



July 27, 2007

Federal Farm Bill passes the House

Debate on setting federal agricultural policy via a new Farm Bill continued throughout week, with the House of Representatives approving H.R. 2419 by a vote of 231-to-191 today.

Despite a few "minor tweaks" it appears that most of the components of interest to California agriculture remained in tack, said a Congressional staffer in Washington D.C. The bill that was approved today is a good step in the right direction for California's diversified agriculture. One item that was amended and will need to be addressed in conference, though, is moving pest detection and inspection programs from the federal Dept. of Homeland Security back to the USDA.

On the Senate side, mark-up of a Senate version is scheduled for the second week in September.

The federal Farm Bill sets the U.S. farm and food policies for a five-year period. Traditionally, federal farm policy has been heavily influenced by commodity crops: corn, soybeans, wheat, rice and cotton. The current draft Farm Bill is different, as California's specialty crops are being recognized and funding for marketing, research, and healthy eating programs is being included.

The 2002 Farm Bill expires this year, with some features ending as early as Sept. 30.

California Farm Bureau Federation has been actively engaged in advocating that the state's food and fiber producers are represented in the debate. Air quality funding, expansion of conservation programs specific to California, expanded nutritional programs that focus on fruit and vegetables, trade promotion, and expanded pest and disease detection programs are some of the components Farm Bureau is promoting for inclusion in the bill.

Fresno County Farm Bureau launches new Web site

Serves as an agricultural informational resource for members and general public

Fresno County Farm Bureau has launched a newly designed Web site, www.fcfb.org, which will serve as a comprehensive online resource for farmers and ranchers, consumers, media, students and the general public.

The new Web site was unveiled at last night's Fresno County Farm Bureau's Media Appreciation Night at the Clovis Rodeo Grounds.

The Web site features an easy-to-navigate format, providing pages about Fresno County agriculture, FCFB programs and activities, an Action Center for advocacy work on current issues, news and FCFB publications, membership benefits, and general and historical information about FCFB. Some of the special events having their own page include the Fresno County Farm and Nutrition Day, FCFB Annual Banquet, Media Appreciation Night, and FCFB's FACT Leadership Development Program.

The Web site also provides important links to other Farm Bureau Internet sites, including other county Farm Bureaus and the California and American Farm Bureau Federations. The design of the FCFB Web site complements the CFBF Web site, www.cfbf.com. The design concept was done by Fresh Air Media of Sacramento, with FCFB Administrative Support Coordinator Tami Farris doing much of the design work.

"We are pleased to provide this service to our members and the public," said FCFB Executive Director Ryan Jacobsen. "We are called often for information about Fresno County agriculture in general, as well as fielding questions about Farm Bureau and what it is doing on behalf of its members. This Web site helps us provide even more information to a wider audience," Jacobsen said.

Let us know what you think of the new look and usefulness of the information presented. Drop us an email at info@fcfb.org.

Journalism Awards presented at FCFB Media Appreciation Event

Fresno County Farm Bureau announced the recipients of its 13th annual Journalism Awards at the organization's Media Appreciation Night last night at the Clovis Rodeo Grounds.

Recognized for excellence in agriculture reporting were:

General Print Media:

First place in general print media: Dennis Pollock, The Fresno Bee.

A series of articles on the 2007 Citrus Freeze: "Citrus loses may hit \$1 billion," "Citrus growers short on propane," & "Lost: Valley growers of exotic greens suffer at least \$1.9M in damage from freeze."

Runner-up in general print media: Gabriel Dillard, The Business Journal.

"Old MacDonald's farm goes high tech," a look at the mechanization and increased technology used in agriculture.

Honorable Mention: Jullian Brackett, Reedley Exponent.

"Vanishing bees alarm ag community," an article about the Colony Collapse Disorder and the impact on bees and pollination.

Agricultural Print Media

First place in agricultural print media: Catherine Merlo, Dairy Today.

"Tarnished Gold: Dairies struggle with the downside of the ethanol boom," a look at how increases in corn prices from ethanol demand have affected dairies' bottom lines.

Runner-Up in agricultural print media: Bob Krauter, Capital Press.

A series of articles: "Push in on for guest worker reform bill" & "Immigration reform heats up," a comprehensive review of immigration reform efforts in Washington D.C.

Television Media

First place in television media: Dale Yurong/Sam Gill, KFSN-ABC 30

"Private Water Bank," a look at one way a west side farmer is coping with chronic water shortages -- by building his own water bank that also is used by local students to learn about waterfowl and the environment.

Runner-up in television media: Vanessa Ramirez/Joseph Munoz, KFTV-21 Univision

"Heladas- The freeze," A two-part series providing a comprehensive overview of the impacts

from the January 2007 freeze on the citrus industry – its growers, farm workers, and communities – months after the freeze.

Honorable Mention: Francisco Lopez Mireles/Wayne Hutchinson, KFTV-21 Univision

"A day with an immigrant," a two-part series that follows the life of a family from Mexico that came to the Valley to work in the fields --a very compelling and artistically filmed view of a farmworker from sun-up to sun-down.

Radio Media

First place in radio: Sasha Khokha, The California Report, KQED Public Radio.

"Hot Cows," a report about the effects of a prolonged heat wave on dairy cows the central San Joaquin Valley.

Runner-up in radio: Sasha Khokha, The California Report, KQED Public Radio.

"Small farmers cope with freeze losses," a report about the effects of the January 2007 freeze on small farmers of specialty crops

More than 35 entries were received from local publications, television and radio stations. The criteria for the awards are: awareness of agriculture's importance in the Valley, demonstration of knowledge, educational element for the non-farm public, and thorough and objective coverage of the issue.

Serving as judges were: Patrick Cavanaugh, editor, Malcolm Media; Russel Efir, FCFB President; Lanny Larson, University Communications, California State University, Fresno; Frances Squire, marketing director, West Hills Community College District; and Terrie Valdero, Fresno-Kings County CattleWomen and Clovis Rodeo Association.

There was no shortage of agricultural-related news during the judging period. Last summer's heat wave and its impacts on crops and livestock, legislative issues centered around immigration reform, food safety and water policy, and the 2007 Freeze that destroyed vulnerable crops and rural communities were subjects covered by the nominations. "The quality of the entries made the selection process difficult. Each entry was worthy of recognition," said Efir.

More than 200 people were on-hand for the annual media appreciation event. Congratulations to

all of the winners, and thank you to the FCFB Public Relations Committee, led by co-chairs Mark Thompson and Theresa Sebasto, for their hard work in putting on a successful event.

Thanks to the following sponsors of Media

Appreciation Night:

Ag One Foundation
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
California Dairies Inc./ Challenge Food Products
Clovis Rodeo Association
Crown Jewels Marketing
Fresno Cooperative Raisin Growers, Inc
Fresno Equipment Company
Fresno Madera Farm Credit
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Rick Hutchinson – SmithBarney
Sawyers & Holland, LLP
The Big Fresno Fair
The Burchell Nursery, Inc
The Business Journal
The Clarksfield Company, Inc
 -Ben Ewell, President

Wawona Frozen Foods

FCFB has “No Trespassing” signs

Fresno County Farm Bureau has received a new shipment of metal “No Trespassing” signs written in both English and Spanish. The signs cost \$7 each and can be picked up at the FCFB office, 1274 W. Hedges Ave. in Fresno.

There also are slow-moving vehicle signs, which sell for \$5 each, and dust control speed limit signs, which sell for \$2 each. Call FCFB at (559) 237-0263 for all of your signage needs.

A Quick Fact

As U.S. food imports grow 15 percent a year, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration inspected about 1 percent of the goods under its purview in fiscal 2006.

A smile a day...

A police recruit was asked during the exam, “What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?” He answered, “Call for backup.”

This Week’s Calendar

July 26 Water meeting with Governor’s staff;
 FCFB Media Appreciation Night
July 27 Fig Garden Rotary Presentation

Next Week’s Calendar

July 31 San Joaquin Valley Political Academy, 11 a.m.
Aug. 2 FCFB Board of Directors meeting, 6 p.m., FCFB office, 1274 W. Hedges Ave.



Fresno County
Farm Bureau

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