits for employers who voluntarily offer paid leave is part of the bill. The credit, available to businesses with fewer than 500 employees, would expire Sept. 30.

In Sacramento, the paid-leave bills would allow not just time off for a COVID-19 illness or quarantine but also time to get vaccines and care for sick relatives or children whose schools remain closed. Drafted as emergency budget items, the measures would apply retroactively to Jan. 1 and expire Sept. 30.

As his aides negotiate with legislators over the bills' language, Newsom has yet to take a public stance. "Giving workers who have contracted or been exposed to COVID time off helps minimize the spread of the disease," spokeswoman Erin Mellon said. "The governor's office is engaged with the Legislature on a workable approach for employees and businesses."

The issue heated up in Sacramento in January, when an alliance of 115 unions, community groups and social service nonprofits called on Newsom and the Legislature to immediately expand paid sick days or risk "more pain and suffering, more deaths, and continued economic devastation."

"California's economy cannot recover until the spread of COVID-19 is under control, and the spread of COVID-19 cannot be controlled without adequate access to paid sick leave," said Katherine Wutchiett, an attorney with Legal Aid at Work, a San Francisco nonprofit that signed the letter, along with the California Labor

Federation, AARP California, ACLU of California, Mi Familia Vota and others.

The rebuttal came last month from a coalition of 112 groups led by the California Chamber of Commerce. "California's response to COVID-19 cannot continue to be subsidized by the business community," the group said in a letter to the governor and legislators opposing the bills. The bills offer no California-specific tax credit or funding to employers, although the state "has an approximate \$20 billion budget windfall," the letter said.

It was signed by the California Business Roundtable, the League of California Cities, state trade associations for manufacturers, farmers, retailers, restaurants and trucking companies, along with local chambers.

Chamber spokeswoman Denise Davis said workers already have access to "multiple sources of both paid and unpaid leave," including paid time off under emergency COVID-19 rules adopted in November by the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, or Cal/OSHA.

The Cal/OSHA rules cover workers who are infected at their workplace and remain available to work, but don't grant them sick leave if they caught it elsewhere. They face a court challenge from the National Retail Federation and the National Federation of Independent Business citing "the absence of a proven nexus between COVID-19 positivity rates and workplaces."

A hotly debated California law that took effect in January allows most workers job-protected leave to care for sick family members, but it is unpaid. A longtime family leave insurance program allows partial pay but no job protection.

The multiple statutes cause confusion, Wutchiett of Legal Aid at Work said. "Workers shouldn't have to be lawyers to be able to figure out whether or not their job will be safe or if they'll be paid," she said. "Two weeks of emergency paid leave is the simple, straightforward, minimum protection they need."

Small businesses are particularly worried about any new paid-leave mandate.

When indoor dining first shut down last March, Nicolas Montano, owner of Los Toros Mexican Restaurant in Chatsworth, laid off half of his 70

workers. Now he employs 30 people for takeout and outside dining.

Over the last year, about 15 of his workers caught the virus, he said. He paid one employee a full two weeks of COVID-19 leave, a cook he wanted to prevent from leaping to another job.

Montano, 60, whose parents founded the restaurant in 1967, said he did not pay most workers who got sick because "who knows where people get it? It's ridiculous to blame the business. How do you know what they do on their day off?"

He opposes two-week paid leave, which he said encourages people to stay home. Los Toros has job openings because "people are so scared right now to go back to work."

The restaurant took every precaution, Montano said. "We wore face shields. We had social distancing. We had gloves. But it was a big yo-yo," he said of shifting county rules. His business has lost more than half its revenue since the pandemic began.

Even before emergency sick leave expired in January, businesses and employees were often locked in conflict over coronavirus-related enforcement. Over the last year, workers have flooded government agencies with thousands of complaints, overwhelmed legal aid hotlines with questions and reached out to labor organizers for help.

The Center for WorkLife Law at UC Hastings Law School in San Francisco has seen a sevenfold increase in hotline calls since March, compared with the same period in previous years, all with COVID-19-related legal questions.

"We've talked to workers who have COVID symptoms or are taking care of sick family members, and they can't get time off work," Deputy Director Liz Morris said. "Folks living paycheck to paycheck can't afford 10 days with no income. We've talked to workers fired for staying home to protect their co-workers." In Los Angeles County alone, the health department has investigated more than 1,500 complaints over COVID-19 outbreaks at workplaces. Cal/OSHA has dealt with more than 11,500 pandemic-related cases so far.

One has played out in a McDonald's in a small community in the Antelope Valley.

Imelda Rosales, a janitor at the

## Paid Leave

continued from page 18

fast-food outlet on Pearblossom Highway in Littlerock, was among scores of masked fast-food workers who caravanned last month to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors building on Temple Street, waving American flags, honking horns and displaying signs reading: “Respect us. Pay us. Protect us.”

On a flatbed truck, Rosales, 53, a broad-shouldered daughter of Mexican immigrants, raised her fist and shouted into a microphone until she was hoarse, pleading for officials to pay attention.

“In my company, so many people — they get COVID,” she cried. “We’re in danger.... In my restaurant, they told us they were not going to pay us. Why not?”

Rosales has worked at the Littlerock McDonald’s for 11 years. She said she reached out to the Service Employees International Union, the protest organizer, after she got sick with COVID-19 in November. She believes

she brought the virus home from the restaurant, infecting seven family members.

“Even my two grandchildren got sick,” she said.

Rosales was paid two weeks to recover. She said she was not paid for an additional two weeks she took off to care for her sick relatives, and she believes she is owed.

Workers at the restaurant have filed eight complaints with the county health department and Cal/OSHA over alleged COVID-19 violations including unsafe conditions, a failure to report infections, and sick leave denials.

According to the complaints, at least 31 employees have caught the virus, half of them at work. Employees were unable to keep six feet apart at the front counter, at the drive-in window or in the kitchen, the complaints alleged. The workers said managers told them to avoid asking customers to wear masks for fear of angering them.

“People were going missing,” Rosales said. “We would ask, ‘Where is so-and-so?’ The store manager would

say, ‘I don’t know.’ Then we would find out the person had told the manager that they had tested positive.”

Andrew Marroquin, owner of McMarro Family Restaurants, a 1,400-employee chain that runs the McDonald’s, said that the complaints are unjustified and that just three workers at his Pearblossom outlet have tested positive for the virus.

He has paid “hundreds of employees for leaving for being sick — from mid-management to management to employees,” he said. He also pays workers to quarantine and to care for relatives, he said.

“I can name thousands of retailers and restaurants that have a few people there with COVID. I mean, that’s just the nature of the beast right now,” Marroquin said. Businesses are doing their best, he said, though “added costs and constantly changing safety regulations can be challenging.”

The Pearblossom dispute illustrates the challenge of enforcing leave laws, even if the Legislature mandates two weeks of sick pay for COVID-19.

County inspectors paid three visits to the McDonald’s outlet in December and found just one violation, later corrected, according to its reports: “Vents laden with dust in the men’s and women’s restrooms.”

Workers said no inspectors spoke to them about their complaints. Although Los Angeles County is among several California jurisdictions to adopt local paid-leave ordinances since January, a county spokesperson said: “Public Health does not manage complaints against employers related to paid leave. These complaints are managed by the State Labor Commissioner’s Office.”

A spokeswoman for the California Labor Workforce Development Agency, which includes the Labor Commissioner, said Cal/OSHA is conducting a “letter investigation” of the Pearblossom site — contacting the employer by email or fax to urge the adoption of precautions.

The short-staffed agency is using the procedure in 80% of its COVID-19 cases as there are “many more than can be investigated in person,” she said.

# California’s Federal Leaders Have a Unique Opportunity to Help Set a New Course

By: Mike Wade, Executive Director,  
California Farm Water Coalition

The Biden-Harris administration has taken a bold and needed step to prioritize efforts to repair the country’s aging infrastructure. California residents in every region depend on water delivered through projects traversing the state from the high Sierra to the Pacific Ocean and all points north and south. The need is especially pronounced in the heart of California’s Great Central Valley.

Whether it’s a farm that grows our food, a restaurant in the heart of the city that serves it, a university, wildlife refuge, or a manufacturing plant, we all depend on the same, clean California water supplies.

The Californians in the Biden-Harris administration and Congress are in a unique position to rally behind proposed legislation aimed at rebuilding and replacing our aging infrastructure.

Vice President Harris, Senators Feinstein and Padilla, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, along with the California congressional delegation, have a chance to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Californians through a long-overdue investment in

our water supply infrastructure.

As California leaders, they have had unique experiences dealing with important water issues for decades. This critical understanding of how water affects all other issues enables each of them to bring our state’s unique vision to this issue by ensuring infrastructure is defined not just as roads and bridges, but also as the aging water infrastructure that is necessary to provide fresh water to all Californians — farms, disadvantaged rural communities, cities, and the environment.

Infrastructure investment is critically needed for both surface and groundwater. Both are critical to help us store water in wet years for use in dry ones and to help us address the challenges of climate change. Californians are living the reality of changing weather patterns and, as it has through our history, storage projects help us adjust. The modest storms that swept across California so far this year are a reminder that when water is available, we need to have the right projects in place to capture and store it for all water users.

We have learned through decades of scientific study that investments in the infrastructure necessary for fish, birds,

terrestrial species, and other habitat improvements, are critical to the health of our water supply, our environment, and our people. These investments, combined with smart, science-based, adaptive management will go a long way towards making California healthier for all.

Prioritizing water infrastructure also helps meet the administration’s “Buy American” goal while the pandemic has taught us the critical importance of a local, safe, affordable food supply.

And investing in water security also helps address some of the social inequalities in the system. The water that grows our food creates jobs for millions of Californians.

Yet disadvantaged communities are often the first to suffer when water supplies are short, particularly in the Central Valley. Water shortages are an undeniable health risk, and when the water goes, jobs and quality of life follow.

Infrastructure investments address many of the specific policy objectives laid out by the administration, and these investments help move us toward the broader goal of “Building Back Better.” If the Biden-Harris team is serious about making this “the moment to imagine and build a new American economy for our families and the next generation,” taking action on water infrastructure is a great place to start.

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# Merced County Business Member Directory

*Businesses Supporting the Farm Bureau*

To be included in the directory, join Merced County Farm Bureau as a business member by calling 723-3001.

## **REPAIRS & SERVICES**

AC King..... 722-3552  
 Atwater Radiator & Muffler, Inc. .... 358-2638  
 Car Plus..... 722-3552  
 Freitas Auto Wreckers ..... 722-7086

## **CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS**

Allison Sierra, Inc. .... 966-4082  
 Dias Construction, Inc. .... 634-9601  
 M-Mig Construction, Inc. .... 631-6017

## **LANDSCAPE**

Bergman Landscape ..... 669-9138

## **FARM EQUIPMENT**

Garton Tractor, Inc. .... 726-4600  
 Holt Ag Solutions ..... 723-2021  
 J M Equipment Co Inc ..... 386-1797  
 Kirby Manufacturing ..... 723-0778  
 Laird Mfg LLC..... 722-4145  
 N&S Tractor ..... 383-5888

## **REAL ESTATE**

Flanagan Realty..... 723-4337 (Merced)  
 Flanagan Realty. (559) 665-1313 (Chowchilla)  
 Property Team ..... 769-4698  
 Dick Templeton Property Team ..... 761-4441  
 Rucker Real Estate..... 722-6532  
 Valley Real Estate Sales, Inc. .... 854-1000

## **GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS**

Blue Diamond Growers..... (559) 474-2996  
 California Sweet Potato Growers..... 394-7935  
 California Women for Agriculture .... 723-5878  
 Central CA Irrigation District..... 826-1421  
 Cortez Growers Association..... 632-3118  
 Dos Palos Co-op Gin..... 387-4151  
 Farmers Rice Cooperative ..... (916) 923-5100  
 Gustine Drainage District ..... 854-6782  
 Hilltop Ranch Inc. .... 874-1875  
 Livingston Farmers Assoc..... 394-7941  
 Merced Boosters ..... 761-0815  
 Merced Irrigation District..... 722-5761  
 Turlock Irrigation District..... 883-8205  
 Merced College Ag Division ..... 384-6250

## **FARM SERVICES**

A-Bar Ag Enterprises ..... 826-2636  
 Caddy Shack Rodent Servc. (559) 363-3315  
 Cal Ag Safety..... 351-0321  
 Cal Corn Growers Inc.....(559) 665-5775

Chipponeri Electric..... 634-4616  
 Chozen Few Ranches..... 585-8633  
 Dutch Door Dairy..... 648-2166  
 Farm Management Inc. .... 667-1011  
 Guerrero Farm Labor ..... 492-0408  
 Horizon Farms, Inc. .... 383-5225  
 J & F Fertilizer..... 854-6325  
 La Follette Enterprises, Inc. .... 632-1385  
 Machado Feed Company..... 658-5943  
 Marciel & Co ..... 777-0911  
 Mid Valley Ag Service ..... 394-7981  
 Modern Dairy..... 722-7452  
 Modesto Dairy Supply..... 669-6200  
 Silva & Sons Custom Spreading..... 667-2566  
 Silva's Hay Source ..... 777-7440  
 The Pollination Connection..... (877) 970-BEES (2337)

## **FOOD PROCESSING**

A V Thomas Produce ..... 394-7514  
 Del Rio Nut..... 394-7945  
 Minturn Huller Co-op..... (559) 665-1185  
 Parreira Almond Processing Co..... 826-1262  
 Sensient Natural Ingredients (800) 558-9892  
 Yosemite Farms..... 383-3411

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Bertuccio Hay ..... 761-6247  
 Castillo Brothers Hay..... 392-3817  
 Diamond J Farms ..... 564-0870  
 Minturn Huller Co-op..... (559) 665-1185  
 Northern Merced Hulling..... 667-2308  
 Wallace & Son ..... 382-0131

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 Agri-Valley Irrigation ..... 384-8494  
 Dickey's Pump Service ..... 394-3112  
 Frasier Irrigation Company ..... 387-4202  
 Irrigation Design & Construction, LLC..... 387-4500  
 Precision Aqua..... 756-2025  
 Quality Well Drillers..... 357-0675  
 Rain for Rent/Westside Pump(559) 693-4315  
 Robal Inc..... 826-4540  
 Shannon Pump Company ..... 723-3904

## **INSECT & WEED CONTROL**

Environmental Spraying Service ..... 667-1038  
 Malm Ag Pest Management ..... 392-6905  
 Star Creek Land ..... 704-1790

## **FARM SUPPLIES**

Ag Flag ..... 357-3424  
 Cal Farm Service ..... 358-1554  
 Kellogs Supply ..... 722-1501  
 Livingston True Value  
 Hardware & Farm Supplies..... 394-7949  
 Marfab ..... 826-6700  
 Modesto Dairy Supply..... 669-6200  
 Stanislaus Farm Supply..... 723-0704

## **FUEL SERVICES**

W.H. Breshears, Inc..... 522-7291  
 Western States Petroleum Assoc. .... (661) 321-0884  
 Valley Pacific Petroleum..... 948-9412  
 Van De Pol Petroleum ..... 667-0236

## **INSURANCE**

Barlocker Insurance ..... 383-0220  
 Fluetsch & Busby Insurance ..... 722-1541  
 Diane Norton Insurance ..... 357-3626  
 Rico, Pfitzer, Pires and Associates .. 854-2000  
 Walter Mortensen Insurance ..... 353-2700  
 Western Valley Insurance ..... 826-5667  
 Winton Ireland Insurance ..... 394-7925

## **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Alice B. Contreras CPA ..... 722-6778  
 American Ag Credit ..... 384-1050/826-0320  
 Farmers & Merchants Bank ..... 626-4100  
 Grimbleby Coleman CPAs ..... 527-4220  
 Trans County Title Company ..... 383-4660  
 Yosemite Farm Credit ..... 383-1116

## **SOLAR**

Coldwell Solar ..... 259-9260

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Amarants Propane Service ..... 358-2257  
 Berliner Cohen LLP ..... 385-0700  
 California Farmland Trust ..... (916) 544-2712  
 EAC Engineering Inc. .... 664-1067  
 The Hat Source..... 357-3424  
 Merced County Fair..... 722-1506  
 P. B. Iyer, M.D..... 854-1120  
 Queen Anne's Garden Nursery..... 358-3875  
 Santa Fe Pet Hospital ..... 383-5050  
 SS Blue ..... 722-2583  
 Unwired Broadband ..... (559) 336-4157

# Fundraising Woes



from the  
**Mariposa CFB**  
Danette Toso

It seems like yesterday, I was planning, prepping and preparing for our Annual BBQ Pork Rib Dinner. Little did I know as I was shopping for groceries and supplies alongside the toilet paper hoarders, that our entire world would soon be turned inside out and upside down!

I felt very accomplished as I unloaded my haul at Stagg Hall in Hornitos, carrying cans and cans of beans, tomatoes, mustard, brown sugar, and other dinner supplies up the steps into the hall. I was ahead

of schedule, and relieved to have everything ready for the big day! My timing could not have been worse, as the very next day, Newsom shut down all large public gatherings, and our dinner was put on hold. Who would have thought that the hold would remain in place for an entire year?! As with every other non-profit organization that relies mainly on fundraisers to stay in operation, 2020 hit us hard! We've had to tighten our belts tremendously, but we are still supporting our Agricultural youth programs as much as possible.

Spring 2021 is bringing new beginnings, renewed hope and additional opportunities for all of us. Please mark your calendars for April 10th and join us in Hornitos for our Rib Dinner with a twist. We will be serving "take out" dinners of ribs, homemade beans, coleslaw, and rolls. Tickets are available for \$15.00 each, and we will be selling complete racks of ribs as well. Doors will open at 4:00 and we'll be serving until 7:00. If you'd like to purchase tickets, please contact me at (209) 376-2304 or email me at [dwtccr@aol.com](mailto:dwtccr@aol.com) or [mcfarmbureau@sti.net](mailto:mcfarmbureau@sti.net).

We hope you will join us with our continued efforts in supporting agriculture by supporting our dinner. As always, I encourage farmers,

ranchers and conservators to invite friends, neighbors and family members to join the collective voice of the Farm

Bureau. Together, we can make our organization stronger than ever, one member at a time.

*Mariposa County  
Farm Bureau's  
Take Out*

**Rib BBQ**

**Saturday, April 10th**  
4 – 7pm at the Stagg Hall in Hornitos

*Tickets \$15.00*

**Full racks of ribs will also be available!**

*For more information*  
Call Danette at (209)376-2304  
[mcfarmbureau@sti.net](mailto:mcfarmbureau@sti.net)  
[dwtccr@aol.com](mailto:dwtccr@aol.com)



## Mariposa County Business Member Directory

*Businesses Supporting the Farm Bureau*

To be included in the directory, join Mariposa County Farm Bureau as a business member by calling 742-5875.

### AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES

Gallaway Feed and Supply.....374-3331  
Mariposa Feed & Supply.....966-3326  
Bootjack Equipment Rental & Feed.966-3545

### ASSOCIATIONS

35-A District Agriculture Assn.....966-2432  
Mariposa Chamber of Commerce....966-2456  
Mariposa County Farm Advisor .....966-2417  
Mariposa County Farm Bureau .....742-5875

### CONSTRUCTION

Bucks Construction.....878-3702  
Tobey Guenthart Construction .....374-3334

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

Inter-County Title Company.....966-3653  
Yosemite Bank.....966-5444

### HARDWARE STORES

Coast Hardware.....966-2527  
Foster Ace Hardware .....966-2692

### MEDICAL

Mariposa Physical Therapy.....742-7242

### MISCELLANEOUS

Allison Sierra Inc .....966-4082  
Happy Burger Diner .....966-2719  
Mariposa Friends of the  
Fairgrounds Foundation.....742-4680  
Hugh A. Yamshon Ranch  
Mariposa Gun Works .....742-5444  
Miners Roadhouse 14 .....966-2444  
Pony Expresso .....966-5053

### REAL ESTATE

Cathey's Valley Real Estate.....742-2121

### SERVICES

Chases Foothill Petroleum.....966-3314  
Edward Lien & Toso Ag Appraisers...634-9484  
Palmer Tractor .....374-3470  
Ranch Fence, Inc.....966-5914  
Valley Pacific Petroleum.....948-9412  
Yosemite Glass & Window Inc.....966-3292

### WINERIES

Mount Bullion Vineyard.....377-8450  
Rauch Ranch Vineyard & Winery .....742-7162

*Support Farm Bureau Member Businesses*

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## ► Merced Farm & Industrial Businesses on Highway 59



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Merced County Farm Bureau .....	723-3001	Shannon Pump Co. ....	723-3904
Agri-Valley Irrigation Co.....	384-8494	Kellogg's Supply .....	722-1501
Kirby Manufacturing .....	723-0778		

# ► MCFB Farm & Ranch Connection

**AG** 209-445-8503

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Email Denelle at  
[dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org](mailto:dflake@mercedfarmbureau.org)  
if interested

# Merced County Farm Bureau 103rd Virtual Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 25th at 6:00 pm

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## GUEST SPEAKER

Shaun Crook, CAFB 2nd VP



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Acknowledgment of Retiring & New Directors and  
Announcement of 2021 Scholarship Recipients

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Updates from  
Eric Harcksen, MCFB Board President  
Breanne Ramos, MCFB Executive Director

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### **Free to register**

To RSVP: call (209) 723-3001 or email  
[info@mercedfarmbureau.org](mailto:info@mercedfarmbureau.org)

Zoom link will be sent closer to event.

**Deadline to RSVP: Tuesday, March 23rd**