

Merced County Farm News



Merced County Farm Bureau Endorses Kevin Cookingham for the 16th District Congressional Seat



September 9, 2020 - At the September Board of Directors meeting the Board voted to endorse Mr. Kevin Cookingham to represent the 16th District Congressional seat.

President Eric Harcksen had this to say about MCFB’s endorsement, “We elected to endorse Mr. Cookingham to add a new face to Washington and the political landscape,” he continued. “As a board we felt more aligned with him on the impactful issues that face our community. We look forward to working with him in the future.”

Mr. Cookingham is a product of the valley as he was raised in Fresno and now resides in Madera. He graduated from California State University, Fresno where he eventually obtained his post-graduate degree in Marriage, Family, Child Counseling. Following his education, he worked within the Clovis Unified School District for 25 years covering a span of jobs including counselor, educator and principal. He also has a commitment to the community as he currently serves as a board member for Hume Lake

Christian Camps. “I am extremely honored to be endorsed by the Merced County Farm Bureau as your candidate for Congress - California District 16. My support for agriculture is unwavering. The Merced County Farm Bureau has been, and continues to be, one of the strongest advocates for the farming community. The importance of this next election cannot be overstated. Valley agriculture will be a key priority for me as your Congressman representing Fresno, Madera and Merced Counties.”

CFB Legislative Update

September 4, 2020 -
Legislative Session Ends
The California State Assembly

Address

and Senate burned the midnight oil as the 2019-2020 Legislative Session ended on Monday night at 12:00am. Every final day of Session has its eccentricities, and this year was no different. As one legislator tested positive for COVID-19 days prior to the close of Session, all Senate Republicans who had interacted with him were required to self-quarantine and participate via Zoom, rather than in person. Tempers flared, made worse as requests were made to limit the time available for Floor debates to move through as many bills as possible. It is likely that the Legislature, upon call by Governor Newsom, will meet during a special session in the near future to discuss evolving issues including the economy, COVID-19 and wildfire. The Governor now has until September 30th to sign or veto all bills that

have presented to him. CFBF will be releasing a Legislative Roundup noting the disposition of all bills in the 2019-2020 session shortly.

Agriculture, Generally
The State Board of Food and Agriculture met on Tuesday, September 1st to discuss workforce development and training. Presentations were made by the California Department of Industrial Relations and various community colleges, focusing on agricultural workforces. Glenda Humiston, Vice President of UCANR, Elliott Balch, with the Central Valley Community Foundation, and Rick Tomlinson with the CA Strawberry Commission also presented to the Board.

Cannabis
The Department of Food and Agriculture has opened a second

comment period on the modifications to the OCal Program’s proposed regulations. These regulations would create a comparable organic program for commercial cannabis produced in California. The release of these regulations marks the official start of the 15-day public comment period provided under California law. The comment period will end on September 15, 2020. The proposed regulations and related documents can be found here

Climate Change
The Department of Food and Agriculture held its final workshop on September 1st to discuss a framework for expanding the Healthy Soils Program into public-private partnerships. The proposal is for the

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from the

President's Corner

Eric Harcksen



Greetings from the Merced County Farm Bureau President. I hope everyone is having a prosperous harvest season. As I am writing this article,

we are almost half way through the almond harvest, tomatoes, hay and peach season. The weather, thus far, has been good and the crop is of high quality for farmers.

At our last MCFB Board of Directors meeting, we held our Candidate’s Night for the 16th Congressional District. We are happy to announce that your board elected to endorse Kevin Cookingham for the 16th Congressional District. I personally feel that our board is a diverse board and will treat every candidate fairly. As a whole MCFB endorses candidates that will best represent agriculture in Merced County. Having the farmers in ag in mind when the Farm Bureau endorses

candidates, I strongly believe that your board has had good judgement in picking the right candidate not only to represent you, the farmer, but to work with MCFB. Bringing the candidates before the board gives us the opportunity to carry out a Q and A with them. It is then possible for us to make the correct decision on whom we will endorse. In the event that our candidate does not take the seat, I would hope that the candidate who does would be willing to sit down with your board to discuss how to better serve the agriculture community.

At our next board meeting September 24, we are scheduled to hear from supervisorial candidates representing Merced County.

California Bountiful Foundation

Farm and Rural Disaster Fund

Help assist communities affected by natural disasters

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Another month down in the crazy year that 2020 has become. I know I’ve said this before, but never did I think things would just keep climbing to another level of Jumanji. Yet, here we are. Any other year our office is filled with mounting legislation that seems to be more daunting than the year prior. This year seems to be rising to the top like no other between pandemic shutdowns, families leaving the state and wildfire. Oh man, the wildfires.

These are the times when I am thankful we do not have forested ground in our county, however my heart does go out to those counties that do. We do have a strong connection to these areas due to family and friend ties, wanting to escape the valley for

the mountain range or for those folks that run cattle in those elevations. Fires such as this year, and previous years, have easily impacted our quality of life in the valley. Aside from it looking like a zombie warzone when you step outside, you also contend with ash and poor air quality.

Much has been said about climate change in recent days. On the flip side, much can also be said about the lack of forest upkeep that has been done due to governmental regulation. Take a trip up to any mountainous region and you can see the trees that have perished because of fire, bark beetle, etc. You name it, our forests have experienced it. Recently we were able to take a trip to Groveland to check out timber harvest. The work they were doing


was cleanup from the Rim Fire that took place in 2013. Since then we have experienced a number of devastating fires including the Ferguson Fire of 2018, the Camp Fire of 2019 and now the Lightening Complex Fires that took hold this year. We are still in the midst of the Creek Fire that is bulldozing its way through Madera and Fresno counties. At the time of this article’s composition, it is currently at 0% containment and 163,138 acres.

Proper management is a key factor and it can be accomplished by using several factors including proper logging and grazing. Bureaucracy has changed the ways in which are forests are managed and we are experiencing the repercussions now. Our hearts and prayers go out to each of those families

from the

Director's Desk

Breanne Ramos



that had to pick up their lives and evacuate, to the livestock that had to be freely released by their owners for safety purposes and those business that will have to be rebuilt.

Buckle up friends, 2020 is still a long way from over.


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.



Program at a Glance*

Friday – September 25, 2020

- 12:00 pm – Welcome to the AITC Virtual Conference and Ventura County
 - Judy Culbertson, Executive Director, CFAITC
 - Karen Ross, Secretary, CDFA
 - John Krist, CEO, Farm Bureau of Ventura County
- 12:35 pm – Live Virtual Tour: Ventura Farm – Location TBD
- 2:00 pm – AgTually You Need Tech – Utilizing Technology in Your Classroom
Julie Cates, Linwood Elementary School
- 3:05 pm – Victory Gardens for a New Era: Cultivating Possibility in a Time of Pandemic
Dr. Rose Hayden Smith, Emeritus – University of CA, ANR
- 3:45 pm – Farmer Panel: Challenges Facing Agriculture
- 5:30 pm – Live Cooking Demo at Mulvaney’s B&L

Saturday – September 26, 2020

- 9:00 am – General Session
 - Jamie Johansson, President, CFAITC
 - Keynote Speaker: Getting Fresh with Your Produce Man
Michael Marks, Television Personality and Produce Expert
- 9:35 am – Live Virtual Tour: Limoneira Company Lemon Packinghouse
- 11:00 am – Adapting On-Farm Education for an Online Classroom
Students for Eco-Education & Agriculture (SEEAG)
- 12:30 pm – Nutrition Education: Why it Matters and How to Make it Work Through Distance Learning
Dairy Council of California
- 1:05 pm – Creating A Bitmoji Agriculture Classroom
Dr. Browning Neddeau, CSU Chico
- 2:00 pm – Closing

*subject to change

[Register Here: Learnaboutag.org/conference](https://Learnaboutag.org/conference)

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Merced County Farm Bureau

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Calendar of Events

- September 12**
Merced River Ag Boosters' Assn. Deep Pit Beef Dinner Drive Thru
- Spetember 17 & 24**
AFT Women for Land Virtual Learning Circle (pg. 5)
- September 22 & 29**
UCCE Merced Fall CE classes (pg. 11)
- September 25-26**
California AITC Conference (pg. 3)
- October 1**
Deadline to apply for Literacy for Life Grant
- October 6 & 13**
UCCE Merced Fall CE Classes (pg 11)
- October 22**
Prescribed Fire Council Annual Meeting
- November 4**
Merced County 4-H Drive-Thru Dinner (pg. 10)

Rethinking Methane

UC Davis White Paper Re-Examines Methane's Role in Climate Change, and How California Dairy Can Achieve Climate Neutrality

By: **The CLEAR Center, UC Davis**

DAVIS, Calif., Sept. 2, 2020 –

Researchers from the University of California, Davis are rethinking methane and showing that climate neutrality is within reach for the California dairy sector.

Methane (CH₄) is a potent greenhouse gas that is 25-28 times stronger than carbon dioxide (CO₂) — the primary greenhouse gas driving climate change in California — but how it influences actual warming is much different, according to a white paper released today by UC Davis professors Frank Mitloehner, Ph.D., and Ermias Kebreab, Ph.D., along with Michael Boccadoro, executive director of Dairy Cares. The publication, “Methane, Cows, and Climate Change: California Dairy’s Pathway to Climate Neutrality,” examines recent literature from leading climate scientists and its implications for the California dairy sector.

Methane is a short-lived climate pollutant and exists in our atmosphere for 12 years before it’s broken down. This means, when a constant rate of methane is emitted for more than 12 years, one molecule in effect replaces a previously emitted molecule that has since been removed. In other words, methane isn’t accumulating in the atmosphere. Currently, the main accounting method used for measuring the climate impacts of greenhouse gases does not describe how individual gases, such as methane warm — or cool — the climate over time. That oversight leads to a misinterpretation of methane’s role in warming the climate, while also ignoring possible solutions that could offset greenhouse gases from other sectors such as

transport.

“We have been looking at methane incorrectly when it comes to reducing warming,” said Mitloehner, a professor and air quality specialist for Cooperative Extension in the Department of Animal Science at the University of California, Davis and head of the Clarity and Leadership for Environmental Awareness and Research (CLEAR) Center at UC Davis. “While more potent than the most prevalent greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, methane is a short-lived climate pollutant, staying in our atmosphere for about 12 years before it’s broken down and removed. On the other hand, carbon dioxide remains in our atmosphere for centuries, with new emissions accumulating on top of those previously emitted, making it the main driver of climate change.”

According to the white paper, which examined historic dairy production in that state, California dairy farms have already stabilized methane emissions, which is a critical step to achieving climate neutrality and global climate goals. The authors explain, that as dairies continue to achieve further methane emission reductions, then they can create negative warming, also referred to as “cooling.”

California — the fifth-largest economy in the world — is responsible for about 1 percent of all global greenhouse gas emissions. More than 80 percent of California’s greenhouse gas emissions come from fossil fuel uses such as the transportation (41 percent), industrial (23 percent) and power-generating (16 percent) sectors. Even though California is the United States’ largest agricultural producer—producing fruits, vegetables, nuts, livestock, and other essential foods for much of the nation and the world — the agricultural sector’s greenhouse

gas contribution is roughly 8 percent of the state’s total greenhouse gas emissions. Of this, California’s largest-in-the-nation dairy sector accounts for 4 percent of the state’s total greenhouse gas emissions.

To its credit, the state has established goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2030, 80 percent by 2050, as it works toward a goal of “net-zero” carbon emissions by 2045.

Given greater efficiencies, plus a decrease in the number of cows and total milk production in recent years, the amount of methane emitted by California dairies is less today than it was in 2008. Simply put, California dairy farms are adding less methane today than they did 12 years ago, meaning more methane is being broken down than is being emitted into the atmosphere.

California’s dairy farmers are making further progress in reducing the amount of methane emissions released into the environment by installing anaerobic digesters designed to capture methane, or through other projects like compost pack barns and solid separators, which are designed to reduce methane production on farms. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, efforts to date will result in a 25-percent reduction of manure-related methane (below 2013 levels), as projects are implemented in the next few years.

Continued progress in these areas will be necessary for the state’s dairy production sector to reach the point at which they are no longer adding to global warming. This is known as climate neutrality.

“Reducing methane emissions and achieving climate neutrality is no small undertaking,” said Kebreab, who holds the Sesnon Endowed Chair in Sustainable Animal Agriculture in the Department of Animal Science at the University of California, Davis. “California is among the most efficient producers of milk and dairy products, and its life cycle carbon footprint (per gallon of milk produced) is among the lowest of any region in the world. Further reductions will be accelerated as dairy methane reduction projects are implemented and feed additives become widely available. For other dairy regions, a critical first step will be to achieve similar levels of production efficiency (more milk with fewer cows) to begin stabilizing methane emissions and work toward climate neutrality. The impact of such an accomplishment would have profound global climate effects.”

The white paper identifies methane as an important mitigation opportunity. As well, it follows research on notable differences among individual greenhouse gases and their impact on climate change by leading scientists at the Oxford Martin School and Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford.



Methane Digester



American Farmland Trust Hosts Women for the Land Learning Circle for Women Farmers and Landowners

“Planning for Resilience in the San Joaquin Valley” virtual event will allow networking and knowledge sharing among women farmers and agricultural landowners in Merced, Madera and Stanislaus Counties.

Sept. 4, 2020, SACRAMENTO, Cali –

American Farmland Trust, a national leader in protecting agricultural land, promoting environmentally sound farming practices and keeping farmers on the land, has announced a two-part “Women for the Land Virtual Learning Circle” for women farmers and non-operating owners of agricultural land in Merced, Madera and Stanislaus Counties. The virtual event will be held on Sept. 17 and Sept. 24, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., via Zoom.

Focused on “Planning for Resilience in the San Joaquin Valley,” the AFT Learning Circle will connect women in agriculture so they can plan for ecological and economic resilience on their land, and learn about the latest research and technical

resources available to help women navigate the impacts of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

“A key component of AFT’s San Joaquin Valley Land & Water Strategy is to help farmers throughout the region comply with SGMA,” explains Kara Heckert, AFT’s California regional director. “Women farmers, however, are often overlooked, underappreciated and underserved. They experience gender bias and often have less access to technical materials. AFT’s Women for the Land initiative is about learning the barriers that women farmers face, engaging with women landowners about conservation, and providing technical assistance to better serve women and their communities.”

Women Farmers in California
According to the 2017 USDA

Agricultural Census, women accounted for 36% of the country’s 3.4 million producers, but only 9% of farms were run entirely by women. Compared to states across the country in that same year, California was not even in the top 10 in terms of the percentage of total producers who were women.

California Department of Food and Agriculture’s 2020 report to the California Legislature on the Farmer Equity Act states that “female farmers represent less than a quarter of all farmers in the state, and according to the United States Department of Agriculture’s Census of Agriculture, only 2% of California farmers are women of color.”

In Merced, Madera and Stanislaus Counties, there were 6,853 women playing a decision-making role (as either a producer or the principal producer) over 1,517,850 acres of agricultural land, according to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture. They accounted for 8.7% of all women producers across California and 8.3% of the total acres under the stewardship of women producers in the state. In collaboration with local partners in these counties, AFT is making strides to reach more of these women with resources to support their success and leadership in resilient agriculture.

Informative Agendas and Networking Time

AFT’s upcoming Women for the Land Virtual Learning Circle is designed to allow fellow women landowners, producers and aspiring farmers to learn how to better prepare for SGMA. They will learn about programs and support systems available to women farmers and landowners, as well as ways that women can get involved in advocacy to support regenerative agriculture in California.

During the Learning Circle, participants will connect directly with conservation resource providers, including:

- Jean Okuye, East Merced County RCD
- Laurel Angell, Madera Chowchilla

RCD

- Priscilla Baker, NRCS – Madera County
- Diana Waller, NRCS – Stanislaus County
- Kara Heckert, AFT California Regional Director
- Caitlin Joseph, AFT National Women for the Land Outreach Coordinator

After the event, participants will receive information on how to access county-specific technical assistance and resources, according to Caitlin Joseph, AFT’s national Women for the Land outreach coordinator.

“AFT looks forward to hosting these Learning Circles, which apply a framework perfected by indigenous cultures worldwide and adapted within AFT through an early partnership with the Women Food and Agriculture Network in Iowa,” explains Caitlin. “After years of implementation nationwide, we are confident this circle model is a powerful tool for sharing knowledge in an inclusive way. Our team aims to provide a non-judgmental setting that breaks down barriers and allows women in agriculture to expand their skills, develop new relationships and connect with valuable information. There are many challenges on the land women are navigating in the San Joaquin Valley, but we believe that as women we are stronger when we support each other.”

Register here. Upon registration, instructions on participating via Zoom will be sent.

Watch Jean Okuye talk about her experiences as a women farmer in Merced County, including as Merced County Farm Bureau’s first woman president. Her family almond orchard was featured among eight national soil health case studies, which demonstrated the economic and environmental benefits of regenerative agriculture growing practices. Funded by a USDA-NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, the case studies are helping to scale up these soil health practices across California and the United States.



WOMEN FOR THE LAND LEARNING CIRCLE

PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE IN CALIFORNIA'S SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY.

THURSDAYS 9/17 & 9/24, 3-5 P.M. PACIFIC

Register at www.farmland.org/women



Meet fellow women in agriculture while learning about how you can plan for resilience on agricultural land. Speakers will share information on policies and programs impacting the region, such as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and we will discuss as a group the ways it may impact growers and communities in the region.

Open to anyone who identifies as a woman and owns and/or manages agricultural land in MADERA, MERCED, or STANISLAUS Counties.



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By: Liliana Boesch, Atwater FFA
Chapter Reporter

The start of the 2020-2021 school year started and continued with the challenges of the COVID epidemic and the required “distance learning” parameters issued by the state, however the Atwater FFA 2020-2021 chapter officers maintained a positive outlook and decided on “Inspire Today, Influence Tomorrow” as this year’s theme. “Agriculture education and the FFA is all about opening doors and opportunities in leadership, personal growth, skill development, and career exploration regardless if one chooses agriculture as their eventual path moving forward,” said Atwater FFA Parliamentarian Nandani Patel. “Our goal is to utilize those doors of opportunities to inspire and influence students in a positive and productive way.”

With the challenges of a closed campus, Atwater FFA held their annual “FFA Ice Cream Social” online through Zoom followed by a drive thru ice cream for students and their family in front of the school following the meeting. Over 350 members attended



Atwater High School agriculture instructor and FFA advisor Jose Vargas grabs a handful of ice cream treats to hand out complimentary to various high school members and their families during the recent annual “FFA Ice Cream Social” event held last week in front of the high school.

Atwater FFA Set to Inspire and Influence in 2020-2021



The 2020-2021 Atwater FFA chapter officers include (top row) Gabriela Moreno, President; Gurkirath Ganhok, Vice President; Celeste Chargoy, Secretary; Tristan Cardey, Treasurer; (bottom row) Liliana Boesch, Reporter; America Lara, Sentinel; Gabby Lucas, Historian; and Nandani Patel, Parliamentarian.

and participated in the Zoom event with numerous members and families following up the meeting in receiving a free ice cream.

“Our officer team starts the school year with focus, vision, and enthusiasm in leading their organization and our students,” said FFA advisor Kim Mesa. The Atwater High School agriculture program has been recognized as one of the state’s most productive agriculture programs by the California Agricultural Teacher’s Association (CATA) and the National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE). “We have tremendous support from our school administration, school district, and our community in supporting FFA and agriculture education as a way

to get students involved and provide individuals with purpose, direction and self-confidence in life,” said agriculture instructor and FFA advisor Jose Vargas.

The new officer team is looking forward to the challenges and rewards that the upcoming 2020-2021 school year holds for them. This year’s officer team includes Gabriella Moreno, President; Gurkirath Gandhok, Vice President; Celeste Chargoy, Secretary; Tristan Cardey, Treasurer; Liliana Boesch, Reporter; America Lara, Sentinel; Gabby Lucas, Historian; and Nandani Patel, Parliamentarian.

“Through inspiration and positive influences through agriculture and the FFA, we hope to engage students outside out of their comfort zone and make an impact on their future,” said Atwater FFA President Gabriela

Moreno.

For more information on the Atwater High School Agriculture Department and Atwater FFA, please log on the website www.AtwaterFFA.org.



Atwater High School agriculture instructor and FFA advisor Kim Mesa holds a Zoom meeting with the chapter officers as a result of the COVID pandemic safety measures where regular meetings to communicate, create, organize, and implement various events and activities are implemented.

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El Capitan FFA Officers Encourage Better Habits for Mental and Physical Health During Distance Learning

By: Annika Cook, El Capitan FFA Chapter Reporter

As students in the Merced Union High School District prepared to head back to school in a virtual environment, the El Capitan FFA Officer team knew of the toll current situations could take on their classmate's emotional and physical well being. "Being alone is hard for everyone," said FFA Chapter Secretary, Miranda Barber, "many of us haven't seen our friends since March and I worry that my classmates

are having a difficult time staying positive right now." The FFA chapter officer team acknowledged this possibility, and decided to use this as an opportunity to get others involved in a positivity challenge before school started.

"We decided to create daily positivity challenges for anyone to participate in to help increase their mental and physical health," said El Capitan FFA Chapter President, Julianna Contreras. The positivity challenges included connecting virtually with friends, cooking

or baking, taking walks, physical exercise, listening to upbeat music, creating a gratitude list, and playing a game or doing a puzzle at home. The officer team's goal was to teach students about these healthy habits, and encourage them to continue these activities after the challenge ended.

The officer team was very happy with the number of students, teachers, and community members who participated. Participants in these challenges not only gained motivation to build healthier habits, but ten lucky participants also won a gift card. The



El Capitan FFA Officer Team and Ag Leadership Class students are working hard to make your time during quarantine a positive and healthy experience. Be on the lookout for more social media challenges to partake in. Follow El Capitan FFA on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, or visit www.elcapitanffa.org for more information. Remember to stay positive during these times!

Gustine FFA Officer Elections



By: Austin Bell, Gustine FFA Chapter Reporter

On Friday, August 28th, Gustine FFA held a virtual meeting with last year's chapter officer team and our FFA chapter members. The past officer team announced and installed the 2020-2021 Officer Team. The election process is made up of 4 main parts. First the candidates must fill out an application which tells the Ag teachers about the involvement a candidate has in the FFA and what makes them qualified to be an officer. 25 percent of the results are based on this application that is graded by the advisors. The candidates must also go through a 10 question interview which is also 25 percent of the result. The interviews were done on the 25th and 26th of August. Possibly the most

important part of the whole process is the speech which was given by all candidates on Thursday, August 27th. This gives the candidate the opportunity to tell the chapter and its members why they should vote for them. It shows creativeness and passion for the organization. Normally the speech portion would be held at a chapter meeting but due to Covid-19, this, among the rest of the process, was held virtually on zoom meetings. Gustine FFA Historian Christina Moitozo says that the process was very different compared to how she has seen it in the past. "I had the opportunity to grow up watching my older sisters run for FFA office and I am so happy to finally be part of the tradition, even though it has been done virtually"-Christina Moitozo. Finally, it comes down to member votes which makes up for the last fifty percent of

the results. After the speeches were given through Zoom the Gustine FFA members were asked to vote through google forms. The results of the election are as follows; President: Daniel Gomes, Vice President: Lalanie Brace, Secretary: Janal Navarro,

Treasurer: Savanna Barcellos, Reporter: Austin Bell, Sentinel: Tyler Borba, Historian: Christina Moitozo. "This year's officer team is filled with leadership and creativity. It will be a great year for Gustine FFA"-Past Gustine FFA Officer Madison Woods.



National FFA Agricultural Proficiency Awards

National Finalists

Alyssa Loreda
Merced FFA – Agricultural Sales – Entrepreneurship

Hunter Aue
Golden Valley FFA – Beef Production – Entrepreneurship

Spencer Stephens
Golden Valley FFA – Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management - Entrepreneurship/Placement

Peter Bliss
Golden Valley FFA – Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement

Josh Heupel
Golden Valley FFA – Fruit Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement

Madison Woods
Gustine FFA – Sheep Production - Entrepreneurship/Placement

Gold Award

Jackson De Jager
Stone Ridge Christian FFA – Dairy Production – Placement

Spencer Wolf
El Capitan FFA – Diversified Agricultural Production – Entrepreneurship/Placement

Silver Award

Kiah Betschart
Atwater FFA – Equine Science – Entrepreneurship

Livingston FFA Virtual New Member Orientation

By: Jenna Bates, Livingston FFA Chapter Reporter

Livingston FFA Officers and Advisors hosted a virtual new member orientation on Wednesday, August 26th. With over 100 new Livingston FFA members in attendance, the chapter officers had the opportunity to share some of their knowledge on FFA and our chapter. The new members were introduced to the five advisors

and eight chapter officers, here at Livingston High School. Through zoom, members were sent to one of four breakout rooms where they participated in an icebreaker activity to get to know one another. Two officers in each breakout room then had the opportunity to speak about Agriculture Classes, SAEs, LDEs, CDEs, Conferences, and other FFA opportunities. After learning about FFA and asking questions, everyone

was brought back together to one big zoom meeting. We played a quick game of kahoot quiz to test the member's new found knowledge.

This was a new experience for everyone and it was a great success. Through this event, we gained over 60 new followers on our Instagram account. Social media is how we keep everyone connected. To end the meeting, we awarded seven students with prizes that we mailed straight to

them. New members left that meeting with so much more knowledge and we hope they take that with them into future events. The officers now continue to prepare for the first monthly meeting of the year, through zoom. Even during these difficult times, we look forward to creating new activities for our members. To learn more about the Livingston FFA Chapter, please visit our website, Livingstonffa.org

Agricultural Fairs Rescue Act Aims to Preserve These Vital Community Assets

The majority of all fairs and festivals have been cancelled and year round operations halted due to the pandemic; many won't have the financial means to operate in 2021.



By: The Merced County Fair

MERCED, CALIFORNIA, August 27, 2020 –

Congressman Jimmy Panetta (D-CA-20) and Congressman Billy Long (R-MO-07) have introduced H.R. 7883, the Agricultural Fairs Rescue Act, in the U.S. House of Representatives to help preserve agricultural fairs across the country and offset the devastating financial losses they have experienced due to COVID-19. The Agricultural Fairs Rescue Act will provide grant funding for agricultural fairs through state departments of agriculture to keep them functioning and preserve them for the future.

The legislation provides \$500 million in Agricultural Fair Rescue Grants to agricultural fairs, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The AMS will provide the grant funding to states or state departments of agriculture based on the loss of attendance those

fairs have experienced in 2020.

"County and local fairs are very important to agriculture and our communities all across our country. Fairs provide our producers with the opportunity to market their crops and livestock, and foster the next generation of farmers. They also are an economic engine and a gathering place for us to highlight and celebrate our communities. Like many institutions, fairs have been impacted by COVID-19, and we must provide them assistance if we are going to preserve these fairs for the future," said Congressman Panetta.

"It is rare indeed if a person doesn't have fond childhood memories of their county and state fairs. Fairs play a vital role in U.S. agribusiness by supporting thousands of jobs and giving farmers a way to promote their products. Our fairs have suffered very substantial, if not devastating, losses due to COVID-19. I am proud to work with my colleague and buddy, Congressman Jimmy Panetta, to introduce legislation that offers critical and strategic relief to a vulnerable industry in dire need of our assistance," said Congressman Long.

"With the exception of a few drive-thru food events in May to support our food vendors, the Merced Fairgrounds has been dark since March. With every month that passes that we are unable to rent out the Fairground's facilities,

we lose approximately \$25,000 after deducting operating expenses," said Teresa Burrola, CEO of the Merced County Fair. "On top of our losses, Merced County is losing out on \$23 million in economic impact dollars from our annual fair and our average of 220 interim events."

"Our county Fairs play a vital economic and cultural role throughout our Valley. They provide family entertainment in addition to serving as a showcase for hardworking Future Farmers of America (FFA) and 4-H students. Like many important traditions that generate revenue during this pandemic, fairs are struggling with a significant loss of

income from shuttered doors and canceled events. This legislation provides needed relief to keep these important community events financially afloat until a time we can once again enjoy with family and friends the valuable traditions county fairs have provided for generations," said Congressman Jim Costa, who has just signed on as a co-sponsor of this bill.

"The agricultural fairs across the United States serve vital community purposes. Besides the social and cultural impact, fairs provide the future leaders of this country – the 4-H and FFA members – with vital leadership skills development. Additionally, the economic impact to each community

is significant. In the majority of communities, the fairgrounds serves as critical infrastructure in times of need – fire camps, hurricane and tornado shelters for humans and animals – and never more evident than now with many serving as COVID-19 testing sites, temporary hospitals, quarantine shelters, food distribution sites, and temporary polling places. We thank Congressmen Panetta and Long for introducing the Agricultural Fairs Research Act and for working to preserve America's fairs," said Marla Calico, President & CEO, International Association of Fairs & Expositions (IAFE).

"Not only do county and local fairs serve a vital education and economic role, they provide families with high value entertainment close to home," says Greg Chiecko, President of the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA), and he continued, "Some of the funds they generate support important youth opportunities in local communities."

According to the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), each year the operation of agricultural fairs results in \$4.67 billion for the U.S. economy and supports thousands of jobs. About 2,000 fairs are held in North America each year, and large fairs can admit

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Fair

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more than a million visitors over the course of a week or two.

Fairs, like so many other industries in the U.S., have suffered tremendous financial losses as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. IAFE estimates a loss of gross revenue exceeding \$3.7 billion to fair organizations so far this year based upon the cancellation of facility events and their annual fair.

State and county fairs are a primary source for the promotion of U.S. agribusiness. They exhibit the equipment and animals associated with agriculture and animal husbandry, and livestock shows are prominent at many state fairs.

Fairs also encourage and develop the next generation of America's food producers. Agricultural producers in rural America represent less than 1% of the U.S. population, and with the average age of a farmer being 57 years old, it is imperative to engage and encourage young people to pursue agricultural careers.

Want to help this bill advantage in support of preserving fairs throughout the nation, including the Merced County Fair? Use the link to find your representative, reach out and ask for their support on this bill: www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative As mentioned, Congressman Costa has signed on a co-sponsor of this bill

This bill is one of two Congressional bills being proposed, both designed as grant programs to be administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture to preserve fairs and their vital functions in communities across the nation. Last month, Representative Josh Harder (D-Stanislus) introduced the "Protecting Fairs During Coronavirus Act" that would establish a \$5 billion federal grant program to offset fair revenue losses throughout the nation during the Coronavirus Pandemic. Representative Harder noted that in typical year fairs generate approximately \$3.5 billion in revenue and provides nearly \$200 million in tax revenue for local and state governments. His legislation is designed to provide financial support to fairs dealing with the COVID-related havoc on fair budgets. Representative Harder's recent press release on the introduction of the Protecting Fairs During Coronavirus Act is available here.

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Department to recognize, through letters of support, financial investments or initiatives by private businesses to promote comparable healthy practices. Farm Bureau has advocated that privately funded and promoted healthy soils practices meet the same standards as the Department's Program and include a quantification and audit component. The Department will likely finalize the draft framework and open it to a formal public comment period shortly.

Farm Bureau submitted a comment letter on a proposal by the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) provided to the Scientific Advisory Panel to include a transition to organic funding option within the Healthy Soils Program. The proposal would be to provide \$4,300 to pay an organic consultant to develop an organic systems plan. While Farm Bureau does not oppose the development of plans or transitioning to organic production to sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Farm Bureau expressed concerns that planning alone does not yield practices with those demonstrable impacts. In its comment letter, Farm Bureau also stated that any funds attributed to paying fire-hire consultants for planning is less money available to farmers to implement conservation management practices on farm. As an alternative, Farm Bureau suggested that the

Department and the Scientific Advisory Panel contemplate a separate planning program for climate change resiliency on farm. The Panel will hear this item October 15, 2020.

Energy and Utilities

SB 865, (Jerry Hill, D) makes changes to the Dig Safe statutes, which govern how those excavating around underground infrastructure


must conduct their activities. One of the changes proposed in the legislation was to codify a recent regulation promulgated by the Dig Safe Board regarding the requirement that an excavator discovering or causing damage to a subsurface installation that results in an emergency to immediately call "911." After calling "911," the excavator would also be required to notify the regional call center within two hours. CFBF had concerns with the regulation regarding the need to notify the call center within two hours given what might be difficult circumstances and certainly thought that it was unnecessary to codify the language. CFBF and Western Growers Association were successful in having the bill amended to remove the specific time requirement. The bill also requires that the Dig Safe Board be moved out of the State Fire Marshall, commencing on January 1, 2022, and into the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety within the Natural Resources Agency, which is the same office as the Wildfire Safety Division is scheduled to move to as of July 1, 2021, pursuant to AB 1054. The bill was approved by the Assembly and concurred in by the Senate and is now headed to the Governor's desk.

AB 1659, (Richard Bloom, D) would have created a new \$3 billion energy tax on only some electric utility ratepayers – those in PG&E, SDG&E and Southern California Edison – and excluded impacts on all other ratepayers. The language was released six days before the end of

session without advance information to impacted parties. This bill was nothing more than an environmental bond to misdirect nearly \$2 billion dollars for unrelated wildfire mitigation activities. The source of the funds, electric rate revenues, bore no relationship to the expenditures authorized, and would have extended a currently authorized charge for another 15 years. A broad coalition of ratepayer groups, business interests, and utilities was quickly formed to work to defeat the legislation. The bill was heard in the Senate Energy & Utilities Committee and passed out on a 7-3 vote and 3 not voting, revealing that several Senators had concerns with the bill, largely focused on the disconnect between the funding source and the projects that would be funded. With mounting opposition there was an effort to scrap AB 1659 and utilize a budget authorization to fund prioritized wildfire related projects through a combination of general fund and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund expenditures. A Farm Team alert was sent out to encourage members to voice their opposition to the legislation. Ultimately, time ran out and neither AB 1659 nor the budget alternative could garner sufficient support to move through the process and both died.

AB 841, (Phil Ting, D) would direct the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to require large electrical and gas corporations to

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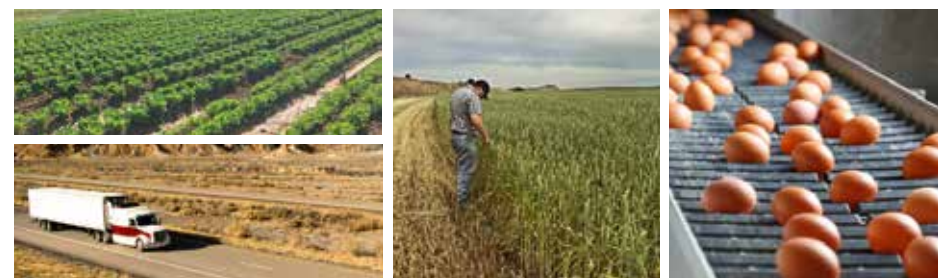
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Fall 2020 Pest Update Series

New Format!
Combination In-Person/Web Meeting

In order to serve as many in the ag community a possible we have been working to develop a program that is accessible and still meets the restrictions placed on all of us by recent health concerns. Our solution is a dual format meeting that has been approved for CE credits by DPR. CCA units will also be applied for.

Each 4 hour meeting of our Fall 2020 Pest Update series will be broadcast via the internet using the meeting application Zoom. Our presenters may be either in the classroom or speaking remotely with a projector presentation setup in the class.

A limited number of licensees will be allowed to attend in the classroom (subject to state, county and UC restrictions at the time of each meeting). Admittance will be first come/first served. Please call the day before each meeting you wish to attend for information regarding class size restrictions in place at that time. Sign-in sheets and scantrons will be available to report attendance.

An unlimited number may attend via their computer or smartphone using the Zoom app.


Attendees must register for each meeting they wish to attend via the internet and registration for each meeting is free, however, **all attendees wishing DPR, or CCA CE credit will be charged \$35 for each meeting** and may request a minimum of 1 CE hour to the maximum of 4 in 1 hour increments only.

*Attendance is recorded in Zoom for each internet attendee and **full attendance required for each CE hour awarded.**

*A link to our payment page and a post meeting test will be provided to each attendee wishing CE credit following confirmation of the minimum attendance time.

*Payment must be made prior to taking the test and a minimum score of 70% is required to receive CE credit. **No refunds can be provided.**

Links to register for upcoming meetings will be posted on the agenda page 1 week prior to each.



Please call our office at 209-385-7403 for further information

Fall 2020 CE for Pest Mgmt Pros Schedule (all hours Other unless otherwise noted)				
Start	September 22, 2020	September 29, 2020	October 6	Oct 13
8am	Mel Machado Blue Diamond Almond Disease and Pest Pressure- 2020 Summary	Jennifer Dimapasoc Merced County Ag Commissioners Office Farm Labor Contractor & Pest Control Advisor Inspections LAWS	Jason Bakken Merced County Mosquito Abatement District Life-cycles and control of mosquitoes. Why they are important pests.	
9am	Karl T. Lund, PhD UCCE Viticulture Advisor Mealy bugs in vineyards	Rebecca K. Ozeran UCCE Livestock & Natural Resources Advisor Post Fire Rangeland Weed Mgmt Update	Phoebe Gordon, PhD UCCE Orchard Systems Advisor Fig Pests Research Trials & Naval Orange Worm Survey	
10am	Thomas Jones Senior Analytical Director Safe Food Alliance Pesticides & Food Maximum Pesticide Residue Limits ½ Hr LAWS & ½ Hr OTHER	Daniel Martinez San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Flame Weed Abatement and Burning Pesticide Containers LAWS	Tom Dinwoodie Master Gardener Merced County Safe pesticide use around the home and garden: Household Pests	
11am	Fadzayi E. Mashiri Ph.D. UCCE Director Mariposa: Integrated Pest Management for Common Rangeland Weeds	Al Dentone Inert Gas Injection, LLC Safe and Effective use of Carbon Dioxide as a Fumigant for Rodent Control	William Griffin Supervising Ag & Standards Inspector- Madera County Training for pesticide handlers/field workers, PPE & label review. LAWS	

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establish the Joint School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program within each of its energy efficiency portfolios. The CPUC would be directed to allocate business portions, including the agricultural portion, of the utilities' energy efficiency budget for program years 2021, 2022, and 2023 to fund the School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program. It also requires any unspent carryovers from the 2020 energy efficiency program years to be allocated to the School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program. CFBF joined a coalition opposing the legislation because ratepayers have been paying into the energy efficiency programs while developing projects that would qualify for funding but would not have the opportunity to access a large portion of the funds for the next several years under the bill. AB 841 was heavily supported by union groups.

Despite opposition from ratepayer interests, AB 841 was approved on the last day of session and is on the Governor's desk.

Hemp

The Department of Food and Agriculture's Industrial Hemp Advisory Board is meeting on September 16th, 2020 from 9am-12pm. To register to view and participate in the meeting, please visit the following site here.

The Department of Food and Agriculture has proposed to adopt regulations related to timeframes, procedures, methods, and confirmation of THC concentration for the planting, sampling, laboratory testing, harvest, and destruction of Industrial Hemp. This formal rulemaking package is consistent with the prior emergency regulations enacted and seek to conform with the conditions in USDA's interim final rule. The text of the proposed regulations can be found here. The Department will be accepting written public comments until the close of business on October 12th. These draft regulations will be discussed at the Industrial Hemp Advisory Board meeting next week.

Labor

Legislators dealt with several bills of interest or concern to agricultural employers; all passed and are pending the Governor's signature, unless

otherwise noted:
COVID-19:

AB 685, (Eloise Reyes, D) will impose a broad and vague obligation on employers to report COVID-19 infections an employer 'knew of or should have reasonably known of,' to employees, employee representatives if any and the California Department of Public Health, allow Cal/OSHA to shutter operations at a worksite where it believes workers are exposed to an imminent COVID-19-related hazard and makes failure to report a criminal violation. Farm Bureau opposed AB 685 because of the broad and vague nature of the reporting mandate and is seeking the Governor's veto.

Labor Standards:

AB 1947, (Ash Kalra, D) undermines the current complaint process in the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) for whistleblower complaints by allowing recovery of complainant attorney's fees. Farm Bureau opposes AB 1947 due to the excessive employment-related litigation it will cause and is seeking the Governor's veto.

SB 749, (Maria Elena Durazo, D) would have changed the California Public Records Act to subject many records collected by enforcement agencies in the course of enforcement which are not considered subject to disclosure because they are proprietary information subject to disclosure. A wide variety of employer organizations, including Farm Bureau, opposed SB 749. SB 749 was not brought to the Assembly floor for third reading and dies at Sine Die adjournment.

Pay Equity:

SB 973, (Hannah-Beth Jackson, D) is a re-tread of Jackson's SB 171, which passed the Senate but failed Assembly passage in 2019. SB 973 will encourage discrimination lawsuits by requiring employers to collect incomplete pay equity data that would not reflect bona-fide reasons for difference in pay, including career choices made by employees and regional wage disparities. Farm Bureau opposes SB 973 because it will encourage needless employment-related litigation. SB 973 is pending action by the Governor; Farm Bureau is seeking a veto.

H-2A Program Regulation:

SB 1102, (Bill Monning, D) will require farm employers of H-2A employees to make extensive, duplicative disclosures to H-2A employees that are already made through the operation of existing state laws (which protect H-2A employees equally with domestic farm employees) and federal H-2A program requirements for disclosure of terms of employers' contracts with H-2A employees. SB 1102 also misstates the required disclosure about compensability of transportation time to affect that all transportation time is compensable; in fact, such time is only compensable if use of company transportation is mandatory. The bill also misstates California law to the effect that employer-provided housing is occupied by employees under California tenancy laws, when in fact such housing is occupied in the course

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of and for the duration of employment. For these reasons, Farm Bureau opposes SB 1102, and is seeking Governor Newsom's veto.

AB 107, (Committee on the Budget) restricts availability of state-support farmworker housing for employees of any employer of H-2A workers, making such housing unavailable to them. Given the shortage of housing of all kinds in California, including housing for farm employees, CFBF opposed AB 107.

Workers Compensation:

SB 1159, (Jerry Hill, D) was the principal COVID-19-related workers' compensation vehicle under consideration in the final days of the 2020 legislative session. In its final form, SB 1159 provides a conclusive presumption of work-relatedness for certain first responders and health care providers and an "outbreak-based" rebuttable presumption of work-relatedness for other employees who's COVID-19 may be work-related. The outbreak-based rebuttable presumption of work-relatedness applies to employers of fewer than 100 employees whose employees experience 4 instances of COVID-19; employees of employers of 100 or more would be subject to the rebuttable presumption if 4% of the workforce experiences COVID-19 infection; in both cases, the infection need not be demonstrably work-related. Governor Newsom is expected to sign AB 1159.

AB 196, (Lorena Gonzalez, D) would have created a rebuttable presumption of work-relatedness for COVID-19 infections occurring among essential industry workers after March 19, 2020. Farm Bureau and a broad coalition of employer groups opposed AB 196 due to massive workers comp costs it would impose. AB 196 was not taken up for third reading in the Senate and died with Sine Die adjournment.

Job-Protected Leaves:

SB 1383, (Jackson, Hannah-Beth - D) boot-strapped the COVID-19 crisis by permanently expanding child- and school-related leaves specified in the Labor Code Sec. 230.8 from employers of 25 or more to employers of five or more; vastly expands the reasons for which Sec. 230.8 leave must be offered to cover a variety of other problems including natural disasters, removes the 40-hour cap on Section 230.8 leaves, and adds a private right of action for violations, exposing very small

agricultural employers to litigation liability for even unintentional violations. Farm Bureau opposed SB 1383 because it will greatly increase legal exposure and administrative difficulties for very small agricultural employers associated with these leaves in conjunction with job-protected leaves for family, medical and other reasons. Employers, particularly small employers, already struggle to manage this panoply of leaves without inadvertently violating the law. SB 1383 passed the Assembly initially with 41 votes; five others "added-on" after it became clear it would pass; similarly, SB 1383 passed the Senate by a single vote. Farm Bureau is seeking an unlikely veto from Governor Newsom; SB 1383 has been a priority of the Governor since it was the subject of a deal struck by the Governor and legislative leaders in February.

AB 1867, (Committee on the Budget) codifies the paid sick leave program for food sector employees that was created by Governor Newsom's April Executive Order N-51-20. The leave mandate would end on Dec. 31, 2020 or upon expiration of the federal leave mandate in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

Unemployment Insurance: AB 1066, (Gonzalez, Lorena-D) provides that unemployment insurance claimants will be entitled to maximum benefits payable if the employer fails within 10 days to furnish earnings records for that employee and would entitle all future claimants employed by that employer to maximum benefits.

Farm Bureau opposes AB 1066 because it imposes an unreasonably short reporting requirement on employers who are likely coping with multiple information requests from numerous government agencies and seeks the Governor's veto.

Packaging

Thanks to the large amount of opposition voiced by Farm Bureau members and the agricultural community, in general, two significant packaging bills, AB 1080, (Lorena Gonzalez-D) and SB 54, (Ben Allen, D) were defeated in the final minutes of the Legislative session. These bills would have required that all single use plastic products (including things like film packaging, plastic bags, etc.) be reusable, recyclable or compostable or not be used in California. Farm Bureau expressed that this material plays an important role in extending shelf life, thereby reducing food waste and ensuring safety of perishable food products. It is likely these bills, in some

form, will be reintroduced in the 2021-2022 legislative session. A heartfelt thank you to all members and leaders

who participated in this important

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Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council

Annual Meeting & Outreach Event "Fire as a Tool"



California is in the midst of another mega wildfire season. Firefighters and other first responders are working across the state to protect homes, lives and landscapes. The legislature is considering both current and future options to help protect California's future. Prescribed fire is one of those tools. Please join the Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council for the 2020 Annual Meeting and Outreach, "Fire as a Tool," scheduled on Zoom on October 22, 2020 from 10:30-2:30.

- The morning session (10:30-12:00) will introduce council business and provide regional updates in the areas of education, policy updates and cooperative burning initiatives.
- During lunch (12:00-1:00), participants will be able to participate in a variety of virtual field day events: see updates from agencies in the southern Sierra and join a series of prescribed burns from the comfort of your home.
- The afternoon session (1:00-2:30) will offer a moderated session from experts in a variety of fields to discuss the increased use of prescribed fire as a tool across different landscapes in the Southern Sierra as well as a demonstration activity for teaching fire ecology to kids.

All three sessions are open to any interested individuals. Whether you are an agency stakeholder, a collaborating partner, a teacher who wants to include fire ecology lessons in your curriculum, or just a curious person, there will be opportunities for all. The cost is free, but registration is required. Join us for one or all the sessions on October 22.

On-Line
Thursday, October 22, 2020
10:30 am - 2:30 pm
Registration is Required
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Workshops are funded in part by [California Climate Investments](#), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities.





2020 CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FARM DOG CONTEST

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To recognize dogs that work alongside California farmers and ranchers, the California Farm Bureau Federation has launched its first Farm Dog Contest.

Open to Farm Bureau members in California, with support from Nationwide, the contest asks farmers and ranchers to submit a brief story about their dog, plus up to four accompanying photos.

The Grand Prize winner in the contest will earn \$1,000. A First Place winner receives \$500; there is also a \$250 award for Second Place and \$100 prize for Third Place.

In the story submitted with the entry, farmers and ranchers have an opportunity to describe how their dog enriches their lives while supporting them in doing their jobs. Entrants can list any special skills their dog has, tricks it can perform as well as non-farm-work activities the dog and its owners enjoy.

The California Farm Dog Contest opened in mid-August. Entries are due Oct. 16. For full contest information, see www.cfbf.com/farmdogcontest.

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debate.

Pesticides

AB 1788, (Richard Bloom, D) will prohibit the use of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) in wildlife habitat areas and other areas of the state, unless and until the Department of Pesticide Regulation completes a reevaluation of it and the Department adopts restrictions necessary to limit significant adverse effects to nontarget wildlife. Farm Bureau worked over several years to secure an exemption for agricultural production sites, including fields, processing facilities, waste storage facilities, etc. The bill passed the Legislature and has been sent to Governor Newsom for his signature or veto.

Friday Review readers may remember, SB 86, (Elena Durazo-D), a bill which would require the Department of Pesticide Regulation and associated County Agricultural Commissioners to submit quarterly, rather than annual, reports on the amount of granular chlorpyrifos

used in California per county. The bill also contains legislative findings that mistakenly proposed granular chlorpyrifos has harmful effects on the public and sensitive groups. Farm Bureau has opposed this measure. The bill passed the Legislature and has been sent to the Governor for his signature or veto. Farm Bureau will be joining other agricultural groups to request a veto.

The Department of Pesticide Regulation's has released its 2021 Research Grants Program solicitation seeking applications. DPR has \$500,000 available to fund projects that develop integrated pest management practices and systems to reduce the impacts on public health and the environment of pesticides of high regulatory concern and/or are considered to be high-risk. Applying is a two-step process, with the Concept Application period followed by the Proposal Application period. More details on the specifics of applying may be found here. Concept Applications will be accepted until October 9th, 2020 at 5:00 pm PST. Please direct any questions to Jordan.Weibel@cdpr.ca.gov.

Taxation

SB 956, (Hannah Beth Jackson, D) failed to meet the policy committee deadline and died without a hearing in the Assembly. SB 956 would have created a tax expenditure review board to evaluate the effectiveness of various tax incentives. Arguably, SB 956 was an effort to ultimately eliminate various tax credits and have the money diverted from supporting California industries to other purposes. For California's farmers and ranchers specifically, the partial sales tax exemption for agricultural related equipment and machinery would have been one of the many programs that could have faced elimination. SB 956 was another effort by the California Teachers Association (CTA) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to increase taxes on businesses in the state.

AB 1253, (Miguel Santiago, D) failed to meet the policy committee deadline and died without a vote in the Senate Governance and Finance Committee. AB 1253 would have, retroactively, increased taxes on sole proprietors and "high-income earners" by imposing a personal income tax surcharge at varying rates. Retroactive to January 1, 2020, the surcharge would have been imposed at the following rates in addition to California's existing highest-in-the-nation income tax:

- 1 percent on taxable income over \$1 million but under \$2 million.
- 3 percent on taxable income over \$2 million but under \$5 million.
- 3.5 percent on taxable income over \$5 million.

Water

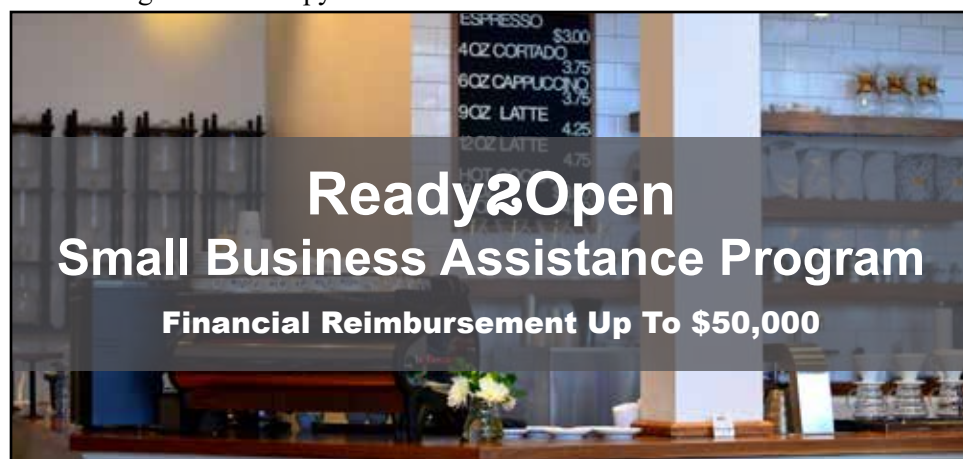
A measure that was gutted and amended last week to include a provision authorizing the Attorney General to bring a civil action, under his/her own authority, for water-polluting acts failed to move out of the Senate and is now DEAD. AB 6, (Eloise Gómez Reyes, D) would have authorized the Attorney General to bring a civil action under their own authority in the name of the people of the State of California and specified the Attorney General should notify the Department of Fish and Wildlife. This same language was amended out of AB 3364 a couple weeks ago two weeks ago to move the bill out of the Judiciary Committee. Existing law only authorizes the Attorney General action upon receipt of a complaint. Additionally, significant new authority for the Attorney General was amended into the measure last week regarding opioid settlements without a policy committee hearing. The measure was

heard in the Senate Budget Committee this week without a vote before being sent to the Senate Floor for a vote. This bill would have declared that it is to take effect immediately as a bill providing for appropriations related to the Budget Bill. The measure was not heard before time ran out at midnight on Monday, the end of this Legislative Session. Farm Bureau and a significant coalition, including many local government representatives vigorously opposes the measure and these late amendments.

A measure that would provide grant funding for repairs on the Friant-Kern Canal, SB 559, (Melissa Hurtado, D), passed the Senate 38-2 on concurrence with Assembly amendments. The measure was amended last week to provide a share of the project cost to restore the capacity of the Friant-Kern Canal after subsidence has severely diminished its capacity. If signed by the Governor the bill will require the Department of Water Resources to report to the Legislature, no later than March 31st next year, on federal funding approved by the United States Congress in its 2021 Congressional Budget Resolution and related appropriations bills to restore the capacity of the Friant-Kern Canal. The bill will also require the department to include in its report a proposal for the state to pay a share of the project cost, not to exceed 35%, and how the money will be spent. Farm Bureau supports the measure.

Wildfire

SB 1348, (Henry Stern, D) would have made numerous changes to enhance fire prevention efforts through improved vegetation management and expand fire safety building standards. Previous iterations of SB 1348 would have created new regulatory burdens on private landowners, failed to adequately protect private property rights, and failed to provide necessary structure to a program that was designed to augment the defensible space inspection and education resources of CALFIRE. Despite these numerous challenges, Farm Bureau worked with the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and Senator Stern to improve the legislation and advance it for the future protection of California communities, homes and businesses. While Farm Bureau was Neutral on the legislation it is clear that wildfire and land management protection is still a priority for the California Legislature. Unfortunately, SB 1348 did not advance beyond the Assembly and failed without a vote.



Merced County through its Ready2Open Small Business Assistance Program can provide local small businesses that have experienced a loss of revenue due to COVID-19 with financial assistance. This program provides up to \$50,000 in grant funding to businesses with 25 or fewer employees for the reimbursement of eligible COVID-19 related operating expenses and to cover expenses incurred due to implementing COVID-19 health and safety measures.

Funding may be used to cover eligible business expenses incurred between March 19, 2020 through the date the application is submitted. Eligible expenses include certain payroll costs, rent/lease costs, and inventory or supplies required to safely operate the business. Applications will be accepted beginning August 17, 2020 through September 20, 2020.

For eligibility requirements and to apply for the Ready2Open Small Business Assistance Program, please visit our website at www.reopenmercedcounty.com for more information.





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, Coldwell Banker.... 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
Del Rio Nut..... 394-7945
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

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Minturn Huller Co-op..... (559) 665-1185
Parreira Almond Processing Co..... 826-1262
Sensient Natural Ingredients (800) 558-9892
Yosemite Farms..... 383-3411

HARVESTING & HAULING

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

IRRIGATION, WELLS, & SEPTIC

Allison Sierra, Inc. 966-4082
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

Common Sense



from the
**Mariposa
CFB**
Danette Toso

“Common sense is in spite of, not the result of, education.”— Victor Hugo

The country has listened repeatedly to countless health experts with very similar opinions regarding the China Virus. The World Health Organization states that “Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness

and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently and not touching your face.” Personally, if I become ill, this is basically the protocol I’ve used all of my life, it’s common sense.

Mariposa County is not only rich in agriculture, but we rely heavily on our tourist trade. Our county has been brought to its knees the last few years with devastating wildfires which obviously is detrimental to both industries. The mandatory closure of businesses in our county has left owners reeling and wringing their hands. I recently attended a meeting with local restaurant owners and many stated that if they could not get back to business as usual immediately, they would be out of business by the end of this month. Our local salons and shops are obviously suffering

tremendously as well. Our county has had an extremely low infection rate. According to the CDC, as of September 4, 2020, Mariposa County has had 71 confirmed cases of the virus and 2 deaths.

These small businesses have been generous supporters of the Mariposa Farm Bureau for many years. Without the support of these businesses and the inability to hold fundraisers..... well, you get the picture. As you can imagine, the agricultural youth programs that we hold near and dear are extremely hard to finance this year. We have tightened our belt past the last notch just like so many others. With

the cancellation of the Mariposa Fair, the 4-H and FFA members have been scrambling to find alternate avenues to sell their project animals. One thing is for sure, Mariposa County will not let these kids down. There will be a virtual auction and add on bids are exceedingly welcome, even after the sale is over.

As always, I encourage farmers and ranchers to invite friends, neighbors, and family members to join the collective voice of the Farm Bureau. Together, using our common sense, we can make our organization and the Mariposa community stronger than ever, one member at a time.



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AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES			HARDWARE STORES		REAL ESTATE	
Gallaway Feed and Supply.....	374-3331		Coast Hardware.....	966-2527	Cathey's Valley Real Estate.....	742-2121
Mariposa Feed & Supply.....	966-3326		Foster Ace Hardware	966-2692		
Bootjack Equipment Rental & Feed.	966-3545					
ASSOCIATIONS			MEDICAL		SERVICES	
35-A District Agriculture Assn.....	966-2432		Mariposa Physical Therapy.....	742-7242	Chases Foothill Petroleun.....	966-3314
Mariposa Chamber of Commerce....	966-2456				Edward Lien & Toso Ag Appraisers...	634-9484
Mariposa County Farm Advisor	966-2417		MISCELLANEOUS		Palmer Tractor	374-3470
Mariposa County Farm Bureau	742-5875		Allison Sierra Inc	966-4082	Ranch Fence, Inc.....	966-5914
			Happy Burger Diner	966-2719	Valley Pacific Petroleum.....	948-9412
CONSTRUCTION			Mariposa Friends of the		Yosemite Glass & Window Inc.	966-3292
Bucks Construction	878-3702		Fairgrounds Foundation.....	742-4680		
Tobey Guenthart Construction	374-3334		Hugh A. Yamshon Ranch			
FINANCIAL SERVICES			Mariposa Gun Works	742-5444		
Inter-County Title Company.....	966-3653		Miners Roadhouse 14	966-2444		
Yosemite Bank.....	966-5444		Pony Expresso	966-5053		

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Agri-Valley Irrigation Co.	384-8494	Kellogg's Supply	722-1501
Kirby Manufacturing	723-0778		

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 NO ON PROP 15

SAY NO TO PROP 15 - THE \$11.5 BILLION-A-YEAR PROPERTY TAX HIKE

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Prop 15 will remove Prop 13’s protections for California farmers, triggering higher property taxes for agriculture-related improvements:



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DAIRIES



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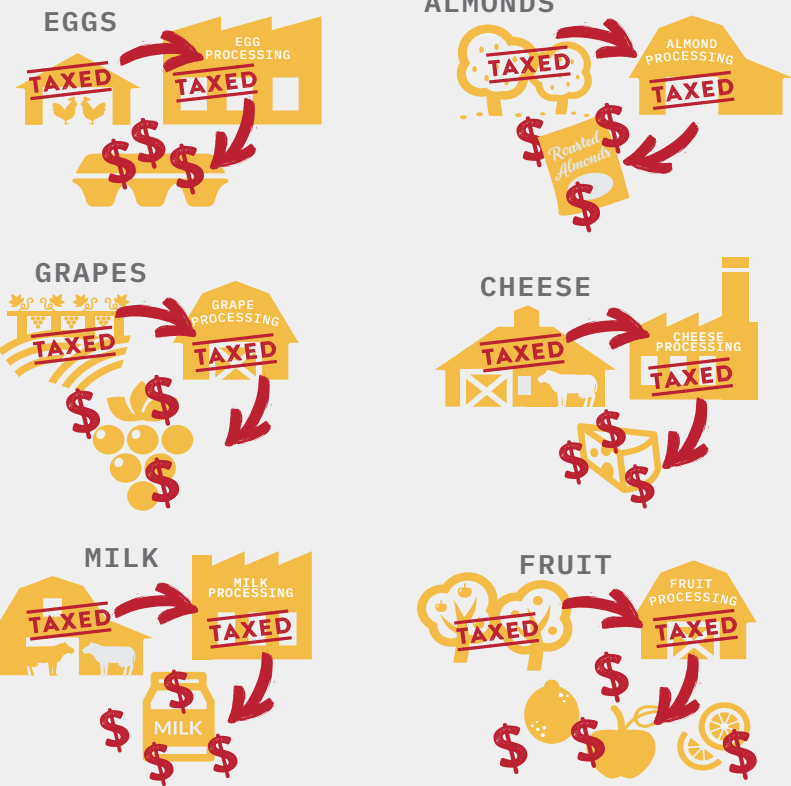
Prop 15 will drive the cost of living even higher and make everything we buy more expensive.

WHAT DOES THIS TAX HIKE MEAN FOR YOUR FOOD?

Most food items will face higher property taxes not just once, but several times, as they travel from the farm to processing, packaging, distribution, and the grocery store!

WHAT DOES PROP 15 MEAN FOR YOUR GROCERY BILL?

HIGHER COSTS FOR FOOD!



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