

Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.
A private, nonprofit organization serving farmers throughout Riverside County since 1917

Our 77th Year of Publication: Volume LXXVII, Number 11, November 2023.



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Welcome New Members

We would like to "Thank You" for becoming part of the Farm Bureau Family.



Do you have a love of agriculture?

Do you want to help support the future of California agriculture?

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) California is looking for vibrant and energetic individuals who are interested in advancing California agriculture.

The **County Program Technician** plays a vital role in supporting California farmers and ranchers.

The Farm Service Agency mission is to deliver programs and services to farmers and ranchers to support them in sustaining our Nation's vibrant agricultural economy. Program Technicians assist in the delivery of FSA commodity, conservation and livestock programs to the farmers and ranchers of California.

Experience in clerical office work, a background in farming or ranching, or college education in an agriculture related field is desirable but not required. Candidates shall be willing to do occasional travel.

The Riverside-San Diego County Farm Service Agency (FSA) office in Indio is hiring a full time Temporary Program Technician. If you know of someone who might be interested, please share this information with them.

Applications must be sent by November 30, 2023 to Rogelio.Araujo@usda.gov

Applications can be found here:

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0675.pdf

Please include resume with your application.

Contact Rogelio Araujo at 760-355-2208 ext. 112 if you have specific questions regarding the position.



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106TH ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

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**THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY FARM BUREAU WISHES
TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED THIS YEAR'S
ANNUAL DINNER MEETING.**

USDA removes California hass avocado Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine

By THE PACKER STAFF November 6, 2023



(Photo: barmalini, Adobe Stock)

The California Avocado Commission has successfully petitioned the USDA to remove hass avocados from the Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine, according to a news release.

On Sept. 27, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the California Department of Food and Agriculture established an Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine in California's San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.

The quarantine area, which includes avocado production regions, listed hass avocados as a host, which was inconsistent with USDA's Mediterranean Fruit Fly and Mexican Fruit Fly host lists that do not include hass avocados, the release said.

California Avocado Commission says its staff immediately informed USDA of this inconsistency, which led USDA to remove hass avocado from the host list on Oct. 27.

"The removal of the previously mandatory treatment requirements for fruit on trees within the quarantine area will result in significant savings for hass avocado growers within the quarantine area," Ken Melban, CAC vice president of industry affairs and operations, said in the release.

Other avocado varieties (Bacon, Zutano, etc.) within the quarantine area are still required to follow the established treatment protocols. As with Mediterranean Fruit Fly and Mexican Fruit Fly quarantines, the harvest, shipping and packing of hass avocados from within the Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine region must comply with approved regulatory measures.

The grower requirements for hass avocado production within the Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine zone will mirror the requirements for Mexican Fruit Fly quarantine areas, the release said. In addition, the requirements for packinghouses receiving hass avocados from the quarantine areas will mirror the Mexican Fruit Fly requirements.

The commission also is working with USDA to remove hass avocados as a host for the Queensland Fruit Fly quarantine, which currently includes parts of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, according to the release. CAC says it will continue to work with USDA and CDFA on the fruit fly quarantines to ensure the harvest and transportation of fruit from within quarantine areas maintains the necessary safeguards to prevent the spread of the fruit fly while not creating unnecessary burdens on premium California avocado production.

"California avocado growers are committed to providing customers with consistently reliable avocados in season," Melban said.

THE CALIFORNIA FAIR PLAN INCREASES COMMERCIAL COVERAGE LIMITS TO \$20 MILLION PER LOCATION

The California FAIR Plan Association (FAIR Plan), in collaboration with the California Department of Insurance (CDI), is now offering increased commercial coverage of up to \$20 million per location, effective November 1. Increasing these limits is a step in the right direction to help consumers and commercial businesses obtain the coverage they need. Prior to this adjustment, the maximum limits for commercial coverage were \$8.4 million per location. Business owners policy property coverage limits will also increase to \$20 million, effective December 14. There are no additional underwriting requirements for these increased limits, and no additional documentation beyond the previous requirements for commercial applications and endorsements is needed to obtain coverage at the increased limits. As Californians continue to confront insurance availability challenges, more consumers have turned to the FAIR Plan for the coverage they need. As of September 2023, the FAIR Plan had 330,101 policies in force, representing a nearly 21 percent increase since the beginning of 2023. More information about the California FAIR Plan: The FAIR Plan is a private association comprised of all insurers licensed to write property insurance in California and is funded primarily through the policies it sells to customers. The FAIR Plan is not a state agency and is not funded by the state or other public agencies. The California FAIR Plan Association offers basic property insurance for all Californians who cannot access coverage in the voluntary insurance marketplace. As an insurer of "last resort," the FAIR Plan was established by statute to provide a temporary safety net for consumers who need fire insurance until coverage through the voluntary market is available.

Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) Update for Riverside County



As of November 7, 2023, there have been 19 Oriental Fruit Fly finds in Riverside County: 1 in Beaumont, 4 in Calimesa, 7 in Moreno Valley, 5 in Riverside, and 2 in Jurupa Valley. Total finds in the project area are 516.

The quarantine has now been expanded to encompass most of Moreno Valley, and all of Calimesa. The Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's staff is actively working on regulatory efforts to notify commercial growers, farmers markets, plant sellers, certified producers, community gardens, and Haulers. The staff is also currently assisting CDFA with delimitation trapping efforts, specifically in Riverside finds, and will continue to do so on all new finds within the county.

The Oriental Fruit Fly is known to target over 230 different fruit, vegetable, and plant commodities. Important California crops at risk include grapes, pome, stone fruits, citrus, dates, avocados, and many vegetables, particularly tomatoes and peppers. Damage occurs when the female fruit fly lays eggs inside the fruit. The eggs hatch into maggots, which tunnel through the flesh of the fruit or vegetable, making it unfit for consumption.

"Invasive fruit flies are serious pests for California's orchards and backyard gardens," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "These recent detections remind us that we need to remain vigilant in protecting our food supply and natural resources. The stakes are enormous, and not just in California. A new report from the United Nations notes that invasive species management costs hundreds of billions of dollars each year around the world. We're all in this together as we work to reduce this impact."

TOGETHER WE GIVE



GIVING
TUESDAY

NOV. 28, 2023



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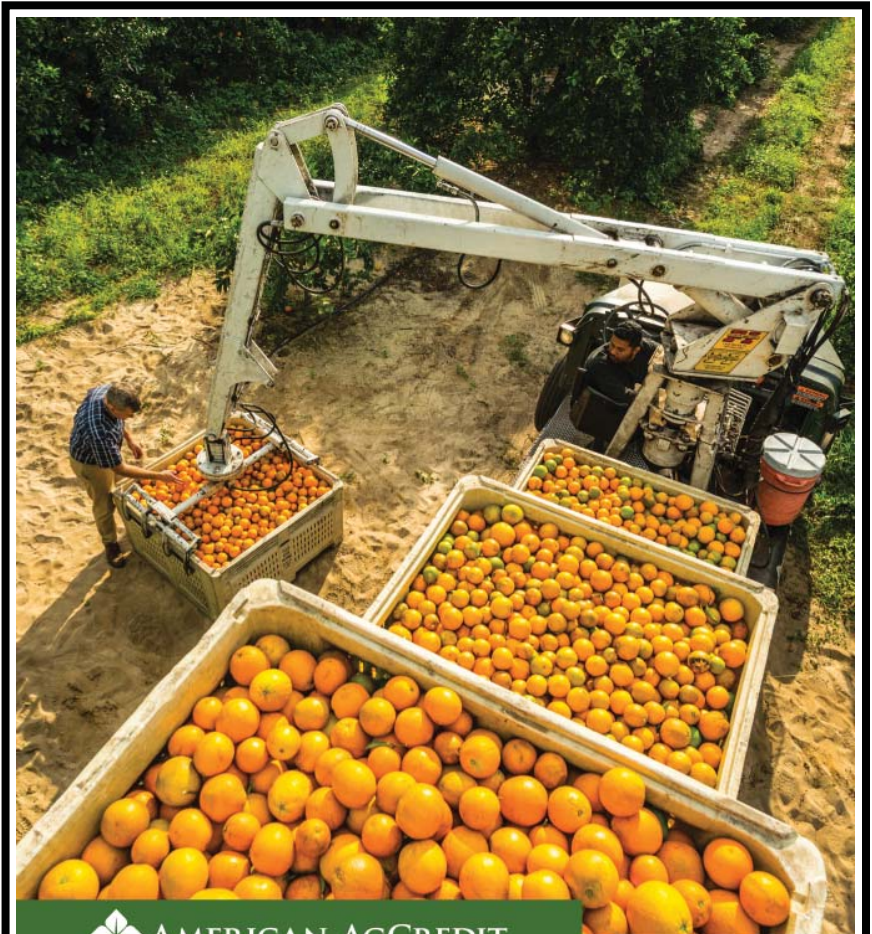
Giving Tuesday is a global day to #GiveBack. On the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, we invite you to join us in supporting UC Master Gardeners, a community of passionate gardeners and educators dedicated to promoting healthier gardens and more sustainable landscapes.

On November 28, your donation will enable us to continue providing gardening education, resources, and support to garden enthusiasts across California.

Visit ucanr.edu/GivingTuesday and help us sow the seeds of knowledge. Let's make this Giving Tuesday a day of growing forward together. We hope you will join us on November 28!

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Climate change to drive surge in insects that attack almonds, peaches, walnuts

UC study predicts three major pests to emerge earlier, produce more generations

As a result of climate change, the Golden State's farms are expected to face a surge in agricultural pests, which poses a threat to California's specialty crops industry. Populations of three major insect pests – codling moth, peach twig borer and oriental fruit moth — are projected to increase mainly due to rising temperatures, according to a study recently published in the journal "Science of the Total Environment" by a team of researchers at University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Agriculture California Climate Hub.

"These three pests are notorious for infesting most of the walnut, almond and peach orchards of California, causing extensive damages by reducing quality of fruits and nuts," said study co-author Jhalendra Rijal, UC Cooperative Extension integrated pest management advisor and entomologist for Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Merced counties.

Climate change can lead to shifts in the timing of seasons, including warmer winters, earlier springs and hotter summers, and these conditions can disrupt the natural life cycles of pests.

The new research, led by Prakash Jha, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources assistant project scientist based at UC Merced, compared pest populations in recent and future climates. The scientists used temperature projections from scientific models to predict the potential impact of climate change on codling moth (*Cydia pomonella*), peach twig borer (*Anarsia lineatella*) and oriental fruit moth (*Grapholita molesta*).

The UC study revealed that due to increases in temperature, these insects are expected to appear up to 28 days earlier in the spring and the time between generations is expected to shorten by up to 19 days. The changes may be gradual, but the study predicts that we may see up to a half-generation of these pests added within the next 20 to 30 years.

The increase in these pest populations poses a serious threat for future pest management, which would subsequently affect the state's economy and employment related to specialty crops, warns Rijal.

"Codling moth is the primary pest of California's walnuts, which occupies over 365,000 acres," Rijal said. "Similarly, peach twig borer and oriental fruit moth are two major economic pests of peaches. Growers must control almost every generation of these pests to protect the fruit.

"Additional generations of these pests within the same growing season will likely increase crop damage. It certainly increases the number of sprays needed to control these pests, increasing the production cost for growers. Plus, more use of insecticides has consequences for beneficial insects and the environment."

Growers may need to adapt their pest management strategies to address the impact of climate change on these pests.

For years, the UC Integrated Pest Management guidelines have suggested putting oriental fruit moth traps out in peach orchards by Feb. 15 in the San Joaquin Valley and Feb. 20 in the Sacramento Valley.

"This year, likely due to warmer winter, as suggested in this study, we observed the beginning of the moth's activity in traps (also called biofix) as early as Feb. 14," Rijal said, "meaning that the trap placement date must move earlier to capture the first moth activity. We are revising the guidelines to change the trap placement date to Feb. 7 for the entire Central Valley."

Developing a holistic climate-smart pest management strategy will build resilience, Jha said. This approach combines pest control with prevention and reduction, such as planting pest-resistant crop varieties, sanitizing the orchards during the winter, harvesting early to avoid later pest generation infestation, using biological control such as natural enemies, and deploying mating disruption techniques.

"More importantly, adoption of pest forecasting – including the long-term prediction and short-term potential outbreak, pest-scouting and early detection – will be essential to combat the growing threat posed by these pests," Jha said.

Research will be crucial to provide growers support and guidance about the latest developments in pest management and how to adapt their practices.

"Climate change impacts on pests and resulting impacts on agricultural production are significant but not often researched or quantified," said Tapan Pathak, UC Cooperative Extension specialist in climate adaptation in agriculture based at UC Merced.

"Information from this research will not only help farmers to understand impacts for strategic planning, but also will inform the agricultural industry to invest in making varieties more resilient to these damaging agricultural pests," Pathak added. "We will use this information to update the CalAgroClimate tool, which informs farmers on the progress of these pests during the season so that they can take steps for effective pest management."

In addition to Jha, Rijal and Pathak, the study was co-authored by Ning Zhang, Lauren E. Parker and Steven Ostoja of UC Davis Institute of the Environment and U.S. Department of Agriculture California Climate Hub.

The article "Climate change impacts on insect pests for high value specialty crops in California" can be accessed for free online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.167605>.

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Report of the Nominating Committee

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Riverside County Farm Bureau, election of Officers and Directors were held and voted in by the Agricultural (Voting) members at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 5, 2023 at Monteleone Meadows in Murrieta, CA.

The Nominating Committee recommended the following Board of Directors for the 2023 - 2024 membership year.

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Andy Wilson

Vice President

Paul Cramer

Vice President

Ellen Way

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



There will be no Board of Directors meeting in November or December 2023. The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 10, 2024. More details will be announced at a later date.

Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

Delay in passing farm bill could cut off federal support for dairy farmers

Dairy farmers are bracing for the “dairy cliff.” That is the term for what happens if the federal Dairy Margin Coverage Program is allowed to expire. The program offers monthly price support payments to dairy farmers. If Congress fails to pass a new, five-year farm bill or approve an extension of current legislation by the end of this year, those payments will cease. That would harm dairies, increase milk prices and cause supply-chain disruptions. “It would be disastrous for the dairy industry,” said Matthew Viohl, California Farm Bureau director of federal policy.

Palm weevil blamed for mass destruction on palms in San Diego County

An insect is wreaking havoc on palm trees in San Diego County. The South American palm weevil, also referred to as the American palm weevil and black palm weevil, was first detected in the region 2011 and breeding populations were later found in a Canary Island date palm in San Ysidro in 2015. Weevils have been blamed for killing more than 20,000 palms in the region. Though no infestation has been confirmed, the insect has been reported in the Coachella Valley, a major production area for edible dates about 120 miles northeast of San Diego.

Organic growers in quarantine region worry about citrus greening threat

As an organic citrus grower and packer in Ventura County, John Wise has long recognized the threat of the Asian citrus psyllid to his business and livelihood. The threat has become greater now that part of his region is under quarantine as state agricultural officials continue to find more residential citrus trees infected with huanglongbing, or citrus greening disease, a fatal bacterial infection that the insect can transmit. For organic citrus growers, there remain few effective treatment options approved for organic production to control the psyllid.