



Photo: Romaine Lettuce, Ocean Mist Farms - Coachella.

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AMERICANS CONSUME 30 POUNDS...

OF LETTUCE PER PERSON EACH YEAR



REGROW LETTUCES LIKE MAGIC

LET'S LEARN ABOUT LEAFY GREENS!



CALIFORNIA GROWS 90% OF U.S. LEAFY GREENS



ANATOMY OF A LEAFY GREEN

**PLACE ROOT IN WATER
GIVE IT PLENTY OF SUN
CHANGE THE WATER OFTEN**



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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING AND BECOMING PART OF THE FARM BUREAU FAMILY.

Meet RCFB's Newest Vice Presidents

In November 2025, the Riverside County Farm Bureau (RCFB) held its 108th Annual Meeting, where members in attendance elected nominees to serve on the Board of Directors. During the meeting, two new Vice Presidents were elected. Please join us in welcoming **Rod Chamberlain** and **Alex Sanchez**.



Rod Chamberlain is a mango grower based in North Shore, California, the southernmost part of the Coachella Valley. Alongside his wife, Debbie, and their two sons, Barrett and Jason, Rod continues the family legacy at Wong Farms. For three generations, the Wong-Chamberlain family has farmed a sandy parcel of land nestled between Joshua Tree and the Salton Sea, specializing in winter tomatoes and tree-ripened summer mangoes.



Alex Sanchez serves as Ranch Unit Director at Grimmway Farms/Cal-Organic Farms. In this role, he oversees the production of organic vegetables and conventionally grown carrots across Coachella, the Imperial Valley, Yuma, and Parker. Alex is deeply committed to sustainable farming practices and works closely with Cal-Organic's desert farming team to produce best-in-class organic vegetables during the winter season.

The Riverside County Farm Bureau looks forward to the leadership, experience, and perspective Rod Chamberlain and Alex Sanchez bring to the Board as they begin their service as Vice Presidents.

Reminder for Employers: OSHA Form 300A Posting Requirement

Employers with 11 or more employees are required to post the OSHA Form 300A Annual Summary each year from February 1 through April 30.

This summary reflects work-related injuries and illnesses from the previous calendar year and must be displayed even if no recordable incidents occurred.

Key Requirements to Know:

What to Post:

- Only the OSHA Form 300A (Annual Summary).
- Do not post the full OSHA 300 Log, as it contains confidential employee information.

When to Post:

- The form must be posted no later than February 1 and remain posted through April 30.

Who Must Sign:

- The summary must be certified by an authorized management representative, such as an owner, officer, or the highest-ranking official at the establishment.

Employees Without a Fixed Location:

- A copy of the Form 300A must be made available to employees who do not regularly report to a fixed workplace.

Record Retention:

- Both the OSHA 300 Log and Form 300A must be retained for five (5) years.

No Injuries or Illnesses to Report?

- You are still required to post the Form 300A, with zeros entered in the total lines.

Electronic Reporting Reminder:

- Even if you submit injury data electronically through OSHA's Injury Tracking Application (ITA), you must still physically post the Form 300A at the workplace.

If you have questions about OSHA recordkeeping requirements or need assistance, AgSafe is here to help. Contact us at safeinfo@agsafe.org or call 209-526-4400.

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Growing What Others Said Couldn't Grow



This month our Director spotlight shines on Coachella Valley farmer Linden Anderson. His career is a great example of what Coachella Valley agriculture is all about, deep roots, steady leadership, and the kind of practical mindset that's willing to try something new, even when people say it won't work in the desert.

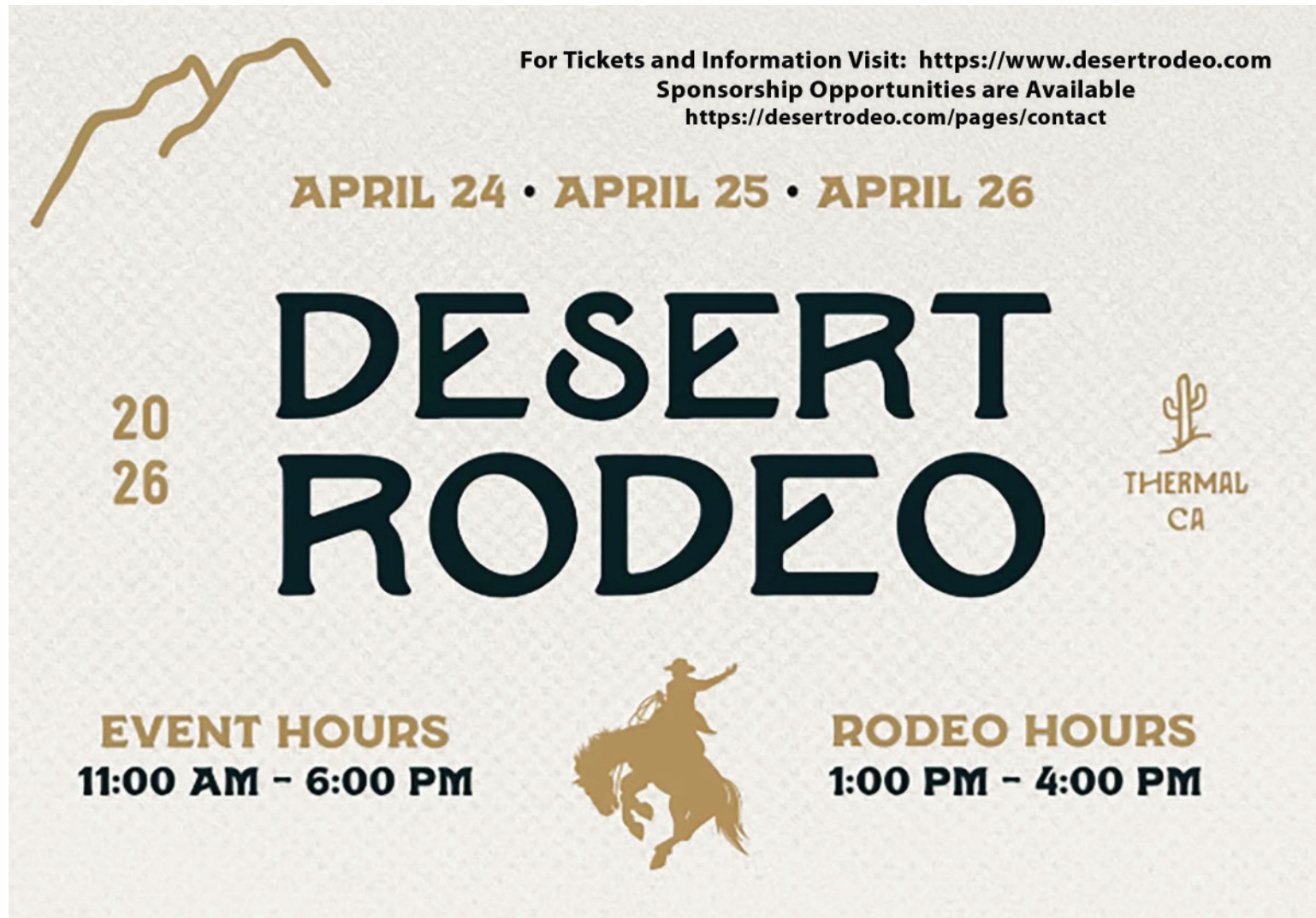
Raised in a multigenerational farming family closely tied to the Valley's iconic date industry, Anderson grew up understanding what desert farming requires. In a place where water, weather, and markets can change fast, his family's legacy has always been about hard work, sticking with it, and doing right by the community.

What really stands out about Anderson's impact is how he helped broaden what Coachella Valley agriculture can be. Back in the early 1980s, commercial mango production in California sounded like a long shot to most people. But Anderson helped prove otherwise through hands-on work and years of trial and error. A 10-acre block was planted in 1984 at C.M.&S. Ranch in Oasis, where more than 50 mango varieties were tested before settling on Keitt, known for its sweet, fiber-free flesh and how well it performs in desert conditions.

Of course, building a new crop in a tough environment means taking on risk. Anderson has described triple-digit harvest mornings as "mild," which says everything about the kind of heat those trees face. And when a severe freeze in January 2007 wiped out many desert mango groves, Linden worked closely with owner Howard Marguleas to replant and rehabilitate the damaged grove. He summed up the attitude that keeps agriculture moving forward, we will replant, recover, and keep going "We're not going away."

That same steady, solutions-first approach shows up in his commitment to stewardship. By using more efficient irrigation technology, Anderson has helped his orchards thrive in the desert while cutting back on water use and runoff. He's also helped lead organic mango production, opening new markets, even though it comes with more work and added challenges in the field.

For our Farm Bureau community, Linden Anderson's legacy is clear, he continues to show that with the right stewardship, technical know-how, and grit, the Coachella Valley can grow world-class fruit and keep building a stronger agricultural future along the way.



For Tickets and Information Visit: <https://www.desertrodeo.com>
Sponsorship Opportunities are Available
<https://desertrodeo.com/pages/contact>

APRIL 24 • APRIL 25 • APRIL 26

2026

DESERT RODEO

EVENT HOURS
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

RODEO HOURS
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

THERMAL CA

Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival Announces 2026 Scholarship Recipients

The Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival presented by Fantasy Springs Resort Casino is proud to announce the recipients of its 2026 Date Festival Scholarship Program following finalist interviews held this weekend. Judges were deeply impressed by the academic achievement, leadership, and community commitment demonstrated by all 16 finalists.

As part of the Fair & Date Fest's proud 78-year tradition of supporting Riverside County students, ten finalists were named Scholarship Recipients. In a generous show of support, judges Becky Bailey-Findley and Gary Findley contributed an additional \$6,000 to the program, allowing the remaining six finalists to be recognized as Scholarship Honorees—ensuring every finalist received a scholarship in recognition of their accomplishments.

"This scholarship program is an investment in Riverside County's students and the future of our community," said Chris Pickering, CEO of Pickering Events. "Each year, the interview process reinforces how much talent, heart, and promise exists in our local schools."

"Programs like the Date Festival Scholarship help open doors for students who are working hard to shape a better future for themselves and our region," said V. Manuel Perez, Riverside County Supervisor. "It's inspiring to see local institutions step up year after year to invest in education and opportunity."

All 16 scholarship recipients and honorees will receive season passes to the 2026 Fair & Date Fest happening February 12 - March 1, and are invited to participate in the Presidents' Day Parade on Monday, February 16 as honored guests alongside local elected officials and community leaders.

Scholarship Recipients

- Bella Barone — Palm Desert — Palm Desert High School
- Joanna Bushnell Crist — Indio — La Quinta High School
- Preston Ellis — Palm Desert — Palm Desert High School
- Emanuel Garcia — Riverside — Ramona High School
- Elizabeth Guerra — Indio — Indio High School
- Erik Huerta — Mecca — Desert Mirage High School
- Paola Miranda — North Shore — Desert Mirage High School
- Kaden Ren — Riverside — Martin Luther King High School
- Pratham Sanghu — Corona — La Sierra Academy
- Ines Yanez — Temecula — Temecula Preparatory School

Scholarship Honorees

- Anahi Canseco — Jurupa Valley — Rubidoux High School
- Jahzara Dansby — Lake Elsinore — Murrieta Mesa High School
- Alexander Diaz — Indio — Indio High School
- Mario Irrera — Indio — Indio High School
- Rachel Anne Madrid — Aguanga — JCS—Pine Hills High School
- Roberto Sanchez — Indio — Indio High School

The Date Festival Scholarship Program is made possible through the continued support of Butler Amusements and Pickering Events. Scholarships are distributed directly to recipients' colleges or universities, and Scholarship Recipients also receive Season Passes to the 2026 Fair & Date Fest.

The 2026 Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival runs February 12 through March 1. For more information about the Fair & Date Fest, visit [datefest.org](https://www.datefest.org).



Ready to show off your honey, beer, or wine? Entries are now open for the San Diego County Fair competitions! Whether you're a beekeeper, brewer, or vintner, this is your chance to gain recognition and put your products in the spotlight. Enter today at <https://www.sdfair.com/p/participate/entry>

The **Farm 2U exhibit** at the San Diego County Fair is currently looking for farmers to serve as judges for our debut Grown & Gathered Contest, featuring Eggs, Vegetable, and Honey competitions; farmers may participate directly or designate someone from their organization, interested judges can email Farm2U@sdfair.com or apply <https://forms.office.com/r/6SZuh40ASa>.

Get ready to dig in and show off your blooms, the Floral and Garden Competitions are back at the San Diego County Fair and they're more fun than ever! This year's Garden Show is sprouting something new with a Patio Garden Contest perfect for small-space creativity, plus a Specimen Plant Contest created especially for professional nurserymen to put their prize plants in the spotlight. Over in the Floral Show, things are heating up with the brand-new Vase Off Competition a fast-paced timed floral design competition open to both professionals and amateurs—so whether you're a seasoned arranger or just love playing with petals, there's a place for you to shine! Entries are now open at <https://www.sdfair.com/p/participate/entry>

AB 1585, Wine Labeling: "American" or "United States" Appellation

Under existing federal law, wine may use the appellation "American" if at least 75% of the wine is derived from fruit or agricultural products grown in the United States.

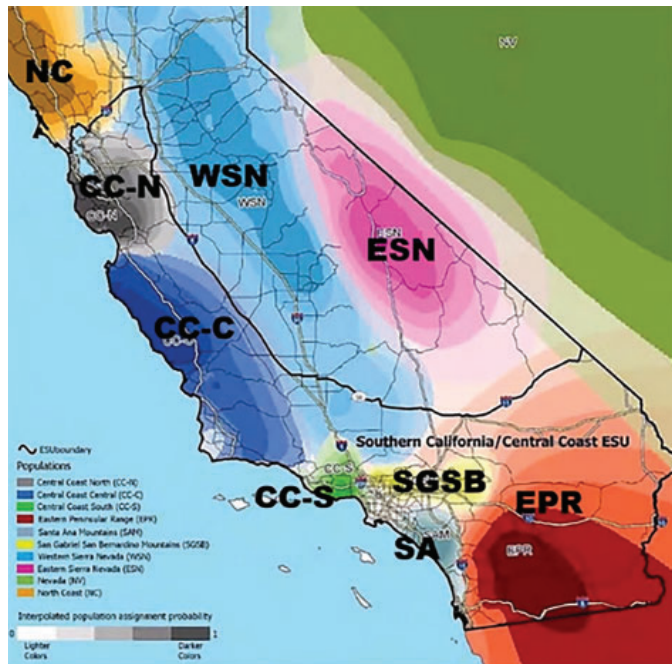
Assembly Bill 1585, by Damon Connolly, D—San Rafael, would establish a stricter standard for wine sold in California. For wine bottled on or after July 1, 2027, the bill would prohibit the use of the appellation "American" or "United States" unless 100% of the wine is derived from grapes or other agricultural products grown in the United States. The bill authorizes the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to seize wine labeled in violation of this requirement. Because violations would expand the scope of an existing crime, the measure would create a state-mandated local program. California Farm Bureau supports the bill. Staff contact: Chris Reardon, creardon@cfbf.com.

Fish and Game Commission Lists Mountain Lions as Threatened

The California Fish and Game Commission voted to list mountain lions in Southern California and along the Central Coast as threatened under state law. The decision follows a 2019 petition to list the species and a 2020 status review.

Over the past seven years, California Farm Bureau has actively engaged with the Commission to adamantly express concerns about the listing, arguing that available data does not demonstrate a population decline and that a threatened designation could limit wildlife management tools.

591 letters submitted by Farm Bureau members.
Direct appeals from 19 county Farm Bureaus.



"Farm Bureau Working for You"

AB 1421 Road Usage Charge Study and Report

Existing law requires the Chair of the California Transportation Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, to establish a Road Usage Charge Technical Advisory Committee. The committee is tasked with guiding the development and evaluation of a pilot program that explores mileage-based revenue collection as a potential alternative to the state's traditional gas tax system.

Assembly Bill 1421 by Assemblymember Lori D. Wilson, D-Suisun City, builds on that framework by requiring CTC, in consultation with the California Transportation Agency, to consolidate existing research and develop formal recommendations related to a road user charge or mileage-based fee system. The bill directs the Commission to consult with relevant state agencies and stakeholders in preparing this work and to submit a comprehensive report of its findings and recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature no later than Jan. 1, 2027.

California Farm Bureau is monitoring AB 1421. While the bill does not establish a road usage charge at this time, it advances research and formal recommendations that could shape the future of California's transportation funding system. Given the potential impacts on rural drivers, agricultural operations and goods movement, California Farm Bureau will remain engaged throughout the process. Staff Contact: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com.



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USDA Announces Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers Impacted by Unfair Market Disruptions

Specialty Crops Acreage Reporting Deadline for 2025 is March 13

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing \$1 billion in Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program assistance for specialty crops and sugar, commodities not covered through the previously announced Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program. These one-time bridge payments will help address market disruptions, elevated input costs, persistent inflation, and market losses from foreign competitors engaging in unfair trade practices that impede exports. Specialty crop producers have until March 13, 2026, to report 2025 acres to USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

"President Trump has the backs of our farmers, and today we are building on our Farmer Bridge Assistance program with the Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers (ASCF) Program. Our specialty crop producers continue to feel the negative effects of four years under the Biden Administration, suffering from record inflation, a depleted farm safety net, and delayed disaster assistance," **said Secretary Rollins**. "President Trump and the entire cabinet are working every day to fight bidenflation and lower prices for consumers. If our specialty crop producers are not economically able to continue their operations, American families will see a decrease in the food they rely on, wholesome and nutritious fruits and vegetables. Putting Farmers First is essential to the Make America Healthy Again movement and we are doing both at USDA by expanding market opportunities and improving the farm economy for all producers. Today's specialty crop announcement builds on our efforts to improve markets for real food into American schools, institutions, and family dinner tables."

The Assistance for Specialty Crop Farmers Program is authorized under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act and will be administered by FSA.

Eligible Specialty Crops

ASCF-eligible specialty crops include: **(A)** Almond, Apple, Apricot, Aronia berry, Artichoke, Asparagus, Avocado **(B)** Banana, Bean (Snap or green; Lima; Dry edible), Beet (Table), Blackberry, Blueberry, Breadfruit, Broccoli (including Broccoli Raab), Brussels Sprouts **(C)** Cabbage (including Chinese), Cacao, Carrot, Cashew, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Cherimoya, Cherry, Chestnut (for Nuts), Chive, Citrus, Coconut, Coffee, Collards (including Kale), Cranberry, Cucumber, Currant **(D)** Date, Dry Edible Beans and Peas* **(E)** Edamame, Eggplant, Endive **(F)** Feijou, Fig, Filbert (Hazelnut) **(G)** Garlic, Gooseberry, Grape (including Raisin), Guava **(H)** Horseradish **(K)** Kiwi, Kohlrabi **(L)** Leek, Lettuce, Litchi **(M)** Macadamia, Mango, Melon (All Types), Mushroom (Cultivated), Mustard and Other Greens **(N)** Nectarine **(O)** Okra, Olive, Onion, Opuntia **(P)** Papaya, Parsley, Parsnip, Passion Fruit, Pea (Garden; English or Edible Pod; Dry edible), Peach, Pear, Pecan, Pepper, Persimmon, Pineapple, Pistachio, Plum (including Prune), Pomegranate, Potato, Pumpkin **(Q)** Quince **(R)** Radish (All Types), Raspberry, Rhubarb, Rutabaga **(S)** Salsify, Spinach, Squash (Summer and Winter), Strawberry, Suriname Cherry, Sweet Corn, Sweet Potato, Swiss Chard **(T)** Taro, Tomato (including Tomatillo), Turnip **(W)** Walnut, Watermelon

*Dry edible beans and peas covered by FBA will not be eligible for ASCF.

ASCF payments are based on reported 2025 planted acres.

Eligible farmers should ensure their 2025 acreage reporting is factual and accurate by 5 p.m. ET on March 13, 2026. Commodity-specific payment rates will be released by the end of March. Crop insurance linkage will not be required for the ASCF Program. However, USDA strongly urges producers to take advantage of the new One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) risk management tools to best protect against price risk and volatility in the future.

More information on ASCF is available online at www.fsa.usda.gov/fba or producers can contact their local FSA county office.

Tricolored blackbird conservation funding threatened

A U.S. Department of Agriculture program that pays farmers to protect tricolored blackbirds nesting on their land could be significantly impacted due to the omission of the program's primary payment scenario in a recent draft released by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Tricolored blackbirds, which gained protection as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act in 2018, often nest in winter silage fields planted by dairy farmers. By agreeing to delay harvest where the birds nest, California farmers have helped save a species that once faced potential extinction. The tricolored blackbird Regional Conservation Partnership Program typically pays farmers \$700 to \$1,100 per acre to delay harvest of their silage crops. "The omission of silage delay as a payment scenario for the 2026 season would significantly hinder the ability to effectively protect tricolored blackbird colonies," said Richard Filgas, assistant director of policy advocacy for the California Farm Bureau.

By The Numbers

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Committed to Ensuring Your Best Farm and Ranch Future



Piña Vineyard Management, Napa County Farm Bureau member

Strengthening Agriculture for Today — and Tomorrow

Rooted in the heritage of our farmers and ranchers, Farm Bureau remains committed to protecting your livelihood, strengthening your operation today, and cultivating lasting success for tomorrow.

Advocacy That Strengthens California Farms and Ranches

Renewed! Lawmakers extended key provisions for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, saving farmers over \$5,000 per year in taxes.

Approved! Proposition 4 funding for agriculture in the 2025–26 budget package totals \$3.5 billion representing more than one-third of the total allocations. Of this amount, \$38 million is allocated to the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program, \$91 million to the Forest Health Program, and \$30 million to groundwater management efforts.

Success! Thanks to Farm Bureau's successful advocacy, the Tricolored Blackbird program secured nearly \$5.4 million in renewed funding through 2028—ensuring \$4.1 million in direct payments to landowners, including \$1,133 per acre for growers who delayed harvest to protect nesting birds.

Passed! The Farm Bill provisions in the reconciliation package included \$2.8 billion for disaster assistance, \$1.6 billion for agricultural research, and \$333 million for horticulture programs, extended the Farm Bill to prevent program expirations, and positions Farm Bureau to continue its advocacy for additional grower-focused policies and reforms.

Participation! Through legal proceedings and negotiations related to utility cost and water user fees, CFB legal advocacy efforts saved members \$2,047,032.

Protecting! CFB's action protected the Williamson Act by stopping legislation that would have risked turning over 5 million acres of prime farmland, and eliminated up to \$7 million from land conservation programs funded by Williamson Act contract cancellations.

Wolf-Livestock Compensation Program
Through advocacy and partnership with California Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau helped secure \$2 million in Wolf-Livestock Compensation Program funding, ensuring support for wolf-related livestock losses.

Lowering Utility Rates
Farm Bureau's legal team participated in proceedings to ensure lower utility rates for agriculture ratepayers, resulting in savings ranging from \$500 to \$1,100 per meter per year on farms.

Safeguarding Pesticide Access
Farm Bureau, working with the state Legislature, ensured continued access to generic pesticides in California, providing direct savings of \$18,666 per year per farm.

Cultivating the Future of Agricultural Leadership

Strengthening Connections Across Counties and States
Summer Leaders Meeting doubled in attendance from years past, hosting YF&R leaders from 25 different counties and 4 neighboring states.

Awarding Scholarships to Pursue Agriculture Careers
The California Farm Bureau Scholarship Foundation awarded \$212,250 in scholarships to 46 students to pursue careers as farmers, ranchers or in agriculture-related occupations.



Developing Farm and Ranch Leaders

Through programs such as Young Farmers & Ranchers, more than 26 active committees are helping over 400 YF&R committee members build their leadership skills.

Cultivating Tomorrow's Leaders

Leadership Farm Bureau provided 250 hours of in-depth learning about Farm Bureau, leadership, and agriculture to class members from county Farm Bureaus. The program focused on developing future leaders, advocates for agriculture, and dedicated stewards of Farm Bureau.

Elevating the Voice of Agriculture

Expanding Agriculture Education Across California
The California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom connected with 39,420 teachers and reached 1,368,822 students, delivering high-quality resources, hands-on programs, and real-world agricultural experiences that strengthen understanding and trust in California's farmers and ranchers.



Delivering Trusted Information

Farm Bureau delivered timely news and insights through the Ag Alert newspaper and California Bountiful magazine, which published 31 issues comprising 503 articles reaching more than 615,000 recipients.

Reliable Resource

Serving as a Food and Farm News provided media connections with 200 updates across 50 weekly editions highlighting key developments in California agriculture.

Engaging Media

Farm Bureau elevated its position on priority issues by fielding 314 media inquiries, hosting press conferences and issuing 24 press releases to more than 1,000 media contacts, earning coverage from international, national and local outlets while strengthening relationships with reporters to ensure agriculture's voice remains part of the public conversation.

Growing Digital Engagement

Farm Bureau expanded its digital reach by sharing 3,536 social media posts with 87,451 followers that generated over 7.8 million impressions and 229,209 interactions, distributing 392 email updates to more than 3.6 million recipients, and drawing 637,699 visits across its websites.

\$3.5 BILLION

in Prop 4
funding for agriculture

\$2.8 BILLION

for disaster assistance

\$6.7 MILLION

distributed through
CA Bountiful Foundation



Business Solutions

Rooted in your Farm's Success

Ensuring Farm and Ranch Legacies

Best-in-class farm and ranch transition resources are helping members prepare for retirement and succession planning.

Filling a Workforce Support Need

The Farm Employers Labor Service (FELS) helped members become employers of choice in their communities, making 1,500 worksite visits to provide training and consultations. FELS published 11 editions of the FELS Newsletter, produced 50 weekly FELS eNews email blasts to nearly 5,000 email recipients, presented 13 webinars, and reached over 1 million video and audio impressions, offering members guidance on staying compliant with California farm employment regulations and understanding and adopting employment best practices.

Driving Sustainable Solutions for Agriculture

The California Bountiful Foundation managed \$6.7 million in research funding, assisting farmers and ranchers through programs such as the Healthy Soils Program, which supports conservation practices on 43 citrus farms across 8 counties, and Expanding Our Roots, a mentorship initiative funded by CDFA and USDA grants. EOR promotes equity, education, and sustainability in specialty crop farming, serving beginning farmers and ranchers, with more than 150 applicants enrolled to date.

Identifying Local Insurance and Financial Management Solutions

The Select Partners program connects Farm Bureau members with local insurance and financial solutions from agents and advisors across 24 insurance agencies who understand agriculture, saving members time and ensuring business success. Farm Bureau members also gained access to a comprehensive suite of business solutions through Nationwide Insurance, including more than 300 risk management education resources and over 100 financial solution offerings designed to protect operations and support long-term success.

Providing Opportunities for Essential Training

Farm Bureau Extension offers, at no cost to members, programs to meet requirements for Department of Pesticide Regulation licensing and state compliance. Over 2,000 members participated in classes to be better equipped to navigate evolving agricultural requirements.

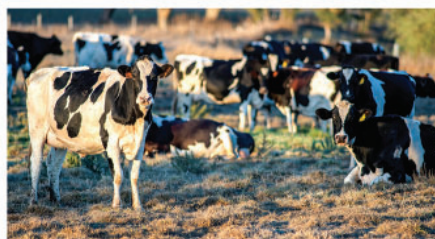
Protecting Farms with Expert Insurance

Nationwide is proud to be the approved insurance and financial services company of the California Farm Bureau, protecting \$14.9 billion in farm and ranch assets in all 58 counties for its members.



"In my farming region many farmers are members of individual commodity groups or different water agencies, but the one thing we all share in common is that we are all Farm Bureau members. Farm Bureau represents everyone in ag across all commodities. Farm Bureau is the tip of the spear in advocating and protecting my livelihood, and I'm proud to continue to serve and be a Farm Bureau member."

— Andrew Leingruber
Imperial County Farm Bureau member



Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.



YOU ARE INVITED



Brad Scott & daughter Jill
Scott Bros. Dairy



Andy & Cindy Domenigoni
Domenigoni Brothers Ranch

JOIN FARM BUREAU TOGETHER WE GROW!

Why Join Farm Bureau?

- ✓ Standing up for farmers on key policy issues in Sacramento and Washington D.C.
- ✓ Defending private property rights and ensuring you have the tools needed to farm.
- ✓ Cultivating tomorrow's leaders with training and Young Farmers & Ranchers programs.
- ✓ Stay connected with local farmers on topics that matter most to your operation.

Join Today!



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951-684-6732

www.riversidecfb.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 11, 2026 ~ 3:30 PM, Riverside County Farm Bureau Board of Directors meeting. In person at the CA Date Commission office, Palm Desert and via Zoom Conference. Please call our office at (951) 684-6732 for more information.

Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

American Farm Bureau Federation adopts policies vital to California

California delegates to the American Farm Bureau Federation succeeded in advancing several changes to the organization's policy on water use and table wine. AFBF adopted all four of the policy changes that California Farm Bureau submitted through the delegate process during the 107th AFBF Annual Convention in Anaheim Jan. 9-14. The policies approved at the meeting will direct the nation's largest general farm organization in its legislative and regulatory efforts in 2026. California Farm Bureau President Shannon Douglass, who is an AFBF voting delegate, praised the months of work by Farm Bureau members and staff to identify policy areas that needed discussion and change at the national level. "Our members' participation influences policy on key issues that affect their businesses and livelihood," Douglass said.

Spread of invasive mussels threatens irrigation systems

Since its discovery in October 2024 in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the invasive golden mussel has spread south to Riverside County, threatening irrigation infrastructure. Experts say eradication is unlikely and are now focused on preventing further spread—especially through the California Aqueduct—though available prevention technology is limited. The mussel has already disrupted operations at the Port of Stockton and several water providers, with impacts expected to increase.

Citrus growers assess risk of new virus

A new citrus disease that so far remains confined to residential trees has industry leaders taking what they describe as a measured approach because of the unknown risks it poses. Caused by the citrus yellow vein clearing virus, the disease was confirmed in residential citrus trees during multipest citrus surveys in Tulare County in 2022 and in residential trees in Hacienda Heights near Los Angeles in 2023. The discoveries marked the first time CYVCV had been confirmed in the Americas. "It's something that's still relatively new," said Casey Creamer, president and CEO of California Citrus Mutual. "I think the way we try to approach things is to put the appropriate amount of concern around it based on the level of risk it poses."

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