

Fresno County Farm Bureau

Aug. 3, 2007



**Friday
Follow-Up**

Tie-Down Regulations meeting set for Aug. 10 in Easton

A meeting to discuss the new tie-down /agricultural hauling regulations will be held on Friday, Aug. 10 at 10 a.m. at the C.P.D.E.S. Hall (Portuguese Hall), 172 West Jefferson in Easton.

Recently, farmers and agricultural truckers have been asking questions about the California Highway Patrol's implementation of new federal regulations governing how loads of harvested agricultural products are secured for transport and the procedure for the exemption that currently is in place for the 2007 harvest season. The meeting is being held at the request of Assemblyman Mike Villines as an attempt to provide answers and to address complaints and concerns expressed by agricultural haulers. CHP Commissioner Mike Brown and CHP Chief Steve Vaughan will address the new changes.

The meeting is open to the public and no RSVP is necessary. For additional details, contact the Fresno office of Assemblyman Mike Villines at (559) 446-2029.

Applications are now being accepted for FACT Leadership Development Program

August 31 is application deadline

Fresno County Farm Bureau's Leadership Development Program is accepting applications to be part of the 2007-08 Class V. The deadline to apply is Friday, August 31.

The Future Advocates for Agriculture Concerned about Tomorrow (FACT) Leadership Development Program provides community leaders with a comprehensive eight-month program highlighting specific issue areas in agriculture. Both agricultural and non-agricultural, community-minded people are encouraged to apply.

Beginning on Oct. 8, class participants will meet once-a-month for a day-long seminar to discuss current issues in food and fiber production. The Class will meet one day a month (on Mondays) from October through June (excluding December.)

As part of the curriculum, FACT offers a balanced, factual presentation of several issue areas specific to agriculture, such as air quality, land use planning and urban encroachment, water quality regulations and water supply development, organic farming, biotechnology crops, international trade, agricultural labor issues and the economic viability of agriculture. The class sessions use a combination of lectures by noted experts and field trips.

"Each month, class members are given a chance to look very intensively at the major issues in agriculture," said Ken Tatami, FCFB Agricultural Education Committee and FACT Program Chair.

Tuition for the program is \$300 per person. Scholarships may be available. The deadline to submit an application is Aug. 31. Applications are available online at: www.fcfb.org or by calling (559) 237-0263; email: info@fcfb.org.

Attention on Farm Bill now turns to Senate

Following last Friday's passage of the House of Representatives' Farm Bill, H.R. 2419, the Farm, Nutrition and Bioenergy Act of 2007, debate on the bill is far from over, as the Senate will now take up its version.

Senate Ag Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) promises the Senate version of the Farm Bill will be substantially different than the one approved by the House. As reported in *Drovers Magazine*, Sen. Harkin wants a bill that will expand the Conservation Security Program to 80 million acres, explains Rich Potorff, chief economist and Washington editor for Doane Advisory Services in St. Louis. The Senate bill also will probably cap farm payments at about \$250,000 per person. Sen. Harkin hopes to have the Senate Ag Committee's first draft completed after Labor Day. The current Farm Bill expires on Sept. 30, 2007.

Debate over the Farm Bill is likely to heat up between now and September 30. The Bush Administration already has expressed opposition to the House version at a news conference last week.

Meanwhile, California Farm Bureau Federation President Doug Mosebar said H.R. 2419 is a good step in the right direction for California's diversified agriculture.

"We're pleased with the 2007 Farm Bill as passed by the House of Representatives. There is something in this farm bill for every farmer and rancher in California, ranging from increased emphasis on research, trade and market development to more monies for keeping unwanted pests from entering our state," said Mosebar.

Water Update: Kings River growers see short season come to a close

Drought conditions cut sharply into this year's Kings River water supplies, and brought an early end to water deliveries for most of the river's public districts and canal companies. Users in three Kings River Water Association member units received no water at all this summer.

In a news release issued this week, the Kings River Water Association reported that nearly all of the member units' water delivery seasons have ended considerably earlier than usual. This year's peak-season runoff during the April-through-July period was expected to end up at less than 38 percent of average.

Fresno Irrigation District ended its surface water deliveries this week, except for limited amounts of hardship water and urban deliveries. Alta Irrigation District's delivery season will finish August 6, and Consolidated Irrigation District did not operate because of insufficient water supplies. The Kings River Water District in the Centerville Bottoms plans to deliver water into the fall.

On the lower Kings River, Laguna Irrigation District and Last Chance Water Ditch Company seasons are over and the Murphy Slough agencies are expected to shut down soon. South Fork units plan to operate until late-August while People's Ditch Company and the Lemoore Canal and Irrigation Company project ending their seasons around August 31. A coordinated lower river water run, in which channel seepage losses are shared, is scheduled to end August 10. Two lower river agencies, the Crescent and Stinson canal companies, were unable to make deliveries because of the short supplies.

River releases from Pine Flat Dam will drop steadily as water agencies exhaust their supplies and conclude their seasons, probably reaching fishery flow minimums by early-September.

Groundwater pumping has cushioned impacts of surface water supply reductions throughout much of

the one million acre Kings River service area in portions of Fresno, Kings and Tulare counties although about 20 percent of the region does not have groundwater or only in very poor quality. KRWA is expecting water table readings in all areas to drop significantly because of the need for heavy pumping.

Pine Flat Reservoir storage has continued a fairly rapid seasonal decline. As of July 29, the reservoir had dropped to 274,000 acre-feet, or 27 percent of capacity. KRWA expects the lake's storage to bottom out at the end of August at about 160,000 acre-feet, or 16 percent of capacity. Pray for rain this winter!

Farm Bureau Co-Sponsors Property Rights Initiative

"Farm Bureau has always stood up for the rights of property owners and we're very concerned about abuses of the government's power to condemn land. It's not right that court decisions allow the government to take your property and give it to someone else." That's according to CFBF President Doug Mosebar, who is joining efforts to oppose government's eminent domain abuses.

CFBF is joining with the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and the California Alliance to Protect Private Property Rights to sponsor the California Property Owners & Farmland Protection Act. Local governments have the ability to take property through eminent domain for legitimate public use, such as highways, schools and police stations. Unfortunately, governments also are using that power to increase their tax revenue by granting the property to others for private use.

The California Property Owners & Farmland Protection Act addresses this misuse by allowing governments to take property for a true, stated public purpose but specifically prohibits private property to be taken for private use. Farm Bureau is calling upon the grassroots Farm Team to help qualify the initiative for the June 2008 ballot. Members will be asked to collect signatures to help achieve the 1 million needed to qualify the initiative. To learn more about Farm Bureau's involvement, visit CFBF's Website at www.cfbf.com.

Be aware of heat illness prevention

Contact us for heat stress educational cards

Now that the summer heat is here, it's important that farmers and ranchers have a heat-

illness prevention plan in place for their employees. Keeping employees safe and healthy this summer is essential.

A permanent regulation aimed at preventing heat stress in employees who work outdoors was adopted by the Cal/OSHA Standards Board in 2006. Here are some key points to keep in mind to avoid a hefty fine—up to \$25,000 per serious violation.

- **Water:** Each employee must be provided with one quart of cool drinking water for every hour of the employee's shift.
- **Shade:** Employees believing they need time to cool down to prevent heat illness must have access to a shaded area to rest in for at least five minutes.
- **Training:** Information about heat-stress prevention and symptoms and an emergency plan are some points that must be addressed during employee training.

The most valuable tool in preventing heat stress is hydration. Make sure employees recognize the importance of staying hydrated at work by drinking at least four cups of water *every* hour and abstaining from drinks containing alcohol or caffeine.

Pocket-size information cards written in both English and Spanish are available at the Fresno County Farm Bureau office; call (559) 237-0263. For a copy of the complete heat-illness prevention regulation, email: heatstress@cfbf.com.

Job Listing: Governmental Affairs

Fresno County Farm Bureau is seeking a full-time governmental affairs coordinator to support and advocate for California and Fresno County agriculture. Essential skills include a proven ability to work with people; excellent research skills with ability to develop issues; exceptional analytical/critical thinking skills; outstanding oral/written communication (including reports and correspondence) and presentation skills; and a good understanding of California agriculture. A bachelor's degree is preferred. Send resume by Aug. 7 to: FCFB, Atten: Manager, 1274 W Hedges Ave, Fresno, CA 93728 or fax: (559) 237-3396.

A smile a day...

YOU KNOW YOU ARE LIVING IN 2007 when...

- You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.

- You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
- You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
- You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
- Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
- You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
- Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
(How true... how true!)

Next Week's Calendar

- Aug. 7** San Joaquin Valley Air District Citizen's Advisory Committee, 10 a.m., Air District office; Operation Clean Air Board meeting, 4 p.m., Fresno City Hall
- Aug. 8** Fresno Chamber Governmental Affairs Committee meeting, 12 p.m., Chamber office;
- Aug. 10** Tie-down regulation meeting, 10 a.m., CPDES Hall, Easton; Chamber Ag, Water & Environmental Committee, noon, Chamber office; Summer Bridge Program luncheon at Fresno State, noon

This Week's Calendar

- July 31** San Joaquin Valley Political Academy Board of Directors; meeting with Allied Insurance officials
- Aug. 2** FCFB Board of Directors meeting

Fresno County
Farm Bureau

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