



Fresno County Farm Bureau

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FCFB Coffee Talk meeting in San Joaquin will be held next Wednesday

Fresno County Farm Bureau is hosting a Coffee Talk meeting with Assembly member Juan Arambula on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 8 a.m. at Maria Mexican Restaurant, 8727 S. Main St., in San Joaquin.

The informal Coffee Talk meetings provide Farm Bureau members and others a chance to get up-to-speed on current local issues. Refreshments will be provided.

There is no cost to attend. To RSVP or for additional details, contact FCFB at (559) 237-0263 or email: info@fcfb.org.

Estate tax legislation is gaining ground; expected to come to a vote soon

A bill to defer estate tax for as long as the farm or ranch remains in production is gaining support from several Congressional representatives and agricultural and conservation organizations. The bill, H.R. 3524 (Thompson, D-Napa), has the support of 43 co-sponsors, 11 of which are in California. The coalition of agricultural and conservation groups supporting the bill has ballooned to include over 80 national, state and local organizations. The bill continues to attract support, and as a result, is gaining serious attention in the House.

It is expected that estate tax legislation will come to the House floor for a vote within the next few weeks. There is still time to educate Congress on the importance of including H.R. 3524 in the estate tax package. CA Farm Bureau Federation's Farm Team is urging Farm Bureau members to make a follow-up call to the legislative staff in the Washington, D.C. office of BOTH your House Representatives and Senators, urging their support of H.R. 3524.

This bill will provide much needed relief to California agriculture. Farm Bureau will continue to monitor the estate tax legislation. For details on participating in Farm Team, visit the CFBF Web site at: www.cfbf.com.

Water and energy use conference set for Nov. 18 in Tulare

A one-day, free conference to help farmers reduce energy use and increase water use efficiency will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at the AgTAC Energy Center, 4175 S. Laspina St., in Tulare. The conference will begin with registration at 7:30 a.m. and is sponsored by the CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts, U.C. Conservation Tillage and Cropping Systems Workgroup and Southern California Edison.

Information presented will cover practical experience on numerous innovative precision agricultural technologies, as well as emerging air and water quality issues by industry and regulatory experts. Detailed discussions will focus on mechanized center pivot and linear overhead irrigation systems and energy innovation and efficiency.

For details or to register for the free conference, contact AgTAC at (800) 722-4822, or visit the Web site at www.sce.com/agtac/.

Ag economist says it's too early to say Recession is over

While some economists claim the Recession is over, a visiting economist from Texas A&M University told participants at this week's Annual Agribusiness Management Conference it's too early to make that claim.

John B. Penson, Jr., Ph.D., of Texas A&M University, said that although the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose 3.5 percent in the third quarter, he would "wait to see three consecutive quarters of growth before saying the Recession is over." Speaking before 100 attendees of the annual business conference in downtown Fresno on Tuesday, Penson said there remains considerable uncertainty in consumer spending, one of the factors in determining the GDP, which is a measure of output produced in the U.S. and demand for goods and services. Last quarter's growth of 2.4 percent in consumer spending can be attributed to the "Cash for Clunkers" program and the tax credit for first-time home buyers – both "due to massive government expenditures and not private sector driven," he said. As unemployment and public/private debt continues to grow, the economic recovery remains lagging, Penson said.

On the agriculture side of the economy, Penson said the USDA is estimating net farm income to be down \$33.1 billion, or 38 percent, from 2008. With a slow recovery beginning in dairy/milk, Penson said the other major (Midwest) crops are trending downward. The projections for corn and soybeans are the worst in the last 20 years, he added.

The future for agriculture remains uncertain, said Penson, given that during a recovery the pressure for increased inflation may occur due to the massive federal fiscal and monetary stimulus spending in 2009.

In addition to an economic overview, industry experts provided updates on invasive species protection, water issues and the upcoming water bond, and climate issues (cap and trade legislation). The annual event is sponsored by the Center for Agricultural Business, Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology at California State University, Fresno.

Annual Ag Awards luncheon to be held next Wednesday

Two Fresno County Farm Bureau leaders will be recognized for their contributions to agriculture at the Annual Agricultural Awards on Wednesday, Nov. 18 in downtown Fresno.

FCFB Past President, Easton area farmer and former dairyman Fred Machado was selected as the 2009 Agriculturist of the Year by the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce. Likewise, the 2009 Baker,

Peterson & Franklin Ag Business Award will be presented to the Riverdale-based Errotabere Ranches. Machado and Errotabere Ranches will be honored at the Ag Awards Luncheon at noon on Wednesday at the Holiday Inn Downtown in Fresno.

Tickets are \$40 and tables of eight are \$320. For tickets contact the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce at (559) 495-4800.

Reminder: Viticulture Tech Group to discuss raisin issues on Nov. 18

The San Joaquin Valley Viticulture Technical Group will meet to discuss this year's raisin production and harvest issues on Wednesday, Nov. 18 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Fresno County Farm Bureau, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno.

Specific topics include the 2009 weather and its impact on vine growth stages and vineyard decisions, an overview of the 2009 season, this year's problems with bunch rot, and a perspective from a raisin processor. Registration is \$10, which includes lunch. To make a reservation, call (559) 661-5539.

Center pivot irrigation technology seminar to be held at Fresno State Farm on Nov. 20

The new center pivot irrigation system recently installed on the Fresno State Campus Farm Laboratory will be used as an outdoor classroom for a free seminar on Friday, Nov. 20 designed to help growers conserve water and increase yields.

The seminar, hosted by the Center for Irrigation Technology at California State University, Fresno, will begin at the Water & Energy Technology Lab at Fresno State at 8:30 a.m. Space is limited and registration is requested.

The day will begin in a session of how-to's for starting and using a center pivot system including: installation, water source, irrigation pump, filtration, flow meter, and spinners (emitters). Growers will be shown basic components and working equipment of the center pivot with a hands-on system audit for distribution uniformity and potential for using irrigation water at its most efficient. A number of irrigation experts also will be on hand to answer questions.

To register on-line, visit: www.californiawater.org/IrrigationTech, or call (800) 845-6038.

FCFB offers Pesticide Applicators Continuing Education class

FCFB and the Fresno County Department of Agriculture will hold a Continuing Education Applicator Class on Friday, Dec. 4, FCFB, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., from 8 a.m. to noon.

The program is free for FCFB members. The cost for non-members is \$10 per hour of education needed. (Membership applications will be available at the meeting.) Each class will provide three hours of continuing education hours toward the Private Applicator license. To register, contact FCFB at (559) 237-0263 or via email at info@fcfb.org.

Orange, broccoli and lettuce crops estimated to be up from last year

Popular fall and winter fruit and vegetable crops are looking ahead to increased production this year, given normal weather conditions.

The 2009-10 California orange crop is forecast at 110 million cartons, up 13 percent from last season. California's Navel orange crop is forecast at 80 million cartons, up 16 percent from the previous season. Harvest has begun for the 2009-10 Navel crop.

California broccoli for fall harvest is forecast at 25,500 acres, up two percent from 2008. Harvest of the fall crop is underway and the crop is reported to be in good condition.

Likewise, California's fall head lettuce acreage is forecast at 31,000 acres, up 11 percent from last year, reports the USDA. Fresno County has about 6,079 acres of fall lettuce, according to the Fresno County Department of Agriculture. Last year, there were 7,100 acres of the fall crop.

Thought for the day

A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all the other virtues. ~Cicero

Calendar of Upcoming Events & Meetings

- Nov. 13** Private Applicator Continuing Education Classes, 8 a.m., FCFB office, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno;
Fresno Chamber Agriculture and Land Use Committee, noon, Chamber office, downtown
- Nov. 17** Big Fresno Fair Board of Directors meeting, 4 p.m., Fairgrounds
- Nov. 18** Coffee Talk meeting in San Joaquin, 8 a.m., Maria Mexican Restaurant, 8727 S. Main St., San Joaquin;
Viticulture Technical Group meeting, 10 a.m., FCFB office;
Agriculturist and Ag Business of the Year Awards Luncheon, noon, Holiday Inn Downtown, Tickets: (559) 495-4800;
Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting, 3:15 p.m., Chamber office
- Nov. 19** Central Valley Water Awareness Committee, 1:30 p.m., Flood Control District office
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