



Farm Bureau at work

California Farm Bureau's government affairs team is at the Capitol, advocating for farmers, ranchers and agriculture's future. Here are some key issues Farm Bureau is focused on this week.

March 10, 2023

Agricultural Employment

California Farm Bureau has taken support positions on three bills that can, if passed, be helpful to California agricultural employers:

[SB-375](#) introduced by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gill, allows an employer to claim a state tax credit partially defraying the costs of compliance with state-imposed COVID-19 workplace mandates.

[SB-592](#) introduced by Senator Josh Newman, allows employers to rely in good faith on interpretations wage-and-hour laws offered by the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) through a published opinion letter or guidance published to the agency's website without fear of punishment or liability.

[AB-703](#) introduced by Senator Roger Niello. The California Workplace Flexibility Act of 2023 allows nonexempt employees to individually request a flexible workweek schedule consisting of up to 10 hours per day in a 40 hour workweek with no daily overtime liability for the employee's employer.

Staff: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

CA Department of Food & Agriculture [CDFA]

[AB 404](#) by Assemblymember Damon Connolly, will be heard in the Assembly Agriculture Committee this coming week. This bill would require the department to evaluate duplicative reporting requirements that affect small and mid-scale farmers and farming operations. AB 404 would require the department, on or before January 1, 2025, to submit a report to the Legislature, including suggestions to amend or remove unnecessary reporting requirements in order to relieve regulatory burdens on small and mid-scale farmers and farming operations. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com

Food Safety

[AB-865](#), as introduced by Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia. Current law requires all California state-owned or state-run institutions, except segments of public postsecondary education or local educational agencies, that purchases agricultural food products to implement necessary practices to achieve a goal of ensuring that at least 60% of the agricultural food products that it purchases in a calendar year are grown or produced in the state by December 31, 2025. Existing law establishes within the Department of Food and Agriculture a public and private collaboration known as the "Buy California Program" to encourage consumer nutritional and food awareness and to foster purchases of high-quality California agricultural products.

AB-865 would require a grower or producer that sells an agricultural product to a distributor, to attest to the distributor under penalty of perjury, using a self-attestation form developed by the department, whether the agricultural product was produced in compliance with specified California health and environmental protection laws and specified California labor laws. By expanding the crime of perjury, this bill would create a state-mandated local program. The bill would require a distributor that sells an agricultural product to a retailer to provide to the retailer the self-attestation form received from a grower or producer.

This bill would require the department to adopt regulations, to administer and enforce these requirements, to prohibit the department from imposing additional fees on growers or producers, to meet the requirements of this bill. The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. *Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com*

Pest Management

The comment period for the Department of Pesticide Regulation's Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap is ending at 5:00 on Monday, March 13, 2023. The Department completed its public listening sessions last week for both ag and non ag stakeholders and we expect numerous comments to be submitted by a cross section of impacted industries and that includes the California Farm Bureau and our local county Farm Bureau's as well. Next steps will be to review how DPR prioritizes the implementation of the roadmap's recommendations. *Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com*

Rural Broadband

In Assembly Committee on Emergency Management - [AB-415](#) by Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez would enact the Emergency Fairgrounds Communications Grant Act and would require the Office of Emergency Services to establish a grant program to provide fairgrounds with grant funding for the purpose of building and upgrading communication and internet infrastructure on fairgrounds. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com*

Transportation

[AB 552](#), introduced by Assemblymember Steve Bennet, was amended this week. The bill now incorporates language which would establish the Regional Farmer Equipment and Cooperative Resources Assistance Program in the Department of Conservation. The bill would require the department provide technical assistance and grants in order to support regional farm equipment sharing and enhance cooperative benefits for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and limited resource farmers and ranchers. This bill would also limit applicants to farms and ranches of 500 acres or less. *Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com*

Water

In Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife - [AB-30](#) by Assemblymember Christopher Ward would require the Department of Water Resources to make investments in data modeling and forecasting for atmospheric river incidents. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com*

Wildfire

In Assembly Committee on Natural Resources - [AB-397](#) by Assemblymember Bill Essayli would require the state air board to include greenhouse gas emissions from wildlands and forest fires in the scoping plan. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com*

In Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation - [AB-294](#) by Assemblymember Petrie Norris would provide an exclusion from gross income for any qualified taxpayer, as defined, for amounts received for costs and losses associated with wildfires or natural disaster. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com*

DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

The Department of Pesticide Regulation's Pesticide Registration and Evaluation Committee (PREC) is meeting on Friday, March 17, 2023, and here is that meeting Agenda.



Julie Henderson
Director

Department of Pesticide Regulation

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

PESTICIDE REGISTRATION AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE (PREC) Agenda

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., March 17, 2023

This meeting will occur solely through remote access. You can view the meeting via the [CalEPA webcast](#) at [video.calepa.ca.gov/#/] or via the Zoom link at the bottom of the agenda. Questions and comments will be accepted after each presentation. Public participation will be facilitated through Zoom and e-mail to precomments@cdpr.ca.gov for webcast attendees. The Chair will impose a 2-minute speaking time limit for live statements. Due to meeting time constraints, not all questions or comments may be addressed during the meeting. Questions will be prioritized over comments to ensure presenter response. Please submit any remaining questions or comments to the e-mail above if you would like to be notified of any response. Necessary response to remaining questions and comments may occur after the meeting. Any response will be included in the meeting minutes.

1. Introductions and Committee Business – Tulio Macedo, Chair
2. Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap Overview & Next Steps – Aimee Norman, DPR
3. Monitoring for Pesticides in Urban Landscapes – Robert Budd, DPR
4. Pesticides Agricultural Monitoring in California – Pedro Lima, DPR
5. Suggested Agenda Items for Next Meeting – Committee Members
6. Adjourn

PREC agendas, meeting minutes, membership roster, and other information are posted on [DPR's PREC Website](#) at [cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/prec/premenu.htm.]

If you have questions, comments, or require additional information, please contact us at precomments@cdpr.ca.gov or at 916-445-4400. If you require reasonable accommodation or language assistance to participate, please provide notice at least 10 business days in advance by contacting DPR's Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator at 916-322-4553.

Link to [remote Zoom meeting participation](#)

[us02web.zoom.us/j/94397959981?pwd=TE5Sei9GcVFabHJtQ1M1WnIXRDM2QT09]

Webinar ID: 943 9795 9981

Password: 074976

Or call from a landline: (+1 669 900 9128) - And enter the Meeting ID and Password when prompted

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✦ANNOUNCEMENTS

CDFA AWARDS \$12.25 MILLION FOR THE POLLINATOR HABITAT PROGRAM

CDFA's [Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation](#) (OEFI) has selected 10 organizations to receive \$12.25 million in funding through a new competitive grant program, the Pollinator Habitat Program (PHP). The PHP was established by the Budget Act of 2021 ([SB-170](#), Nancy Skinner) in which CDFA was appropriated \$15 million to provide grant funding for the establishment of pollinator habitat on agricultural lands throughout California. CDFA was directed to administer the Pollinator Habitat Program and to prioritize the planning of native habitats for the benefit of native biodiversity and the use of locally appropriate native plant seed mixes when feasible.

"CDFA is pleased to make this investment in pollinator habitat on California farms and ranches. Pollinators are not only vital to our ecosystems, they are essential to over a third of our crops, helping to produce a wide variety of California-grown fruits, nuts, and vegetables," said Secretary Karen Ross. "The Pollinator Habitat Program demonstrates how working lands can help safeguard California's diverse ecosystems." CDFA accepted applications from September 2022 through November 23, 2022. Resource Conservation Districts, non-profit organizations, the University of California, California State Universities, California community colleges, and California and federally recognized Tribes were eligible to apply for up to \$2,000,000 in funding to work directly with farmers and ranchers to install habitat and implement management practices that support pollinators.

CDFA RELEASES MANURE RECYCLING AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS TASK FORCE REPORT

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has released [the final report](#) from the Manure Recycling and Innovative Products Task Force (MRIP). CDFA convened the task force in late 2021 with the goal of developing recommendations on how to recapture and enhance the nutrient value of dairy manure while supporting healthy soils, protecting water quality, and reducing agriculture's carbon footprint in California.

The workgroup was comprised of dairy farmers and other members of the dairy industry, representatives of academia, state and federal government agencies, and non-governmental organizations with interests in sustainable farming, water quality protection, and environmental justice. Recommendations for addressing nitrogen surplus are grouped into conventional strategies, compost strategies, denitrification and treatment, and nitrogen capture.

In close alignment with this effort, CDFA funded research conducted by the California Biomass Collaborative (CBC) at the University of California, Davis. The findings provide an overview of the amount and location of surplus nutrients within California's dairy sector and evaluate selected manure treatment technologies capable of recovering manure nutrients in useful form or otherwise safely reducing surpluses. The CBC's completed report, [Manure Nutrient Recovery, Removal, and Reuse on California Dairies](#) includes topics for additional research and development needed and suggestions for quantitative assessment of technologies.