



Riverside County AGRICULTURE

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

Our 78th Year of Publication: Volume LXXVIII, Number 9, September 2024.

Save the Date



Come celebrate with the
Riverside County Farm Bureau

107th Annual Dinner Meeting

November 10, 2024 🍷 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Desert Falls Country Club
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The cost of the Dinner is \$85.00 Per Person

For reservations, please call the Riverside County Farm Bureau at (951) 684-6732.
There will be a No-Host Bar that accepts cash only.

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Welcome New Members

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

**Farm Bureau Mourns the Loss of
Carl Garczynski, the "Farmer's Weatherman"
June 28, 1936 - August 25, 2024**

It is with heavy hearts that Farm Bureau announces the passing of Carl Garczynski, affectionately known as the "farmer's weatherman." For many years, Carl provided indispensable weather insights to the farming community, helping countless farmers navigate the unpredictable elements. His deep understanding of weather patterns and agricultural needs, combined with his approachable and down-to-earth nature, made him a beloved figure in both local and farming circles.



Beyond his professional expertise, Carl was known for his love of life, adventure, and his remarkable brilliance. He lived life to the fullest, embracing every opportunity with enthusiasm and curiosity. Farm Bureau was honored to sponsor Carl on his once-in-a-lifetime journey to Mt. Everest in 1992, a testament to his adventurous spirit. That trip marked one of the many ways

Carl sought to push boundaries and explore the world in his unique way.

Carl will be deeply missed by all who knew him. His legacy will live on in the hearts of the farming community and beyond, as a man who not only forecasted the weather but brought warmth, wisdom, and a sense of adventure to all those around him. Farm Bureau extends its deepest condolences to Carl's family and friends during this difficult time. Carl's obituary can be found in the Desert Sun. <https://www.desertsun.com/obituaries>



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Coachella Harvest Replenishes Date Supply as Sector Recovers

Original Article by Caleb Hampton, CAFB Assistant Editor of Ag Alert, September 18, 2024



After last year's crop disaster, fresh California dates are making a comeback on store shelves this month. Farms in the Coachella Valley, the primary region for U.S.-produced dates, have started harvesting Medjool dates, with other varieties being harvested from July through November. Typically, dates are stored in cold facilities and sold year-round, but Tropical Storm Hilary severely impacted last year's crop, leading to an early depletion of supplies.

Dates, originally cultivated in the Coachella Valley from seeds sourced from North Africa and the Middle East, thrive in arid climates but are sensitive to moisture. Rain during

the harvest can cause mold and fermentation. From 2021 to 2023, California's date production dropped from 53,200 tons to 35,300 tons, with the total value decreasing from \$161 million to \$92 million, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The cultivation process is labor-intensive. Each spring, farmers manually pollinate date palms, thin the clusters, and cover them with protective bags. Workers hand-pick the dates from trees that can reach up to 75 feet, often working at night to avoid the daytime heat. This makes date cultivation costly, and California producers face competition from imports from countries like Mexico, Tunisia, and Algeria.

Date shippers are eager to bring the new crop to market, while growers are anxious to see if the fruit's absence has led to a loss of buyers. Despite recent challenges, California's planted date acreage increased from 8,200 acres in 2013 to 12,000 acres in 2022. Consumer demand for dates in the U.S. has risen, driven by the popularity of date paste in energy bars and growing awareness of the fruit's nutritional benefits. Dates are rich in fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants, have a low glycemic index, and serve as an effective binding agent in manufactured foods.

Companies like Clif Bar and RX Bar have incorporated processed dates into their products, initially boosting demand for California dates. However, this trend waned as companies transitioned to more affordable imports. Most dates are currently sold as whole fruit.

In recent months of short supply, strong demand has allowed Coachella Valley growers to slightly increase prices for mail orders, farmers markets, and other direct-to-consumer channels. However, prices paid by packers and major retailers have remained comparable to previous years due to advance contracts.

This summary reflects the key points of the original article. For the full article, please visit <https://www.agalert.com/>.

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2024 General Election • Tuesday, November 5

The California Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors adopted the following recommendations on statewide ballot measures that will be before California voters in the Nov. 5 general election.

PROPOSITION	POSITION
<p>PROPOSITION 2: Issue \$10 Billion in Bonds to Fund Construction and Modernization of Public Education Facilities</p> <p>New construction and modernization of education institutions will cost \$8.5 billion for K-12 and \$1.5 billion for community colleges.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p><i>REASONING: California is already paying off billions in bond debt, all at a cost to the general fund to service the debt payments.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 3: Removes Outdated Language Regarding Marriage from State Constitution</p> <p>Repeals the unenforceable constitutional provision that marriage only between a man and woman is valid or recognized in California.</p>	<p>NO POSITION</p> <p><i>REASONING: CAFB does not have policy on this topic.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 4: The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act</p> <p>Allows for the issuance of \$10 billion in bonds to fund safe drinking water; drought, flood, water resilience; wildfire and forest resilience; nature-based climate solutions; climate-smart, park creation and outdoor access; and clean air programs among other programs. Allows for funding to be shifted from the state budget to bonds for ongoing programs.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p><i>REASONING: Shifting government program costs from general tax revenues to additional public indebtedness through bond issuance to mitigate budget shortfalls is bad fiscal policy.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 5: Lower Supermajority Requirement to 55% for Local Bond Measures to Fund Housing and Public Infrastructure</p> <p>Amends the constitution to lower the threshold from 2/3 vote to 55% to allow a local government to impose a parcel tax for the purpose of issuing bonds to build or rehabilitate public infrastructure and affordable housing, including downpayment assistance, or permanent supportive housing.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p><i>REASONING: The 2/3 vote for taxes and fees is paramount and should not be weakened.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 6: Amend the California Constitution to Bar Involuntary Servitude in Correctional Facilities</p> <p>Removes a constitutional provision allowing jails and prisons to impose involuntary servitude as criminal punishment. It prohibits the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation from disciplining inmates for refusing work assignments while allowing inmates to voluntarily accept work assignments for credits to reduce their sentences.</p>	<p>NO POSITION</p> <p><i>REASONING: CAFB does not have policy on this topic.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 32: \$18 Minimum Wage Increase</p> <p>Increases the minimum wage from \$16 per hour to \$18 per hour by January 1, 2025.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p><i>REASONING: California is already a difficult and costly state to do business in without an increasing minimum wage.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 33: State Limitations on Local Rent Control</p> <p>Allows a city or county to enact rent control by repealing the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p><i>REASONING: Private property rights are paramount.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 34: Restrictions on AIDS Healthcare Foundation Support</p> <p>Ensures that health care providers spend 98% of revenues on direct patient care if their spending on items other than patient care exceeds \$100 million over 10 years.</p>	<p>NO POSITION</p> <p><i>REASONING: CAFB does not have policy on this topic.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 35: Permanent Managed Care Organization (MCO) Tax</p> <p>Makes permanent the existing tax on managed health care insurance plans, currently set to expire in 2026. The revenue generated pays for health care services for low-income families with children, seniors, disabled persons and other Medi-Cal recipients.</p>	<p>NO POSITION</p> <p><i>REASONING: CAFB does not have policy on this topic.</i></p>
<p>PROPOSITION 36: Drug and Theft Crime Penalties and Treatment-Mandated Felonies</p> <p>Allows for felony charges and increases sentences for certain drug and theft crimes, including organized theft.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p><i>REASONING: Law enforcement should have all the tools necessary to prevent crime from occurring.</i></p>

www.cfbf.com/ag-advocacy/farm-team

FARM BUREAU AT WORK

State Legislative and Government Affairs Updates

CATTLE

Inspection Fees. AB-2436 (Alanis -R) would adjust the statutory fees payable to the Bureau for inspections of live cattle through brand registration fees, and cattle, hide, and carcass inspection fees. AB-2436 passed the Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature. California Cattlemen's Association, California Farm Bureau, and Western United Dairy led the efforts to pass this legislation. Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

INSURANCE

USDA Announces New Fire Insurance Protection – Smoke Endorsement for California Grapes USDA has recently introduced the Fire Insurance Protection-Smoke Index (FIP-SI) endorsement for grapes in California, effective for the 2025 crop year. This new option, offered by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), is available for grapes insured under the Grape Crop Provisions in specified California counties. The deadline for applying is January 31, 2025. The endorsement helps cover part of the deductible on Grape Crop Provisions policies if the county experiences a certain number of Smoke Events, which are defined by NOAA's Hazard Mapping System Smoke Product. This provides an additional layer of protection against potential smoke damage from wildfires. Producers may not receive indemnity if their county does not meet the Smoke Event criteria, or they may receive indemnity from FIP-SI but not from their standard grape policy. An administrative fee and premium for each grape variety covered by FIP-SI will apply, although the fee may be waived for qualifying limited resource, Beginning, or Veteran Farmers. Staff Contact: Erin Huston; ehuston@cfbf.com

PESTICIDES

Paraquat Cancellation. AB1963 (Connolly D) was amended in the Senate Agriculture Committee. Because of the confusion on how the committee came to their decision, we believed there would be more amendments, but the bottom line is that DPR will have until 2029 to complete their evaluation and while the 2026 cancellation was removed, it still directs the department to complete an evaluation not based on need, but political pressure. The bill was passed by the Legislature, so Farm Bureau will be requesting the governor veto this bill. Staff Contact: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com

TRANSPORTATION

FARMER Program and Carl Moyer Program Open for Comments. The Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER) Program and Carl Moyer Program are undergoing changes. To comment by October 14, 2024, submit your comment electronically at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/farmer-program>, and click onto Public Comment Docket. Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

UPCOMING WEBINAR:

MONARCH BUTTERFLIES AND FARMING

The monarch butterfly is scheduled to be listed as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in December 2024. Farm Bureau, in conjunction with Western Growers, and CAPCA will be hosting a webinar for growers to learn about the forthcoming listing as well as EPA's Workplan to Protect Endangered Species and Threatened Species from Pesticides. **The free webinar will be on October 8, 2024, from 9:00 am to 10:00 am.** Please register here: <https://go.wga.com/esa-listing-monarch-butterflies-new-epa-regulation>. Staff Contact: Kari Fisher, kfisher@cfbf.com



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Hands-on learning, training make irrigation best practices accessible

UCCE advisors provide free training to nursery and greenhouse staff

Working as an irrigator seems straightforward at first: if you're not watering plants by hand, you're building and managing systems that can do the watering. What could be complex about a job like this? University of California Cooperative Extension advisors Bruno Pitton and Gerardo "Gerry" Spinelli can tell you – or better yet, show you.

Pitton and Spinelli, members of the UC Nursery and Floriculture Alliance, offer a one-day technical training in irrigation best-management practices for irrigators working with containerized nursery plants. The comprehensive curriculum – developed with input from two focus groups of California nursery and greenhouse managers – aims to improve irrigation efficiency, reduce water consumption and improve plant health.

Thanks to funding from the California Department of Food and Agriculture, nursery and greenhouse managers in California can request this training for free and advisors like Pitton and Spinelli will travel to conduct the training on-site.

The complexities of irrigation incorporate concepts like evapotranspiration, salinity, irrigation uniformity, capillarity, pressure and flow rate. Spinelli, UCCE production horticulture advisor for San Diego County, said that irrigators have a critical role in the industry because of all the things they must consider to do their job well. "Our goal is to support irrigators and help them become more confident decision-makers and experts in the field," said Pitton, UCCE environmental horticulture advisor for Placer and Nevada counties.

Interactive sessions reveal nuances of irrigation

The training consists of a presentation on fundamental concepts for managing irrigation in container plant production and hands-on demonstrations. "In the nursery industry, where precise irrigation is crucial for the health and productivity of our crops, having access to expert knowledge is invaluable," said Mauricio de Almeida, general manager of Burchell Nursery in Fresno County. "The training's practical demonstrations and real-world examples made the concepts easy to grasp, allowing our team to implement the strategies immediately."

For one of the demonstrations, the advisors used sponges to model soil saturation when water is applied. Ana, an irrigator at Burchell Nursery, appreciated the step-by-step explanations, which helped her better understand how water pressure differs in drip irrigation, sprinklers and watering by hand. Doing this out in the field, as an example of how irrigation audits occur, was extremely helpful for attendees.

Francisco "Frank" Anguiano, production manager of Boething Treeland Farms in Ventura County, observed his team of irrigators as they learned how to measure distribution uniformity with water collected from sprinklers. "This training isn't just about irrigation and plant management. It's also about savings, both water and costs. Who doesn't want to save money and use less water?" Anguiano said.

Reducing the barriers to learning

Many of the irrigators attending these trainings gained their skills and knowledge from life experience rather than a college education, explained Peter van Horenbeeck, vice president of Boething Treeland Farms. "It's important that my irrigators learn from external experts, but it's more important that they can relate to them. And that's what Gerry was able to do," van Horenbeeck added.

Regarding content and delivery, and referencing what he learned from the focus groups, Pitton wanted the trainings to be easy to understand and engaging. For example, scientists use the term "matric potential" to describe how soil particles hold water against gravity, which is the same as capillary rise. "We demonstrate this concept with a paper towel held vertically and dipped into a beaker of dyed water that it absorbs," said Pitton.

Many of the irrigators in attendance agreed that hands-on activities and visual aids were instrumental to their learning. Charli, another irrigator at Burchell Nursery, shared that the in-field examples and hosting the training in Spanish kept them engaged. To address language barriers, Spinelli has been conducting trainings in Spanish – a common request from many nurseries with eager participants.

Maintaining state regulations and partnerships

Although the technical aspects of irrigation management are key elements of the training, regulatory compliance is also addressed. Recognizing the finite availability of water and the environmental impact of pollution, the advisors highlight irrigation and fertilizer management and runoff prevention as critical components of compliance.

Under Ag Order 4.0 administered by California's Water Resources Control Board, growers must comply with stricter policies regulating nitrogen use. As irrigators learn from the training, better control of irrigation can certainly make a difference.

Deanna van Klaveren, chief operating officer and co-owner of Generation Growers in Stanislaus County, said the most valuable aspect of the training was learning on-site and completing an audit on her own systems. "It is so much more impactful to have trainings like this on-site where our staff can learn and then go out into the nursery and actually put it into practice while the presenters/experts are there," van Klaveren said.

Pitton and Spinelli described the partnership between UC Cooperative Extension and CDFA as "symbiotic" given the technical and educational capacity of UCCE advisors who conduct research and extension. "It's a great example of how the two institutions can collaborate successfully. Californians are the ones who win because they get a service for free," added Spinelli. "And it's rewarding for us to see so much interest in what we, as advisors, do."

If you are a nursery or greenhouse operator and would like to request the Irrigation Best Management Practices training, please contact the UCCE advisor assigned to the region that corresponds with your nursery location below.

Southern California - Grant Johnson, UCCE urban agriculture technology advisor, gejohnson@ucanr.edu

Spanish Trainings Only - Gerry Spinelli, UCCE production horticulture advisor, gspinelli@ucanr.edu



Thank You

Your commitment to quality and sustainable growing practices has not gone unnoticed. Thank you for your tireless efforts from planting to harvest. Your passion and dedication are appreciated and helped make the 2024 season a success.



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2024

Train-the-Trainer Refresher

Review required annual training topics for fieldworkers and handlers

Actualización de Entrenamiento

Repasa los requisitos de capacitación anual trabajadores de campo y manipuladores

COST: \$100

Dates/Fechas	English	Español
Oct 15	9 am - 12 pm	1 pm - 4pm
Nov 19	9 am - 12 pm	1 pm - 4pm

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



October 9, 2024 ~ 5:30 PM, Riverside County Farm Bureau Board of Directors meeting. In person at Farm Bureau office and via Zoom Conference. Please call our office at (951) 684-6732 for more information.

Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

Growers seek guidance after ban on herbicide used in vegetable fields

Reacting to the emergency suspension of an herbicide used to control weeds in vegetable crops, farmers and agricultural representatives are asking for more guidance as the sector considers effective alternatives, disposal of existing inventory and potential liability issues. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency acted on Aug. 6 to immediately restrict the use of Dacthal, which is used by growers as a preplant treatment in crops including broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and onions.

Agricultural officials say state is now free of invasive fruit flies

State and federal agricultural officials have announced that they have succeeded in eradicating all populations of invasive fruit flies from California. Officials say the state's 2023 invasive fruit fly outbreak was the worst ever recorded. That led to a joint eradication effort by the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. APHIS deployed hundreds of employees to join forces with CDFA and the agricultural commissioners for trapping, fruit removal and survey activities.

California fig sector hopes to raise profile of the fruit

Figs are in peak season, and California growers say they have a quality crop this year that more retailers should promote for fresh eating, even if most of their production still ends up going to make dried fruit. They have been trying to change that for years by promoting fresh figs while they're in season and educating consumers, who may know the fruit only as a filling for a certain cookie. "We're really trying to liberate the fig from the Newton," said Karla Stockli, CEO of the California Fresh Fig Growers Association and the California Fig Advisory Board.

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