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.

December 1, 2023

Animal Health & Welfare

As members may recall, Farm Bureau has been closely tracking the spread of **Vesicular Stomatitis Virus** throughout the state. Below is the most recent report released on Tuesday.

9 New VSV-affected premises identified (3 confirmed positive, 6 suspects; including 2 with affected cattle) in California, including a new affected county, Merced County. We wish to strongly reiterate and re-emphasize the importance of ongoing, active vigilance and outreach to your memberships and agencies to encourage prompt reporting of suspect lesions in horses and susceptible livestock and an **immediate stop movement** of any suspect animals. We are requesting that all stakeholders disseminate as widely as possible within our industry as well as to those within your organizations/memberships that may need this informational update.

****Please take a moment to review the following **IMPORTANT** information reminders, and share widely with colleagues and other industry stakeholders as appropriate:****

VSV Case Sampling, Lab Submissions, and Reporting

Any non-equid VSV suspect species must be reported to CDFA or USDA immediately and sampled by a regulatory veterinarian given the concern for clinical similarities to Foreign Animal Diseases (FADs) such as Foot and Mouth Disease.

1. VSV Surveillance and Monitoring

Continue to be highly vigilant and promote VSV awareness in ALL areas of the state, including previously affected areas that have not recently confirmed new cases, as well as currently naïve areas. The fly vectors still remain active and present in California, and migration patterns continue to be challenging to predict despite currently cooling weather.

2. Prevention is Critical

Please talk to your clients/colleagues/employees/agents frequently during this outbreak period and ensure they are taking the risk of infection and exposure seriously and implementing enhanced fly control in addition to routine biosecurity best practices to the best of their abilities. While many of our cattle premises do do some level of fly control; prevention of exposure via vectors is critical.

3. Infection with or exposure to VSV does NOT produce protective antibodies or immunity in any susceptible species

This also contributes to the lack of a currently effective vaccine. Previously infected animals CAN be reinfected if the flies carrying the virus remain present in the area. VSV-exposed animals may have antibodies for many years following exposure or infection, but positive antibody levels do not confer protection.

4. Reminder

Mandatory VSV quarantines for any susceptible species will be in place for a minimum of fourteen (14) days from the date of ONSET of last known vesicular lesions. Quarantine release is dependent on verification of

no additional clinquarantinedtible signs of any susceptible animal on a quarantined premises, and criteria for release will be evaluated no less than 14 days from onset of last clinical lesions.

VSV SITUATION REPORT 11/28/2023 BRIEFING

All confirmed cases to date have been vesicular stomatitis New Jersey virus (VSNJV) serotype. Updates are as follows:

California

1. Fresno County – 1 new confirmed positive equine and 1 suspect cattle premises
2. Madera County – 4 new suspect equine premises
3. Mariposa County – 1 new confirmed positive equine and cattle premises
4. **Merced County (New Infected County) –** 1 confirmed positive equine premises
5. Tuolumne County – 1 new suspect equine premises
6. Counties with current VSV quarantines: Fresno, Inyo, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Tuolumne, Merced Counties

Since the start of the outbreak (5/17/2023), **307 VSV-affected premises have been identified (90 confirmed positive, 217 suspect)** in **3 states, California, Nevada, and Texas.** Two hundred ninety-seven (297) of these premises have had only equine species clinically affected, seven (7) premises had only clinically affected cattle (Fresno County, San Diego County, and Santa Barbara County, California), two (2) premises had both equine and cattle clinically affected (Fresno County and Mariposa County, California), and one (1) premises had clinically affected rhinoceros (San Diego County, California). Additional information and maps of the affected area are contained in the situation report. The situation report is posted publicly on the APHIS website and is accessible at the following link: here.

Please contact CDFA immediately if you have suspicion of a VS case in any species. Contact information for each of CDFA's district offices is attached. As a reminder, clinical signs of VS include excessive salivation, vesicles (blister-like lesions), erosions or ulcerations around the mouth, tongue, nostrils, teats, feet, and coronary bands. As VS is **highly contagious** among susceptible species (primarily equids and cattle, but also camelids and small ruminants, and occasionally swine) as well as potentially **zoonotic**, we also want to ensure proper personal protective equipment and biosecurity measures are in place on your facilities. Please notify your CDFA district office immediately if you or your personnel identify animals with consistent lesions.

There is no effective vaccine for VS. Vector mitigation (specifically black fly and sand fly control) is critical in containing a potential VS outbreak. As has been mentioned through this outbreak, please ensure adequate fly protective measures are in place on your facilities, such as insecticide use on animals and around facilities, manure management and reduction of fly breeding areas. Any suspected lesioned animals should be immediately isolated upon detection. As VS can also be transmitted via contaminated surfaces; please ensure extra precautions are in place on dairies especially, to avoid transmission of VS to other animals or personnel during milking.

Last week, The Meat, Poultry, and Egg Safety Branch at CDFA released information for egg handlers regarding the upcoming **Prop 12 implementation** dates. We are writing this to help registered egg handlers be aware of upcoming dates for Animal Confinement regulatory requirements (aka Prop 12). Many people have been confused because they are already registered as an Egg Handler. These Animal Confinement requirements are in addition to and separate from, registration as an Egg Handler. As of January 1, 2024, all producers are required to have a "Certificate of Compliance." ESQM can help you get the verification inspection needed to be in compliance. If you would like ESQM to complete your verification audit, please let us know and then fill out this form and send it in. Below are some helpful links for the Animal Care program information that may also be helpful.

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/AHFSS/AnimalCare/
Animal Confinement Important Dates guidance
Egg Regulatory Framework guidance
Distributor Registration guidance
Egg Producer guidance
Egg Producer Website Guidance Video

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Insurance

This week a Los Angeles Superior Court Judge ruled in support of the California Department of Insurance's order that the FAIR Plan must offer homeowners a comprehensive insurance policy option. In response to that ruling, Commissioner Ricardo Lara issued the following statement:

"This ruling is a win for homeowners and an essential part of our ongoing strategy during this unprecedented time in our state. It upholds my authority to implement measures that enhance the availability and affordability of insurance coverages for consumers. While we continue to pursue long-term insurance solutions to safeguard Californians from climate change, it's essential that homeowners have a strong short-term option in the California FAIR Plan. Requiring Californians to purchase separate insurance policies only results in higher costs and greater confusion, leaving them on the hook for uninsured damage from a winter storm or burst pipe. Many FAIR Plan policyholders are seniors or families who cannot afford to pay these unexpected costs out-of-pocket. The sooner that the FAIR Plan can offer a more comprehensive policy option, the better for many Californians. This ruling is a step forward in achieving a balanced and robust insurance market that meets the needs of Californians. I will continue to put the needs of California's insurance consumers first through a sustainable insurance marketplace that serves all consumers."

The FAIR Plan is California's "insurer of last resort," offering a bare-bones residential policy that covers fire and smoke damage but forces homeowners to purchase an additional policy at an increased cost to have coverage for liability, water damage, and other common perils. Many FAIR Plan policyholders do not, and cannot, purchase a Difference in Conditions (DIC) policy, increasing the coverage gap for vulnerable communities. Modernizing the FAIR Plan to meet Californians' coverage needs is a key goal of Commissioner Lara's Sustainable Insurance Strategy, which he announced in September. This is the second time a judge has upheld Commissioner Lara's action, supporting the Commissioner's goal to restore stability in the property insurance market, including an expanded FAIR Plan policy as a short-term option for homeowners.

In the ruling, Judge Kin denied the FAIR Plan's request to vacate his amended order, upholding the Commissioner's ability to order additional coverages including accidental discharge or overflow of water or steam; premises liability; incidental workers' compensation; theft; falling objects; weight of ice, snow, or sleet; freezing; and loss of use, including coverage for additional living expenses and fair rental value. These are typically included in a standard comprehensive homeowners policy, but not offered under the FAIR Plan's limited fire policy.

FAIR Plan policyholders who want additional coverage must purchase a separate DIC policy offered by a private insurance company. Judge Kin wrote that "the prohibitive cost of DIC policies and confusion about what DIC policies cover supports the Commissioner's desire to have an expanded policy as an option for homeowners, in furtherance of the goal of assuring stability in the property insurance market."

The FAIR Plan has approximately 330,000 residential policies in the state as of September 2023, according to its data. According to Department of Insurance data, approximately 40% of FAIR Plan policyholders insuring an owner-occupied dwelling do not have a DIC policy, leaving them uninsured for winter storm damage and

other common losses. In 2022, FAIR Plan insured approximately 270,000 residential policies. About 200,000 of these policies insured an owner-occupied dwelling, constituting roughly 3.1% of the state's homeowners' market. As of September 2023, FAIR Plan has shown growth exceeding 20% over last year.
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Pesticides

The California Farm Bureau is working with our local partners in San Bernardino County related to the outbreak of the **Oriental Fruit Fly!** There are serious concerns on the ground because they have identified over 500 flies with populations continuing to grow. We've had discussions with CDFA, Senate and Assembly Agricultural Committees and local agricultural commissioners on efforts to clarify potential assistance and resources for impacted farmers in those areas. I know there is also outreach occurring with our federal partners at USDA to provide additional assistance as well. We will continue to work with all the stakeholders to insure we have all the available information to assist growers through this time. *Staff: Chris Reardon; creardon@cfbf.com*

Transportation

Clean Truck Check, formerly known as the Heavy-Duty Inspection and Maintenance Program, was approved by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 2021. The program ensures heavy-duty vehicles operating in California are well-maintained and repaired quickly when needed to reduce emissions and improve public health statewide, especially in disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by air pollution. It also provides a level playing field for the businesses that operate these vehicles as it applies to both in-state and out-of-state registered heavy-duty vehicles. The program includes nearly all non-gasoline vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating over 14,000 pounds that operate in California. This includes public vehicles, trucks, buses, personal vehicles, California-registered motorhomes, single vehicle fleets, and vehicles registered outside of California (not including motorhomes).

Clean Truck Check is being implemented in three phases. Phase 1 began January 1, 2023. This initial phase began with the deployment of Remote Emissions Monitoring Devices (REMD). REMD monitors the exhaust emissions of passing heavy-duty vehicles and flag potential high emitters that may receive a Notice to Submit to Testing (NST). NST's require vehicle owners to submit a passing compliance test to CARB after any necessary emissions-related repairs are made, within 30 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to comply and remedy emissions-related concerns could result in DMV registration holds and/or removal from the compliance database.

Phase 2 of the program began October 1, 2023. This phase requires vehicle owners who are subject to the program to **enter their vehicles in** CARB's Clean Truck Check database **and pay an initial annual compliance fee of $30 dollars per vehicle by December 31, 2023.** Phase 2 also includes freight contractor, broker, and applicable freight facility requirements for hiring compliant fleets, allowing access to the facility, and record keeping. **Starting January 2024, all trucks driving in California will need proof of compliance to continue operating in the state.** Operating in California without registration in the compliance database could result in violations from CARB and/or the California Highway Patrol.

Phase 3 of Clean Truck Check requires heavy-duty vehicle owners to conduct periodic emissions testing on their vehicle. This is similar to California's Smog Check program for cars. Periodic testing begins in 2024 and applies to all compliance deadlines after July 1, 2024. Compliant tests may be submitted as early as April 2024. Periodic testing initially will be required twice per year for nearly all vehicles in the program. **Agricultural vehicles** and California-registered motorhomes are required to **test once annually**. Testing requirements vary based on whether the vehicle is equipped with OnBoard Diagnostics (OBD). For California-registered vehicles, the compliance testing deadlines are linked to each vehicle's DMV registration

expiration/renewal date. For vehicles registered outside of California and for vehicles exempt from DMV registration requirements, compliance deadlines are based on the last number of a vehicle's VIN. Passing test results may be submitted up to 90 days before a compliance deadline. Testing should be performed in a timely manner to avoid penalties and possible DMV registration holds. Visit Database Reporting to view all reporting training videos on the Clean Truck Check.

The upcoming webinars on the impending regulation will be held via Zoom. Interested parties must register for a specific date to participate. The November 16, 2023 and December 5, 2023 meetings will be recorded and made available on the Clean Truck Check Reporting page. We anticipate a large number of participants and questions. Therefore, to facilitate an efficient discussion, we request that questions be submitted in advance and pertain only to reporting. Questions about other aspects or requirements of Clean Truck Check must be submitted to hdim@arb.ca.gov.

- **CTC-VIS Reporting Training Webinar (Spanish): Tuesday, December 5, 2023 / 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., submit questions no later than 11/28/2023.** Register
- **CTC-VIS Reporting Training Webinar (English): Monday, December 18, 2023 / 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., submit questions no later than 12/11/2023.** Register

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Earlier this month the CA Air Resources Board (CARB) released the notice of public hearing on the Zero-Emission Forklift Rulemaking for June of next year. The notice contained the current proposed regulation which is currently open for public comment. The Farm Bureau, along with many agriculture partners, have been engaged in the rulemaking process for over two years. The agricultural coalition has provided valuable feedback about electrical infrastructure (or lack thereof), supply chain and inventory issues, increased cost of equipment, labor issues, and off-road limitations – just to name a few. Now that the proposed regulation has been released, Farm Bureau will be providing comments to CARB staff in the coming weeks. Farm Bureau will remain engaged in the final phases of this process. *Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CDFA AWARDS MORE THAN $500,000 FOR PROACTIVE INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM) SOLUTIONS GRANT PROGRAM

Project will develop and optimize a management strategy for major pest threatening California date growers

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has awarded more than $500,000 in funding for one project in the sixth funding cycle of the Proactive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Solutions grant program. The project will consist of two years and two months developing and refining a proactive, low-impact control program for South American palm weevil, an invasive pest in California that is not yet found in agricultural areas.

"California's agricultural community is making real progress on sustainable pest management solutions for growers big and small, and for the benefit of the communities they serve as well," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "This project is about building a solution now for a pest that we know is knocking on the door for our date palm farmers – and it's about looking first for solutions that reduce the need for pesticide use."

Project leader Dr. Mark Hoddle at UC Riverside will receive funding for his project, titled "Development of a Proactive IPM Program for the California Date Industry: Optimizing Attract and Kill for Managing the Invasive South American Palm Weevil." Attract and Kill is a management strategy that employs pheromone-baited

traps to lure and eliminate pests. This project will assess the efficacy of this strategy against South American palm weevil. This proactive IPM work is designed to give growers a sustainable, reduced-insecticide-use control tool that can be rapidly employed by commercial date producers, ideally before the South American palm weevil becomes established in date production areas of Coachella Valley.

"By supporting the development of management tools for highly invasive pests before they arrive in California or spread within the state, the innovative CDFA Proactive IPM program is bolstering the biosecurity preparedness of California into the future," said Brian Hogg, Research Entomologist at the USDA Agricultural Research Service's Invasive Species and Pollinator Health Research Unit.

CDFA's Office of Pesticide Consultation and Analysis manages the Proactive IPM Solutions Program with the goal of anticipating which exotic pests are likely to arrive in California and/or spread from isolated local populations, and the office will use that information to develop and test low-impact management strategies that can be quickly implemented if these pests become established in the state. Having strategies in place can lead to a reduction in the long-term use of broad-spectrum pesticides, a key goal of the state's Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap.

Detailed information on this program, including the application process and application requirements, is available at: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/opca/proactive-ipm.html Information on CDFA's Office of Pesticide Consultation and Analysis is available at: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/opca/

CDFA GRANT AWARD SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE PEST MANAGEMENT FOCUSES ON PHEROMONE DISRUPTION

CDFA is pleased to announce the award of $490,000 in funding to the Coalition for Urban/Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES) to support a three-year project promoting and incentivizing the use of pheromone mating disruption, a biological-based pest management approach, near impaired waterways in the eastern San Joaquin Valley. Navel orangeworm (NOW) is a major insect pest in almond, pistachio, and walnut orchards and is often controlled using conventional insecticides, including pyrethroids.

"We have a responsibility to balance our mission to protect the state's food supply from pests like the navel orangeworm with the imperative to use the most sustainable methods available," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "This funding will provide real, tangible benefits to growers, to impaired waterways, and to the broader community."

Pheromone mating disruption offers an alternative and sustainable pest management (SPM) practice that disrupts NOW reproduction by preventing males from locating females in orchards. Mating disruption is a technique for reducing NOW damage proven by both commercial use and research by the University of California. The philosophy of the CURES project follows an approach called area-wide mating disruption wherein a group of growers with contiguous acreage collaborate to use mating disruption.

"CURES works with the Eastern San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and its outreach program managers to contact growers along impaired waterways," said Parry Klassen, Executive Director of CURES. "We're offering financial incentives and technical assistance for using the NOW mating disruption simultaneously in their contiguous orchards. The larger the area covered along a waterway, the more effective the approach
for reducing NOW populations and the damage they cause."

Also collaborating on the project are the Almond Board of California (ABC), the University of California Cooperative Extension and crop consultants working with growers along impaired waterways.
This grant award is from CDFA's Sustainable Pest Management Pilot Grant Program. The award will

promote the transition to safer, sustainable pest control practices by incentivizing their use near sensitive habitats. The project aligns with the state's new pest management strategy, "Accelerating Sustainable Pest Management: A Roadmap for California," which underscores SPM as a whole-system approach that promotes human health, resilient ecosystems, and economic viability in agricultural production.

CDFA ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CALIFORNIA FARM TO SCHOOL INCUBATOR GRANT PROGRAM RFA

The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) announces it is seeking public comment for the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program's draft request for applications (RFA). The RFA is open to public comment until 5 p.m. PST December 14, 2023. The Budget Acts of 2021 and 2022 provide up to $60 million in one-time funding to support this grant cycle. CDFA will set aside up to 10% of awards for Tribal governments and Tribal-based non-profit organizations. The purpose of the 2023-24 California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program is to support projects that cultivate equity, nurture students, build climate resilience, and create scalable and sustainable change in the school food system.

"This program is helping us meet our goals to nourish students while fostering climate-smart, resilient food systems to meet the needs of local communities by directly connecting students, educators and farmers" stated CDFA Secretary Karen Ross added. "Whether they're in the cafeteria, classroom or school garden, we've seen this program inspire kids to eat what they grow and expand what they know about California food and farmers."

The program is helping to transform the school food system and nourishing students by cultivating a healthier, more equitable, climate smart California for all. There are four grant tracks within the 2023-24 program:
- Track 1: California Farm to School TK-12 Procurement and Education Grant
- Track 2: California Farm to School Technical Assistance Grant
- Track 3: California Farm to Early Care and Education Grant
- Track 4: California Farm to School Producer Grant

Two live information sessions will be held to provide an overview of the RFA and allow time for questions and public comments. The live information sessions are:

- 10 a.m. PT November 30, 2023
- 4 p.m. PT December 6, 2023

The RFA and registration for the Zoom information sessions may be viewed on the CDFA Farm to School Incubator Grant Program webpage. Stakeholders may submit comments during live information sessions or via email to cafarmtoschool@cdfa.ca.gov. Please include "F2S Grant Stakeholder Comments" in the email subject line and please specify which funding track each comment is regarding in the body of the email. Once the public comment period is complete, CDFA will incorporate stakeholder feedback in the final RFA and the grant application period will begin in early 2024.

$6.1 MILLION IN GRANT AWARDS ANNOUNCED FOR CDFA'S ORGANIC TRANSITION PILOT PROGRAM

The California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) is pleased to announce $6.1 million in grants to four organizations through a new competitive grant program, the Organic Transition Pilot Program (OTPP). The Organic Transition Pilot Program comes by way of two $5 million appropriations, from the Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023. The program provides support to farmers and ranchers who are preparing land for organic certification. The program is designed as a block grant, administered through awards to organizations that demonstrate the expertise and collaboration

needed to disburse financial and technical assistance and provide business planning to producers. The pilot program has a strong emphasis on equity. Awarded organizations will direct at least 50% of financial and technical assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers.

“We are excited to provide these grants to organizations that are experts in this field and that can guide farmers and ranchers through the transition to organic production, which involves a learning curve,” said CDFA Deputy Secretary for Climate and Working Lands Virginia Jameson. “These grants will also help the state advance the goal set by the state’s 2022 Scoping Plan to increase organic agriculture to 20% of all cultivated acres by 2045.”

The 2022 Scoping Plan is a statewide document that sets out California’s pathway to carbon neutrality, including substantial contributions from the agricultural sector. Financial assistance disbursed to farmers and ranchers will be spent on a wide range of eligible expenses for making the transition to organic farming, including field-preparation awards to help build soils for successful organic production.

CDFA accepted applications from July 21, 2023, through September 15, 2023. Resource Conservation Districts, non-profit organizations, Universities of California, California State Universities, California community colleges, and California Native American Tribes were eligible to apply for $500,000 to $2,000,000 in funding. When the projects begin, the awarded organizations will perform outreach and identify producers to assist in the organic transition. More information is available at the program website: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/otp/ If you have questions about the Organic Transition Pilot Program, please email cdfa.oefi_otp@cdfa.ca.gov.

CALFIRE WILDFIRE PREVENTION GRANT ONLINE OFFICE HOURS

CAL FIRE to host online Office Hours for Wildfire Prevention Grants. The virtual Office Hours will be hosted on Microsoft Teams. No registration is necessary.

Virtual Office Hours Details:
Date: December 06, 2023 10:00AM-11:00 AM
Microsoft Teams Meeting - Join on your computer, mobile app, or room device. Click here to join the meeting
Meeting ID: 226 337 861 139, **Passcode: oYr8Rq**

Or call in (audio only)
+1 650-564-3271,702308246# , United States, San Jose
Phone Conference ID: 702 308 246#

Wildfire Prevention Grants Program Contacts
Northern Region Contact: CNRgrants@fire.ca.gov
Southern Region Contact: SouthernRegionGrants@fire.ca.gov
Sacramento Contact: WPgrants@fire.ca.gov or CALFIRE.Grants@fire.ca.gov