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FCFB e-newsletter undergoes transformation

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FCFB's weekly e-newsletter has a new look, complete with a new logo and name, *Ag Wire*.

Ag Wire will continue to be delivered once a week to e-mail inboxes. The publication will continue to provide important information that will keep you informed about upcoming events and meetings, legislative activity, the current



status of Fresno County's water supply and issues, as well as commodity information and more.

For more information about this update or to provide suggestions, contact Director of Public Relations Katie Rodgers at 559-237-0263 or info@fcb.org.

Sexual Harassment Training is Feb. 24

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The Fresno County Farm Bureau and Nisei Farmers League are partnering to provide free sexual harassment training in English next Thursday, Feb. 24 at 10 a.m. at the Fresno County Farm Bureau, located at 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno.

Participants will receive a certificate of completion at the end of the session.

Seating is limited and spots will be reserved based on a first-come, first-served basis. Please RSVP to FCFB at 559-237-0263 or info@fcb.org by Monday, Feb. 21.

Free Spray Safe workshop set for Feb. 24

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The Fresno-Madera Spray Safe program is next Thursday, Feb. 24, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Kerman Community Center, 15101 W. Kearney Blvd., Kerman.

Growers, pest control advisors, applicators, field managers, farm labor contractors, field supervisors and foremen are invited to attend this free training. The program was developed by fellow growers and applicators to control drift and protect worker and public health through better communications.

Registration will begin at 8 a.m., followed by presentations, from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Presentation topics will include: worker safety; spray technology; emergency response; compliance; and record keeping. Lunch will begin at noon, featuring special guest speaker Rich Matteis, administrator at the California Farm Bureau.

Presentations are available in Spanish. Continuing education hours will also be available.

For more information, or to register, contact fmcapca@gmail.com.

Legislative Update

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AB 316 (Carter, D-Rialto) is a newly introduced bill and amendment of AB 237 from 2009. The intent of the legislation is to help law enforcement officers reduce metal and vehicle theft from farms, ranches and construction sites. Officers from the California Highway Patrol, county sheriff departments and city police departments that are conducting investigations related to metal theft would be allowed to stop vehicles if they have reasonable belief that it is a stolen vehicle or a vehicle that is transporting stolen

metal. This bill is sponsored by California Farm Bureau Federation at the request of several county sheriff departments who have been hindered by the limitations in law to conduct their investigations and apprehend those suspected to have committed metal theft crimes.

Budget Update:

- The Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee unanimously approved a motion by Senator Doug La Malfa (R-Richvale) to increase funding for the Williamson Act from \$10 million to \$20 million this year.
- Senate Budget Committee 2 and Assembly Budget Committee 3 took action to approve the Governor's proposal to reduce the Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) budget by \$15 million in 2011-12. CDFA is expected to provide specific cuts to the committees within the next two weeks.
- The Governor's budget proposes \$32 million in cuts for the network of California Fairs. Fair representatives testified in opposition of the budget cut and asked for additional time to develop an alternative that will allow all the fairs to continue operating.

Source: CFBF's Friday Review, February 11, 2011

Grape Grower Tailgate Meetings scheduled for March

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The San Joaquin Valley Winegrowers Association, California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance and Rain for Rent will host a grape grower tailgate meeting on March 2 in Madera from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Mission Bell Winery, 12667 Rd. 24, Madera.

Program topics will include: powdery mildew and wet spring fungicide needs; an update on air quality; an update on sustainable winegrowing and metrics; an early grape market update; PG&E time varying and energy saving tips for vineyards; what OSHA is looking for and information on recent citations; and on vineyard sustainable pest management procedures and practices. A SJVW barbecue lunch will follow.

One hour of continuing education credits is pending for pesticide applicators and CPAs.

The same workshop will be offered on March 1 in Shafter and March 3 in Modesto.

To RSVP, or for more information, contact San Joaquin Valley Winegrowers at 559-618-1856 or info@sjvgrapes.org.

CID public meeting scheduled for Feb. 23

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Consolidated Irrigation District (CID) will hold a public meeting to discuss water conditions and current issues impacting District operations on Feb. 23 at 1 p.m. at the Caruthers Fairgrounds Commerce Building, located at 13595 South Raider Ave., Caruthers.

The meetings are open to the public and District members are encouraged to bring questions for District staff and the Board of Directors.

For more information, contact CID at 559-896-1661.

FID will begin water deliveries March 1

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Water deliveries to users within the Fresno Irrigation District (FID) will begin on March 1. The action, based upon excellent water supply prospects on the Kings and San Joaquin rivers, will launch what could be a seven-month water run.



The first California Department of Water Resources current forecasts for natural runoff indicate that the Kings River's most-probable discharge during the peak April-through-July snowmelt season could amount to 1.62 million acre-feet, or 132 percent of average. San Joaquin River runoff for the same period is predicted to be 1.63 million acre-feet, 130 percent of average. Both forecasts assume that average amounts of precipitation will occur over the next few months.

Most of FID's water supply comes from the Kings River, where the District is among the most senior diverters. The District also is a contractor for up to 75,000 acre-feet of Class 2 water on the San Joaquin River and the Central Valley Project's Friant Division and assists the City of Fresno in managing the city's 60,000 acre-feet of Class 1 supply from the Friant system. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, in a preliminary water supply forecast for Friant users, believes there will be a 100 percent supply of Class 1 available as well as a 15 percent supply of Class 2 water. The first formal water supply declaration from Reclamation is expected in early March.

FID urges growers to work closely with District water system operators in scheduling water deliveries. All irrigators need to use water wisely and conserve as much water as possible through good on-farm water management practices. Please call the District at 559-233-7161 to obtain any water system operator information or to ask water operations-related questions.

Alfalfa Seed Symposium is March 9

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The California Alfalfa Seed Production Symposium is set for March 9, from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the UC West Side Research and Extension Center in Five Points.

The symposium agenda topics will include: an update on the alfalfa seed industry; the need for assessment of the alfalfa seed industry; how to obtain pesticide registration for the alfalfa seed industry; gene flow studies enhanced by tracking pollinator movement; the alfalfa seed stewardship program; a spray table demonstration of nozzles and pressures; 2010 drip irrigation trial results; drip irrigation system considerations; IR measurement of stress as a tool for irrigation scheduling; an integrated approach to controlling pocket gophers and voles in seed alfalfa; coexistence with crop isolation mapping; and chemical company updates.

Cost is \$20 and includes one copy of the symposium proceedings and lunch. Pre-registration, due by Feb. 28 to the Alfalfa Seed Production Research Board, assures lunch for participants. Those registering on the day of the event will receive lunch on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information, contact the Alfalfa Seed Production Research Board at 559-591-4792 or Fresno County Farm Advisor Shannon Mueller at 559-456-7261 or scmueller@ucdavis.edu.

YF&R to discuss 2011-12 legislative outlook on Feb. 23

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Fresno County YF&R will meet Wednesday, Feb. 23 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the FCFB Conference Room, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno. Special guest speaker Barry Bedwell, president of the [California Grape and Tree Fruit League](#), will discuss the 2011-12 legislative outlook.

Dinner will be served at 5:15 p.m.

For more information, or to RSVP by Monday, Feb. 21, contact Kristen Avery at 559-999-8393 or avery.kristen@gmail.com.

IFB family business marketing workshop

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The Institute for Family Business (IFB) at California State University, Fresno will present the workshop, "Marketing Yourself and Your Family Business," on March 2 at the University Business Center, room PB 192 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Dr. Susan Geringer will discuss the intertwined nature of individual and business marketing. The presentation will address comprehensive strategies that can be incorporated at the same time for individual marketing, as well as business marketing.

A wine and cheese reception will take place immediately following the presentation.

Cost is \$25 for non-IFB members.

To take part in this event, RSVP to IFB at 559-278-5662. Parking passes will be available with response.

Food Check-Out Week is Feb. 20-26

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Food Check-Out Week, involving Farm Bureaus at the county, state and national level, celebrates the abundance and safety of food.

It also is a time to observe the affordability of food in the United States. Typically, the average American can earn enough disposable income to pay for the entire year's food supply by mid-February – far less than the amount of time required to earn enough to pay for taxes.

According to the most recent statistics compiled by the Agriculture Department's Economic Research Service, U.S. residents spent about 10 percent of income on food. In comparison, people in the Mexico spent 22 percent, residents of China spent 28 percent, and in Russia, residents used 37 percent of their income for food.

Interestingly, Americans worked until April 9 to afford their taxes in 2010, known as Tax Freedom Day, according to The Tax Foundation. Americans typically pay more in local, state and federal taxes than they spend on food, clothing and housing combined.

America's farmers and ranchers are committed to producing safe, abundant and healthy food. Today, America's farmers are the world's most productive. Each U.S. farmer produces food and fiber for 155 people in the United States and abroad, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

For more information about Food Check-Out Week, visit <http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=events.foodweek>.

Be aware of bee box frame thefts

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Beehive frame thefts recently occurred in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. Only frames were stolen, not boxes. Keep an eye out for suspicious activity. Please report Ag crime tips to Valley Crime Stoppers at 559-498-STOP(7867).



Report shows average farm size

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The average size of a California farm has gone down slightly, according to a new [government survey](#).

The report says the average California farm is 311 acres in size, down one acre from the last survey a year ago. The average California farm remains more than 100 acres smaller than the average farm nationwide.

The survey also says California has more than 81,000 farms.

Source: *CFBF Food and Farm News, February 16, 2011*

Ag Employment Opportunities

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Ag openings in Tulare County

Tulare County has multiple openings with the Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer's Office in Tulare.

The complete job description and benefits will be posted online at www.co.tulare.ca.us/hrd on Saturday, Feb. 19 at 12:01 a.m. Click on "Jobs" on the left side of the screen and then click on the Ag position opening.

The filing deadline is March 8 at 5:30 p.m.

Accounts manager position available at Vance Publishing

Vance Publishing is seeking a National Accounts Manager in the protein/livestock division.

The individual would cover the western United States and work in either Lenexa, Kan., or from a home office within the territory. A solid production animal background with sales or media experience is ideal.

The position would consist of managing National advertising accounts within the geographic territory for four of the Vance Publishing publications: *Dairy Heard Management*, *Drovers CattleNetwork*, *Pork* and *Bovine Veterinarian*, as well as all related e-products, Web sites, newsletters, etc.

Interested applicants should contact Tim Tobeck, Vice President of Publishing, at ttobeck@vancepublishing.com or 720-940-4701.

The Future of Central Valley Agriculture MCFB Regional Conference is Feb. 25

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The Madera County Farm Bureau will hold their 2011 regional conference, "Changing Times: The Future for Central Valley Agriculture," on Feb. 25 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Madera State Center Community College.

The conference's featured speaker is Roelef van Ark, CEO of the California High Speed Rail Authority. The conference agenda will also include a welcome from MCFB President Tom Rogers, Madera County Board of Supervisors Chairman Frank Bigelow and Madera Mayor Pro Tem Brett Frazier; a message from State Senator Anthony Cannella; an overview of solar projects in Madera County; a message from Congressman Jeff Denham; a focus on AB 32, diesel regulations and incentive funding; water and the Delta; and an overview of opportunities for those who act in 2011-2012 on the new estate tax law.

For more information, visit the MCFB Web site at www.maderafb.com.

This week in Ag news

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Calif. agency releases long-range Delta Plan draft [Associated Press]

The first draft of a long-range plan to manage California's freshwater delta released by a state agency Tuesday did little to solve the state's historical conflict between groups fighting to strengthen the crumbling water system and protect the delicate estuary. The first of seven draft plans to be released by a council of experts formed by legislators to manage the delta set in motion a yearlong planning process by recapping previous scientific, economic and regulatory data....The draft succinctly spells out the delta's woes: California's total water supply is already over-tapped and becoming more volatile as a result of climate change. Populations of some native species have plummeted and may not survive, even with increased restoration efforts. And there is no comprehensive state or regional emergency response plan, despite analysis that the delta region may be at greater risk for flooding than New Orleans.

<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/02/15/3405027/calif-agency-releases-delta-plan.html>

Outlook for food prices: High [Wall Street Journal]

The seeds of a sustained increase in food prices are about to be sown in Mississippi, Nebraska and other farm-belt states across the U.S. As American farmers prepare to plant their next crops, they must decide how much, and what, to plant....In past years there have been some big acreage swings, but analysts expect mostly minor changes when the U.S. Department of Agriculture releases a closely watched survey of farmers' intentions next month. Only a limited amount of idle land can be brought into production, further capping supply. That could help extend the commodities rally, which has already seen corn futures jump 92% over the past year, soybeans rise 44%, wheat gain 69% and cotton soar 162%.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703961104576148722014393308.html?KEYWORDS=outlook+for+food+prices>

Quote of the Week

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“Wake up with a smile and go after life...Live it, enjoy it, taste it, smell it, feel it.” –Joe Knapp

Did you know? – Focus on almonds

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Q: Why are at least two varieties of almond trees planted in almond orchards?

A: Almonds must cross-pollinate

Q: What percentage of United States almonds does California produce?

A: More than 99 percent

Q: Name one nutrient almonds have that is important for strong bones and teeth.

A: Calcium

Source: *California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, Almonds Commodity Fact Sheet*

Joke of the Week

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Settling a cow case

A big-city lawyer was representing the railroad in a lawsuit filed by an old rancher. The rancher's prize bull was missing from the section through which the railroad passed. The rancher only wanted to be paid the fair value of the bull.

The case was scheduled to be tried before the justice of the peace in the back room of the general store.

The attorney for the railroad immediately cornered the rancher and tried to get him to settle out of court. The lawyer did his best selling job, and finally the rancher agreed to take half of what he was asking.

After the rancher had signed the release and took the check, the young lawyer couldn't resist gloating a little over his success, telling the rancher, "You know, I hate to tell you this, old man, but I put one over on you in there. I couldn't have won the case. The engineer was asleep and the fireman was in the caboose when the train went through your ranch that morning. I didn't have one witness to put on the stand. I bluffed you!"

The old rancher replied, "Well, I'll tell you, young feller, I was a little worried about winning that case myself, because that durned bull came home this morning."

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

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February 20-26 – Food Checkout Week,

<http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=events.foodweek>

February 22 – Tractor Safety “Train the Trainer” Seminar, English – 8 a.m., Spanish – 1 p.m., Tulare County Ag. Commissioner/UCCE Office, 4437 S. Laspina, Tulare, [complete schedule and registration form](#)

February 23 – CID Public Meeting, 1 p.m., Caruthers Fairgrounds Commerce Building, located at 13595 South Raider Ave., Caruthers, 559-896-1661

February 23 – YF&R Meeting, 5:30 p.m., FCFB, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno, 559-999-8393, avery.kristen@gmail.com

February 24 – Sexual Harassment Training, 10 a.m., FCFB, 1274 W. Hedges Ave., Fresno, 559-237-0263, info@fcfb.org

February 24 – Spray Safe workshop, 8 a.m., Kerman Community Center, 15101 W. Kearney Blvd., Kerman, fmcapca@gmail.com

March 2 – Grape Grower Tailgate Meeting, 9 a.m., Mission Bell Winery, 12667 Rd. 24, Madera, 559-618-1856, info@sjvgrapes.org

March 7 – Tractor Safety “Train the Trainer” Seminar, English – 8 a.m., Harvest Hall, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, [complete schedule and registration form](#)

March 8 – Tractor Safety “Train the Trainer” Seminar, English – 8 a.m., Stockton Ag Center, 2101 Earhart Ave., Stockton, [complete schedule and registration form](#)

March 9 – Alfalfa Symposium, 7:30 a.m., UC West Side Research and Extension Center, Five Points, 559-456-7261, scmueller@ucdavis.edu

March 25 – Tractor Safety “Train the Trainer” Seminar, English – 8 a.m., Reedley College of Ag., 995 N. Reed Ave., Reedley, [complete schedule and registration form](#)