

Riverside County AGRICULTURE

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

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Welcome New Members

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



Coachella Valley
Irrigated Lands Coalition, Inc

You are invited to attend the second annual grower meeting of 2023 for the Coachella Valley Irrigated Lands Coalition.

When: Tuesday, October 31, 2023 from 2pm – 3:30pm

Where: Coachella Corporate Yard 53-462 Enterprise Way, Coachella.

This meeting will cover the new nitrogen fertilizer reporting templates, the surface water sampling program and plans for a groundwater quality trend monitoring network. This meeting will also assist you in completing the new Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Plan Summary Report (INMPSR) that will be due February 1, 2024.

Spanish language translation will be provided.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend to lcooper@CVILC.ag.

This meeting fulfills your mandatory meeting requirement for 2023. Meeting attendance will be credited to your Membership ID Number (IDNO).

If you cannot attend the meeting in person, you can join us live via Zoom.

Zoom Option Information:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9633897180?pwd=dWttRnlkam5TTDFWdHZRUi8vSXpSQT09

Meeting ID: 963 389 7180 Password: 259808 Dial by your location +1 408 638 0968

A recording of the event will also be posted on the CVILC website: www.cvilc.ag a few days after the meeting.

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USDA Extends Deadline for Emergency Conservation Program Applications from California Producers

Funding Available to Help Restore Lands to Pre-Disaster Condition, Replace or Repair Fencing

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has extended the deadline for accepting Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) applications from California agricultural producers who need assistance to address damages from severe storms that occurred during December 2022 to April 2023. All counties in California were approved to implement ECP for damage caused by severe storms/flooding. The application deadline has been extended to December 29, 2023.

“We understand the extent of the damage caused by these severe storms and the catastrophic and widespread impacts of these disasters on California’s agricultural communities,” said Blong Xiong, State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in California. “This deadline extension will give producers more time to apply for emergency assistance and rebuild with resiliency.”

ECP provides financial assistance to producers to help them restore their farmland to pre-disaster conditions. Approved ECP applicants may receive up to 75% of the cost of an approved restoration activity. Limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and beginning farmers and ranchers may receive up to 90% cost-share. The payment limitation for ECP is \$500,000 per disaster event.

The approved ECP practices under this authorization for recovery include:

- Removing debris from farmland;
- Grading, shaping, releveling, or similar measures;
- Replacing or repairing permanent fences; and
- Restoring conservation structures and other installations

Producers with damage from such events must apply for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work. They must also work with FSA to complete the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental compliance review process. before they begin reconstructive work. If a producer submits an ECP application after reconstructive work has been completed, their eligibility for program benefits may be adversely impacted.

FSA county committees will evaluate applications based on an applicant’s estimate or measurement of the damaged land, taking into consideration the type and extent of the damage. On-site visits will be required for every ECP application. Applying for ECP assistance does not guarantee that cost-share funding will be provided.

The use of ECP funds is limited to activities to return the land to the relative pre-disaster condition. Conservation concerns that were present on the land prior to the disaster are not eligible for ECP assistance.

More Information

For more information on ECP, please contact your local FSA office or visit farmers.gov/recover. To find your local FSA office visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Additional USDA disaster assistance can be found on farmers.gov, including the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Loan Assistance Tool can help producers and landowners determine program or loan options. For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their crop insurance agent. For FSA and NRCS programs, they should contact their local USDA Service Center.

LEGISLATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Two of the worst bills for agriculture proposed to upend and essentially eliminate the current water rights system: AB 460 (Bauer-Kahan) and AB 1337 (Wicks). Our GAD and Legal teams worked hand in glove to fight these issues and when the critical time came, it was over a thousand Farm Bureau members who weighed in and ensured that a new freshman Senator, Steve Padilla, was the final vote to stop these bills in their tracks. Concurrent with this effort, our GAD and legal teams compelled the Governor’s office to issue an executive order to allow for the sinking of groundwater to be a beneficial use and then to codify that right into law. We had been working on that effort for close to fifteen years and now farmers throughout the state can choose to use their fields to replenish the groundwater basin and, hopefully, take some of the sting out of SGMA.

ORIENTAL FRUIT FLY QUARANTINE IN PORTIONS OF SACRAMENTO, SAN BERNARDINO, AND RIVERSIDE COUNTIES



Portions of Sacramento, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties have been placed under quarantine for the Oriental fruit fly following the detection of multiple flies in those regions.

In Sacramento County, detections in and around the city of Rancho Cordova have resulted in a quarantine zone covering 106 square miles, bordered on the north by Madison Ave. in the community of Foothill Farms; on the south by Elder Creek Road; on the west by 28th St. in Sacramento; and on the east by Douglas Road near Sunrise Blvd.

In San Bernardino and Riverside counties, detections in and around the city of Redlands have resulted in a quarantine zone covering 112 square miles, bordered on the north by the San Bernardino National Forest; on the south by Highway 60; on the west by Mountain View Avenue and Redlands Boulevard in Loma Linda; and on the east by Wildwood Canyon.

A link to both quarantine maps may be found here: www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/off/regulation.html

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

To prevent the spread of oriental fruit flies through homegrown fruits and vegetables, residents living in the quarantine area are urged not to move those items from their property. However, they may be consumed or processed (i.e., juiced, frozen, cooked, or ground in the garbage disposal) on the property where they were picked or disposed of by double bagging and placing in the regular trash, not green waste.

Following the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), agricultural officials use the “male attractant” technique as the mainstay of the eradication effort for this invasive species. This approach has successfully eliminated dozens of fruit fly infestations in California. Trained workers squirt a small patch of fruit fly attractant mixed with a very small dose of an organic pesticide, Spinosad, approximately 8-10 feet off the ground on street trees and similar surfaces; male fruit flies are attracted to the mixture and perish after consuming it. The male attractant treatment program is being carried out over an area that extends 1.5 miles from each site where the oriental fruit flies were trapped.

While fruit flies and other invasive species that threaten California’s crops and natural environment are sometimes detected in agricultural areas, the vast majority are found in urban and suburban communities. The most common pathway for these pests to enter the state is by “hitchhiking” on fruits and vegetables brought back illegally by travelers as they return from infested regions of the world, or in produce from other countries sent to California.

The Oriental fruit fly is widespread throughout much of the mainland of southern Asia and neighboring islands, including Sri Lanka and Taiwan, and it has invaded other areas, most notably Africa and Hawaii.

Residents with questions about the project may call CDFA’s Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899. Additional information may be found here: www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/off.



ACP/HLB UPDATES

In Riverside County, as of October 6, 2023, a total of 197 residential citrus trees have been confirmed positive for HLB in Riverside Co. for a total of 6,481 residential citrus trees statewide. New HLB tree detections continue to be found in the city of Corona. HLB



quarantine maps can be found in the Citrus Insider website. When moving citrus from, to, or within an HLB quarantine, please review the HLB and ACP regulatory protocols and contact the Riverside Co. Agricultural Commissioner’s Office to submit the required mitigation forms. If you need a pest control or tree removal referral, please contact me, Sandra Zwaal szwaal2@gmail.com.

UC Cooperative Extension advisor helps property managers prevent pests in the home

Living with pests, or "unwanted guests" as some put it, can take a physical, mental and economic toll. For people living in multi-family unit housing, like an apartment complex where everyone lives under one roof, a single infestation of insects or rodents can expose all residents.

Using integrated pest management, or IPM, residents and property managers can detect infestations early and control severe ones and protect people. IPM programs can also save money. IPM saved a 75-unit complex in Contra Costa County \$11,121 annually. Similarly, in Santa Clara County, a 59-unit complex saved \$1,321 on pest control annually after implementing a proactive IPM program.

This summer, regional directors, property managers, residential service coordinators, maintenance managers and groundskeepers of Mercy Housing – a nonprofit organization that provides affordable, low-income housing – gathered in Long Beach to learn about in-home IPM. The session was led by Siavash Taravati, University of California Cooperative Extension area IPM advisor for Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and Josh Shoemaker, an entomologist and private consultant.

Taravati and Shoemaker collaborated with StopPests in Housing, a national program out of Cornell University's Northeastern IPM Center, which seeks to improve pest control in affordable housing and teach management practices for cockroaches, bed bugs and rodents within and around the home.

During their presentation, Taravati introduced participants to the IPM principles and emphasized the importance of monitoring pests.

"IPM is all about making informed decisions which requires knowing the latest status of an infestation," explained Taravati. "That's where monitoring comes into play. It can help us to identify the exact species we are dealing with as well as telling us if an infestation is growing or shrinking."

"Monitoring is foundational," agreed Shoemaker. "If a program does not include monitoring, it's not an IPM program."

According to Shoemaker, the benefit of partnering with UC IPM is their sharp focus on general IPM, which includes monitoring. "It's real IPM, that prioritizes the well-being of the public," said Shoemaker, who's eager to continue working with Cooperative Extension and Taravati to ensure that children are growing up in safe environments.

Pest control treatments commonly take place following a serious infestation or several complaints, but IPM promotes constant monitoring to prevent heavy infestations from ever happening. It's a proactive approach rather than a reactive or emergency-response. For many attendees, the training revealed a need to engage with pest management operators more closely.

Training prompts changes that improve safety for residents

Pest management operators commonly use pesticide sprays to control pests. Besides inconveniencing residents, forcing them to do extensive preparations and evacuate their unit until it's safe to return, sprays increase exposure risk to pesticides since the aerosols can linger and land on surfaces.

Instead, Taravati and Shoemaker recommend using gel baits, which are much safer to apply and can target a specific area of a home, including crevices, instead of along all the walls.

"Now that I'm more informed, I'll be speaking to my contractor to discuss how we can switch their **CONT. ON PAGE 6....**



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.....CONT. FROM PAGE 5. approach from a bug spray to a gel," said Leonardo Pinuelas, a maintenance manager for Mercy Housing.

Pinuelas is not the only one wanting to modify their program, however. According to feedback from staff members at the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles who experienced the same training earlier this year, they prompted their team to amend their pest extermination to include dusting, or applying insecticidal dusts, against roaches, and to review and update their existing IPM plan and practices where appropriate.

Cindy Wise, area director of operations for Mercy Housing, said that in her 35 years, this was one of the few trainings that engaged her staff so actively. "I couldn't help but text my regional vice president to say that our managers were actively participating and asking questions. That doesn't happen often, not even in our own meetings," said Wise.

Many of the attendees, with their new understanding of how cockroaches move through a structure, shared that they are eager to return to work to meet with residents and support them.

"If you've got roaches in one unit, you've got them in the entire building," Wise said.

Shoemaker recalls the words of Judy Black, senior technical entomologist for Orkin, and Dini Miller, entomologist at Virginia Tech, who urge the importance of inspections and documentation as IPM best practices.

Although reporting pests in the home can make one feel embarrassed, Wise said she is more interested in making residents feel empowered to not only report signs of infestation to the staff, but to their neighbors.

Training residents is certainly beneficial, but as experts such as Black and Miller have pointed out, housing managers must do their part, instead of scapegoating tenants for their cleaning habits.

StopPests provides free IPM training and technical assistance to Housing and Urban Development assisted properties. If you are interested in the training provided by Taravati and Shoemaker, in collaboration with StopPests, visit StopPests.org for more information.

UC Agriculture and Natural Resources brings the power of UC to all 58 California counties. Through research and Cooperative Extension in agriculture, natural resources, nutrition, economic and youth development, our mission is to improve the lives of all Californians. Learn more at ucanr.edu and support our work at donate.ucanr.edu.

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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

Quarantine established in Ventura County amid threat to citrus

A new quarantine has been established in Ventura County, a key commercial citrus-growing region, after two residential citrus trees in the city of Santa Paula tested positive for the fatal citrus disease huanglongbing, or citrus greening. The quarantine, which covers a minimum 5-mile radius around where the diseased trees were found, is mandated by law to restrict movement of citrus fruit, trees and related plant material, so as not to artificially spread the disease.

Researchers eye agave as a crop for state's changing climate

After years of drought, some California farmers are planting agave, a drought-tolerant succulent used to make sweeteners and distilled beverages such as tequila and mezcal. Calling agave an emerging, low-water crop, researchers at the University of California and partners in the state and in Mexico are sharing research and growing guidelines for growers interested in sustainably growing agave. Researchers said agave plants carry significance in Latino and indigenous cultures, having provided food, fiber and tools for sewing and medicine for thousands of years.

Forecast of another El Niño raises water hopes, flooding fears

California has seen dramatic increases in reservoir levels and surface-water supplies as a result of an El Niño weather pattern this year that brought drenching atmospheric river storms. It followed a La Niña pattern that delivered three years of searing drought. But with farmers and ranchers suddenly blessed with ample water supplies, state and federal officials said last week they expect to release water from reservoirs to create more water-storage space. That is because of fears of potential severe flooding from a predicted second consecutive El Niño year.