



Fresno County Farm Bureau

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In This Issue:

- Legislative Update
- Pacific Legal Foundation to hold Aug. 19 press conference
- FAACT Program is accepting nominations for Class VII until Aug. 28
- LBAM quarantine expanded
- Free tickets available for Grizzlies' last homestand on Aug. 23
- This is National Farmers' Market Week
- Reminder of upcoming events:
- Cotton Harvest Safety Training Workshop to be held Sept. 29
- Smile for the Week

Legislative Update

By Teresa Plascencia

FCFB Governmental Affairs Coordinator

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The House began their August recess last week while the Senate is scheduled to be in session through the end of this week. Here is a brief overview of recent activities:

H.R. 2749 (John Dingell, D-MI), the Food Safety and Security Act of 2009, aims to modernize the federal food safety system. The Act would delegate newly created food oversight responsibilities and farm production standards to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). USDA's current food safety programs for meat and poultry are not included and this Act purposely exempts farmers' markets, direct sales and intrastate commerce from the requirements. The bill passed the House last week, 283 to 142. The Senate will soon take up their version.

H.R. 2997 (Rosa DeLauro, D-CT) was passed this week in the Senate. This \$124.3 billion spending bill seeks to increase the domestic food programs, such as the school lunch program. The 2009 federal fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

Pacific Legal Foundation to hold Aug. 19 press conference

The Pacific Legal Foundation is nearing the final phase of its "Save Our Water" signature-gathering phase, and has planned a news conference on the west steps of the State Capitol building on Wednesday, Aug. 19 to call for action to deal with California's water emergency.

The news conference, which begins at 10 a.m., will feature key PLF attorneys; Rep. George Radanovich; Denise Davis, of the California Chamber of Commerce; and others. The PLF has gathered more than 10,500 signatures to-date, supporting the request to ask Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to petition the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to convene the Endangered Species Committee high-level panel "God Squad" to exempt federal water projects from crippling restrictions. Delta Smelt regulations have severely cut

pumping into the federal and state systems for Central and Southern California. Now, additional water cutbacks are threatened by a new federal "biological opinion" relating to salmon and steelhead.

For additional details, contact PLF's Bob Krauter at (916) 419-7111 or rlk@pacificlegal.org.

FAACT Program is accepting nominations for Class VII until Aug. 28

Fresno County Farm Bureau's Leadership Development Program currently is accepting applications to be part of the 2009-10 Future Advocates for Agriculture Concerned about Tomorrow (FAACT) Class VII. The deadline to apply has been extended to Aug. 28.

The FAACT Leadership Development Program provides community leaders with a comprehensive eight-month program highlighting specific issue areas in agriculture. The Class will meet one day a month (on Mondays) from October through June (excluding December.) Both agricultural and non-agricultural, community-minded people are encouraged to apply. Tuition for the program is \$350 per person.

The deadline to submit an application is Aug. 28. Applications are available online at: www.fcfb.org. Direct questions to Teresa Plascencia at (559) 237-0263 or email: teresap@fcfb.org.

LBAM quarantine expanded

The quarantine boundary for the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) has reached the San Joaquin Valley, about 18 square miles in the Manteca area of San Joaquin County, reports the CA Department of Food and Agriculture. Both new and expanded quarantine boundaries are in effect in several California communities due to recent detections of LBAM.

The new boundaries will quarantine plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables grown in some areas of Contra Costa, San Benito, Monterey and Solano counties, as well as San Joaquin County. Preparations also are underway to quarantine the Long Beach area of Los Angeles County and in the Los Osos area (San Luis Obispo County) due to recent pest detections.

The statewide light brown apple moth infestation has grown in density and range in 2009. This summer the apple moth did considerable damage to berry fields near Watsonville. More than 110,000 moths have been trapped statewide, and 3,473 square miles are now under quarantine within the State..

Free tickets available for Grizzlies' last homestand on Aug. 23

Fresno County Farm Bureau, in partnership with the Fresno Grizzlies, is offering free game tickets to FCFB members for Sunday, Aug. 23, at Chukchansi Park. The Grizzlies will be taking on Seattle Mariners affiliate Tacoma Rainiers, with the first pitch scheduled for 6:05 p.m. Children 12 and under eat free and will have the opportunity to run the bases for free.

Up to four tickets per a membership are available on a first come, first serve basis, and must be requested by noon on Wednesday, Aug. 19. RSVP by calling the FCFB office at (559) 237-0263 or via email at info@fcfb.org.

This is National Farmers' Market Week

This week, Aug. 2-8, is National Farmers' Market Week, designed to help raise awareness about the direct-market outlet for locally produced farm products.

Currently, about 4,900 farmers' markets operate nationwide, up from 4,685 in 2008. In Fresno County, several active seasonal and year-round farmers' markets are held in Fresno (at various locations), Coalinga, Clovis, Kingsburg, Kerman, Orange Cove, Reedley, Sanger and Selma.

In fact, one of the most popular local farmers' markets is currently ranked as THE most favorite farm market in a nationwide survey. Due to enthusiastic support, more votes have been cast to-date for the Rue and Gwen Gibson Farm Market at Fresno State to be America's favorite farm market in a nationwide survey conducted by the American Farmland Trust. But the contest is not over. It is open until Aug. 8 and it is a close race. If you have not yet voted, please cast your vote by logging on to: www.farmland.org/vote

A listing of the farmers' markets in Fresno County can be found at: www.gofresnocounty.com.

Reminder of upcoming events:

Fig Fest 2009 is Saturday at Fresno State

The 6th Annual Fig Fest will be held on Saturday, Aug. 8, from 9 a.m. to noon on California State University, Fresno Ag East Lawn between the Ag Science Building and Satellite Student Union, near the corner of Barstow and Maple Avenues. The Fig Fest features fig-inspired dishes created by local chefs, live music, kid's-oriented educational activities and more.

Tickets are \$10 per person (in advance; \$12 at the gate) and are available by contacting the California Fig Advisory Board office at (559) 243-8600. Children under 12 years are free. Event proceeds will benefit Fresno State Ag One Foundation, Slow Food Madera, and the Bulldog Pantry, a non-profit food bank serving the community since 2007.

U.C. Grape Day is set for Aug. 11

The U.C. Kearney Agricultural Center Grape Day 2009 will be held next Tuesday, Aug. 11 from 7 a.m. to noon at the Ag Center, 9240 S. Riverbend Ave., near Parlier.

Several U.C. Extension Specialists will discuss a variety of projects, including vineyard soil fumigants, heat pulse sensor monitors for water use, new wine grape varieties, post-emergent herbicide management, powdery mildew management, pocket gopher management and grape maturity in DOV raisin production. CCA and PCA continuing education units have been requested.

The cost is \$10 per person, which includes the meeting, proceedings and refreshments. For information, contact (559) 456-7285.

U.C. Dry Bean Field Day is Aug. 12 at Parlier

The U.C. Cooperative Extension is hosting a Dry Bean Field Day on Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Kearney Ag Center, 9240 S. Riverbend Ave., near Parlier.

The program will feature an informal tour and progress report on "Evaluation of deficit irrigation strategies in blackeyes under variable plant densities." For details, contact Shannon Mueller at (559) 456-7261; or email: scmueller@ucdavis.edu.

Water for All Rally is Aug. 13 in Bay Area

The Water for All grassroots group is organizing a protest rally at the Bay Area office of Rep. George Miller on Thursday, Aug. 13 at 10 a.m. in Concord.

Rep. Miller is a long-time critic of irrigated agriculture on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, and along with Rep. Nancy Pelosi, has failed to address the human and economic impacts from the Endangered Species Act-induced pumping restrictions and regulatory drought. Water for All organizers are calling for Valley residents to join the protest at Rep. Miller's office at 1333 Willow Pass Rd., Ste 203, in Concord.

For details about the rally, call (559) 229-9034/35 or email at: piedad@thewaterforall.com or ben@centralvalleyteaparty.com.

Cotton Harvest Safety Training Workshop to be held Sept. 29

The annual Cotton Harvest Safety Training Workshop is set for Tuesday, Sept. 29. The safety program is directed to cotton harvest equipment operators, crews, ginners and farm workers in conjunction with farm managers/supervisors and growers. All segments will be conducted in both English and Spanish.

Despite reduced plantings of cotton, Fresno County Farm Bureau and State Compensation Insurance Fund will continue to provide this annual service to its members.

The event will take place at the U.C. West Side Field Station on the southwest corner of Oakland and Lassen Ave., south of Five Points. The free program will begin with registration and refreshments at 7:30 a.m., with presentations beginning at 8:15 a.m. The program concludes at noon with lunch. To register for the event, contact the FCFB office at (559) 237-0263 or via email at info@fcfb.org.

Smile for the Week

They say there is no such thing as a stupid question, but there are many questions that make you scratch your head and say, "Huh?" Here's a few from Jokes Galore.com:

- Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast to a horrible crisp, which no decent human being would eat?
- Why is there a light in the fridge and not in the freezer?
- If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?
- Can a hearse carrying a corpse drive in the carpool lane?
- If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?
- Why do the Alphabet Song and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star have the same tune?
- Does pushing the elevator button more than once make it arrive faster?

Next Week's Calendar

Aug. 11 FCFB Board of Directors' meeting, 6 p.m., FCFB office, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno

Aug. 12 Clovis East FFA presentation, 9 a.m., FCFB office;
Fresno Chamber Governmental Affairs Committee, noon, Chamber office

Aug. 13 Chamber Eggs and Issues breakfast with Rep. Devin Nunes, 7:30 a.m., Grand Occasions Banquets;

Sheriff's Metal Recyclers Task Force meeting, 9 a.m., Brooks Ranch, Chestnut and Highway 99

Aug. 14 Agriculture and Land Use Committee, noon, Chamber office

This Week's Calendar

Aug. 4 San Joaquin Valley Air District Citizens' Advisory Committee meeting