

Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.
A private, nonprofit organization serving farmers throughout Riverside County since 1917

Our 77th Year of Publication: Volume LXXVII, Number 3, March 2023.



"Microgreens" Photo by Monika Grabkowska on unsplash.com

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(USPS 466-900) Published monthly by Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc., a non-profit organization serving farmers and ranchers at 21160 Box Springs Road, #102, Moreno Valley, California 92557, Telephone 951/684-6732. Subscriptions: \$1 per year of membership dues. Periodicals postage paid at Riverside, California 92507, under act of March 3, 1887. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to RIVERSIDE COUNTY FARM BUREAU, 21160 Box Springs Rd., #102, Moreno Valley, CA 92557. For advertising information, Telephone: (951)684-6732 - Printed by Layton Printing, La Verne, California.

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Welcome New Members

We would like to "Thank You" for becoming part of the Farm Bureau Family.

SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

CARL MOYER

2023 PROGRAM

Financial Incentives for Purchasing Zero-Emission and Low-Emission Heavy-Duty Vehicles, Engines and Equipment

Application Deadline
May 9, 2023 11:59 PM

TO APPLY ONLINE,
PLEASE VISIT
www.aqmd.gov/moyer

2023 Funding Available

\$51 Million

Approximate funding available for 2023 to support projects within South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction

Funding categories include:

- On-Road Heavy-Duty Vehicles, including transit fleet vehicles, drayage trucks, transportation refrigeration units (TRUs), solid waste vehicles, public agency/utility vehicles and emergency vehicles (fire apparatus)
- Off-Road Equipment, including:
 - Marine Engine Repowers & Retrofits
 - Ship-Side Shore Power (if project is not subject to CARB's At-Berth Regulation)
 - Construction Equipment
 - Agricultural Mobile Equipment (loaders, tractors, water pulls, etc.)
 - Locomotive
 - Cargo Handling Equipment
- Infrastructure to fuel or power a zero or near zero emission, heavy-duty vehicle or equipment, including but not limited to: on-road heavy-duty vehicles, cargo handling equipment, and marine vessels (shore power).

The application deadline is 11:59 pm PST on Tuesday, May 9, 2023. All applications must be received electronically through the Carl Moyer Program Grant Management System (GMS) no later than the application deadline. For assistance, South Coast AQMD staff are able to answer questions during our normal business hours Tuesday through Friday (7:30 PM to 5:00 PM) at (909) 396-2000. For more information visit www.aqmd.gov/moyer

Carl Moyer Program General Workshops

Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

South Coast AQMD Headquarters, Conference Room CC6

21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765

EMWD Secures \$4.5M in Federal Funding for Desalination Program

Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) this week received a multi-million dollar funding commitment from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) to construct infrastructure to support EMWD's groundwater desalination program.

The Army Corps Fiscal Year 2023 workplan included \$4.5 million for Phase 2 of the Valley Boulevard and Murrieta Road pipeline project in Menifee. The pipeline will deliver untreated water to EMWD's desalination facility.

Of the 13 non-earmark projects listed in the workplan, EMWD received the single-highest funding amount nationally. The Army Corps has been a longstanding funding, technical and strategic partner in helping EMWD to develop a nationally recognized groundwater desalination program that includes wells, pipelines and three desalination facilities.

EMWD's desalination program provides enough water for more than 30,000 households annually while helping to remove more than 50,000 tons of salts from the groundwater basin each year.

EMWD received broad support for its application for funding from all its entire Congressional Delegation, including from Reps. Ken Calvert, Mark Takano, Darrell Issa, and Raul Ruiz who conveyed their support of this project directly to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"EMWD appreciates the continued support and partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, which has been a longstanding and valued partner in the success of our desalination program," EMWD Board President Phil Paule said. "We also wish to thank our Congressional Delegation, whose emphatic support was incredibly valuable in helping to advance this funding request."

California Farm Bureau reacts to groundwater decisions

California Farm Bureau President Jamie Johansson today responded to the California Department of Water Resources announcement on sustainability plans for the state's groundwater basins.

The agency recommended approval of plans for six California groundwater subbasins. It declared six other plans to be "inadequate," which will result in a review by the State Water Resources Control Board.

"This action will trigger a process before the water board that will afford local agencies additional opportunities to address identified problems, regain control of their basins and, hopefully, avoid formal probationary status or the imposition of eventual state interim plans," Johansson said.

"Passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in the 2014 drought year was a seismic shift in California water," he said. "It was never going to be easy to transition on a timeline of just 20 years to eliminate an estimated 2.5 million acre-feet of overdraft a year in our most impacted areas of the state. Historic droughts in recent years have also shown us that we can't simply continue as we have been—and that California must also invest in a more resilient, 21st-century water system."

Johansson added, "California Farm Bureau will work with state and local agencies, our county Farm Bureaus and our agricultural groundwater users on workable solutions to sustain healthy aquifers. Our groundwater supplies are critical for California farmers, including vegetable, fruit, nut and dairy producers who account for much of America's food supply. It is important that California carefully consider solutions that protect both our aquifers and our food production."

The California Farm Bureau works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of nearly 29,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of 5.3 million Farm Bureau members.



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From the Fields - RCFB Director Celeste Alonzo

Courtesy of California Farm Bureau Federation



We finished our fall season at the end of November, early December. We then got the ground ready and planted corn in January. We're hoping to have our corn ready in time to sell at the Stagecoach (Festival) in Coachella in April. It's been really nice to have so many repeat customers. Even after last year, even after COVID, they still look for us.

We planted less corn due to cost. We're still trying to recover from COVID, which put a big dent into things. I'm working on supplying more local corn to vendors or restaurants here in the valley just to do more farm-to-table. We have a 120-acre ranch that's just bell peppers and corn. A lot of restaurants are doing cowboy caviar, so that is my goal with the bell peppers and corn.

I do feel sorry for the consumers because everything is so expensive. We have definitely seen the diesel increases, and the cost of fertilizer has been insane; it has gone through the roof and tripled, quadrupled.

To apply materials on our corn in Mexico, we purchased a drone. Now that I'm taking on more leadership in the company, I'm trying to aim more for new technology to help our business grow. I am working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to improve our farming practices. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, they will pay for some of the practices that we are already doing, so that will help offset some of our costs.

Water is still available. Working with USDA has helped us a lot to improve water conservation management. All our fields are on drip, which is saving us money. We haven't had any water cuts yet, but the water district is letting us know it is working to fallow more fields for three to five years. They are coming up with a program to encourage people to fallow.

Celebrating National Ag Week 2023

Wilson Creek Winery & Vineyards

Saturday, April 13, 2023

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



- Special guest, CFAITC's Outstanding Educator, Carrie Robertson.
- Imagine this... Story Contest student author to read their winning story.
- Winery Tour and Luncheon in the Gazebo • Silent Auction

To Register <https://learnaboutag.org/specialevents/>

35960 Rancho California Rd
Temecula, CA 92591

Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival 2023 Jr. Livestock Auction



Photo L to R: Duane Young and RCFB President Richard Schmid

On Saturday, February 25th, President Richard Schmid participated as an auction buyer at the Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival Junior Livestock Auction on behalf of Riverside County Farm Bureau and the members that donate to our Auction Support Fund.

With two winning bids, the animals purchased were lambs on the “Buy Back” program, as well as several hundred dollars going towards student add-ons, this financial support helps all the students’ projects.

Students of 4-H, FFA, Grange, and Independent Exhibitors roughly spend 3-9 months and countless hours raising and caring for their livestock projects learning the benefits of experience, responsibility and dedication as well as animal care and entrepreneurialism. They keep records and gain an understanding of the costs and challenges of producing food along with time management. During fair time, they will show and sell their market animals to the highest bidder allowing these students to use their proceeds to start another animal project or save for college.

The Riverside County Farm Bureau believes that successful auctions will encourage students to continue their interest in agriculture as well as reinforce their future aspirations.

Each year the Riverside County Farm Bureau participates as an auction buyer to support the students at both the Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival in February and the Southern California Fair in October. Since the inception of our Junior Livestock Auction Support Fund, Riverside County Farm Bureau has contributed over \$100,000 towards the purchase of student animals, including \$24,000 from member donations alone. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation for the gracious donations and say “Thank You” to all of you for your continued support.

Would you be willing to join us by donating to the Auction Support Fund? Any amount is key to helping maintain auction prices and benefit agricultural students. All donations made are towards the purchase of animals at the Junior Livestock Auctions.

If you wish to contribute to the Auction Support Fund, please make your check payable to Farm Bureau and mail it to Auction Support Fund, Riverside County Farm Bureau, 21160 Box Springs Road, #102, Moreno Valley, California 92557.

**Donations are not tax deductible as charitable contributions but may be deductible as ordinary business expenses; consult your tax preparer.*

All photos provided by Janell Percy.



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GROWMARK Offers 55 Scholarships Valued at \$2,000 Each

GROWMARK, Inc. announces a revamped scholarship program for 2023. The GROWMARK Foundation will provide 55 scholarships of \$2,000 each to students pursuing agriculture and business-related degrees or certificates at colleges, universities, and technical schools in the United States and Ontario, Canada.

“GROWMARK and the FS member cooperatives are strong supporters of youth leadership education, and this is one more way we can contribute to the future of agriculture,” says Amy Bradford, GROWMARK corporate communications manager and GROWMARK Foundation manager.

At the time of application, students must be high school seniors or the equivalent of and enrolled in a university, community college, or technical school for fall 2023, or continuing students enrolled in good standing at a university, community college, or technical school. Scholarships will be scored by a committee comprised of industry professionals outside of the GROWMARK System.



The 2023 GROWMARK Foundation Scholarship Application is available on line at www.growmark.com, click the Careers button, then click the Students dropdown button and there you will click onto the Scholarships and Funding button. The application deadline is May 12, 2023.

Over the last year, GROWMARK has contributed almost \$1 million to community initiatives through its charitable organization, The GROWMARK Foundation. These funds have supported more than \$200,000 in scholarships, \$400,000 in matching funding to ag initiatives across North America, and more than \$70,000 to Ag in the Classroom programs.



Resources to resolve tense situations and difficult conversations ~ Podcast

Ever had a conversation that didn't go well, and afterward, you replayed all the ways it could have gone better? Let's face it; we've all been there.

If you want to feel better when you walk away from a difficult conversation, check out this podcast episode from Progressive Dairy. The tips apply to all types of farmers (and non-farmers too).

Host Kimmi Devaney is joined by two agricultural mediators to discuss a resource that can help you resolve some of the tense situations and difficult conversations that inevitably come up while managing a business, especially one with your family.

Listen at www.bit.ly/podcastconversations or search for "Progressive Dairy Podcast" wherever you listen to podcasts. It's the Jan. 31 episode called "Resources to resolve tense situations and difficult conversations."

Need help navigating your specific challenges with a difficult conversation or topic?

You can set up a free call with the California Agricultural Mediation Program to learn more about mediation and how agricultural mediators can help you create the solutions you desire.

Fill out this 'request for mediation' form to schedule (scroll to the bottom of the web page). Or visit www.CALAMP.org. Services are confidential and free to farmers.

California Agricultural Mediation Program



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Reasons to Mediate:

- ✓ Tailored Solutions
- ✓ Voluntary
- ✓ You Control the Outcome
- ✓ Confidential

What Types of Issues Can Be Mediated?

- ✓ Farm Loans / Credit Problems
- ✓ Leases
- ✓ Farmer-Neighbor Conflicts
- ✓ Family Farm Transitions
- ✓ Organic Certification
- ✓ USDA Adverse Decisions

www.CALAMP.org

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- ✓ Explore Options
- ✓ Draft Agreements



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DRE #00957590
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PAULA TURNER
DRE #00702492
paula@dppllc.com
Direct: 760.766.0511
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



📅 April 12, 2023 ~ 5:30 PM, Riverside County Farm Bureau Board of Directors meeting. In person at Russo's Italian Kitchen in Banning and via Zoom Conference. Please call our office at (951) 684-6732 for more information.

Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

Tens of thousands gather at ag festival, check out new technology

Despite chilly temperatures, tens of thousands of visitors turned out for the Feb. 13-15 World Ag Expo, California's largest and most famous farm show. The event is renowned for its annual announcement of its top 10 new products for agriculture. This year, those products included flying fruit-picking autonomous robots, as well as technology to reduce off-target farm spraying. Other innovations included a mobile app for seeding efficiency and smart-irrigation water delivery systems.

Despite challenging times, almond farmers aren't skimping on bees

California almond growers are keeping up with pollinating their trees this season. After a bruising year of lower earnings, crop losses and soaring production costs for growers, there still appears to be plenty of work for beekeepers, who rent their hives to pollinate crops and whose insects rely on blossoming almond trees as a source of pollen to build their colonies. State almond acreage is down for the first time in 25 years. But beekeepers say a surplus of bees at the season's start has evaporated and demand for bees is robust again.

Low yields for winegrapes revealed in Preliminary Grape Crush Report

California winegrape growers last year harvested their smallest crop of any year within the past decade. That's according to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Preliminary Grape Crush Report, an annual benchmark for the winegrape and bulk wine sector. The third-consecutive low-harvest year isn't necessarily bad news. Demand for wine has stagnated in recent years, and the smaller-than-average yields have helped keep inventory low and prices high.

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