

By The
Numbers

2022 Annual Report





**Our farmers, ranchers and
agricultural communities**

BRAVED

extraordinary events in 2022

They persevered through more water shortages amid a Western U.S. “mega-drought” described by scientists as the worst in 1,200 years. Winter vegetable growers in the Imperial Valley voluntarily curtailed water use and plantings to help protect the Colorado River. San Joaquin Valley nut growers toppled still more orchards. Klamath Basin farmers fallowed field crops and ranchers culled herds, only to have the federal government shut off water supplies in mid-summer.

Our Farm Bureau members also faced dramatically rising production costs, including huge spikes in expenses for fertilizer and fuel. They were frustrated by continued supply-chain disruptions and port delays for farm exports. And yet our more than 30,000 Farm Bureau members continued doing what they always have done—helping feed California and the world beyond, while battling to preserve America’s most critical agricultural economy and their way of life.

Throughout the year, Farm Bureau continued to advocate for our farm communities, represent our members and provide them with our full range of services. These numbers tell our story for 2022.



PERSEVERING

and working for our FARMING FUTURE

18%

That's the American Farm Bureau Federation's estimate for how much production costs rose for farmers and ranchers in 2022.

Many farmers and ranchers may well have experienced worse increases, given the estimated **52% increase** in fertilizer costs, largely blamed on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Pesticide costs were up by **20%**, fuel by as much as **42%**.

In the third year of a devastating drought, **531,000 acres of normally productive farmland went unplanted** at the start of the 2022 California growing season due to a lack of irrigation water, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. By October, **more than 94% of California** was listed in severe, extreme or exceptional drought conditions.

With California farmers facing costs rising as fast as their water supplies were diminishing, the California Farm Bureau worked on multiple fronts to protect our agricultural economy.

Farm Bureau and other agricultural groups supported the inclusion of **\$3.1 billion** in the federal Inflation Reduction Act to provide assistance to **36,000 distressed agricultural borrowers** across the U.S. who faced extreme financial difficulties from continuing pandemic impacts, supply-chain backlogs, droughts, wildfires and rising farming costs.

Our federal policy and legal teams worked to help secure **\$4 billion in federal funding to address drought impacts in the West** by supporting water management and conservation efforts for the Colorado River and providing financial relief for farmers following crops and investing in water conservation measures over the **next 3 years**.

Our Government Affairs Division helped bring in **\$510 million in 2022 funding** from the California Department of Water Resources for water system improvements to help communities, water agencies, farmers and ranchers amid the continuing drought. That funding includes **\$200 million** to help groundwater agencies and communities that rely on aquifer supplies comply with the state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Additionally, we helped secure **\$900 million** over three years for wildfire prevention. Some **\$582 million** of that money will pay for removing hazardous fuels and promoting healthy forests, and another **\$336 million** will support community fire protection and economic growth in the forest sector.

That's on top of **\$200 million** for the state's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, which helps farmers and ranchers reducing emissions by replacing harvesting equipment, tractors, heavy-duty trucks and agricultural pump engines.

In a year when even small steps were critical, California Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers donated **1,338 pounds of food** to community food banks, raised **\$7,500** and provided **429 volunteer hours** for the American Farm Bureau Federation's Harvest for All program.

In the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Farm Bureau and Farm Employers Labor Service worked to help California agricultural employers to navigate safety regulations that continued to evolve and to cope with new challenges as they arose. The FELS website provided **hundreds of free resources** to Farm Bureau members. FELS Newsletter subscribers and FELS customers received **11 issues**, including the latest information on pandemic workplace safety rules. FELS provided **14 free webinars** on protecting farm employees and on supplemental paid leave for workers who missed time due to the virus.

FELS also provided guidance on new overtime requirements, rising minimum wages and shortages of employees. It produced and sold to agricultural employers more than **15,000 laminated employment notification posters and books** to help agricultural employers to post information required by law. And FELS labor management consultants made some **2,000 worksite visits**, providing training on safety, workplace harassment prevention, good management practices and positive relationships between supervisors and employees.

During the year, Farm Bureau's communications team fielded more than **100 media inquiries on challenges facing agriculture**, with Farm Bureau's legal and policy experts interviewed frequently on drought, water cutbacks and the resulting impacts on food production.

And Farm Bureau members and agriculture supporters stood tall on critical issues. Farm Bureau's political affairs team and **33,605 FarmTeam members** initiated **22,804 contacts to legislators**. Farm Bureau members responded to **18 FarmTeam Alerts** on important California legislation or rulemaking and went into action. On one matter alone, the **Proposition 12** measure impacting pork producers, they **provided over 4,000 comments**, making their voices heard.

52% increase in fertilizer costs

20% increase in pesticide costs

42% increase in fuel costs



\$510 million in funding for water system improvement

\$200 million in funding to help groundwater agencies

\$200 million for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

PRODUCING RESULTS

in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

Farm Bureau representatives testified before more than **30 legislative or regulatory hearings**. Farm Bureau's Government Affairs Division kept members abreast of critical state issues through **50** editions of its weekly legislative memo, *Friday Review*, which was refashioned in May as *Farm Bureau at Work*.

In addition to securing major funding for drought and water projects and fire protection, the Government Affairs Division advocated on behalf of **key bills** that passed the California Legislature and were signed into law during the 2022 legislative session.

Assembly Bill 2406 will prohibit onerous fees imposed on agricultural exporters and other businesses that were saddled with unjust cargo detention and demurrage charges by international ocean carriers at California's clogged ports. The carriers were charging **2 to 10 times** the fees in Los Angeles and Long Beach versus other major U.S. ports.

Senate Bill 856 will ease restrictions on hunting and increase access to depredation permits to address as many as **400,000 wild pigs** found in **56 of 58 California counties** and blamed for causing extensive damage to farm and ranch properties.

On drought and water issues, **AB 1164** will enable irrigation districts to construct and maintain water storage and deliver irrigation supplies under the same rules as private entities, meaning less red tape. **SB 1378** will prohibit the Department of Water Resources from using the approval of a groundwater sustainability plan to determine the allocation of pumping rights. **SB 880** will extend the rights of agricultural irrigators who divert more than 100 acre-feet a year to take their own water-use measurements if they take a University of California Extension course. **SB 489** will allow the multi-benefit Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project to be fast-tracked for approval, a key step that can be modeled for similar projects.

Farm Bureau defeated **2 misguided bills** of concern to agriculture. **AB 2764**, an extreme measure advanced by animal rights activists that stood to ban construction or expansion of animal feeding operations and meat-processing facilities in California, died in committee. Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed **AB 2550**. Opposed by Farm Bureau, that bill would have imposed unnecessary requirements on the California Air Resources Board and local districts with providing additional air-quality benefits or addressing the state's greatest pollution source—motor vehicle emissions.

In the nation's capital, Farm Bureau's federal policy staff helped lead or facilitate **over 100 meetings** with members of Congress, their staffs, federal officials, embassies and consulate staff, and industry coalition partners. They also attended agricultural policy events in **12 states** and kept Farm Bureau members informed through **over 40 email editions** of *This Week in Federal Policy News*.

Farm Bureau's federal team helped secure **369 votes in Congress** in favor of the Ocean Shipping Reform Act to address the port crisis severely impacting California

agricultural exporters.

The team also relayed **comments of 504 Farm Bureau members** in opposition to proposed Securities and Exchange Commission climate rules that would subject farm families to burdensome reporting requirements and substantial costs and liabilities.

In addition to federal funding secured for drought relief in the West and assistance for financially distressed farmers and ranchers, our Farm Bureau also secured **\$300 million in natural disaster Emergency Relief Program funds** for California farmers and ranchers impacted by wildfires and other adverse events.



California Farm Bureau's political action team, FarmPAC, provided financial support to **68 candidates and elected officials**. It contributed **\$494,521** in California election races and **\$149,700** in federal races. FarmPAC was supported by **1,009 donors** raising **\$426,548** in **1,297 separate contributions**. That included contributions from more than **60 new donors** who recognized the value of FarmPAC and the role it plays in building relationships with candidates and elected officials from diverse political backgrounds who support legislation benefiting farmers and ranchers.

Meanwhile, a new small-dollar email fundraising effort introduced in 2022 **raised \$33,225** by contacting members and informing them of Farm Bureau's successes on critical agricultural issues and its commitment to address challenges that lie ahead.

68 candidates and elected officials supported by FarmPAC

1,009 donors raised \$426,548 in FarmPAC funds

60 new donors



LEGAL ADVOCACY DELIVERING

for farmers and ranchers

The California Farm Bureau legal team **reviewed 22,736 pages of briefs, letters and regulatory materials** and **composed 1,531 pages of briefs, letters and regulatory materials**. The team participated in and testified at **71 regulatory hearings and workshop meetings** and took part in **1,463 hours in regulatory hearings on Zoom**.

Our legal team submitted an amicus brief to the United States Supreme Court in *Sackett v. EPA*, advocating for appropriate regulations for Waters of the U.S. rules. The team also read and reviewed an administrative record of **over 1 million pages** in the unpaired flows case, a case impacting our members' water rights.

Farm Bureau legal staff also advocated on behalf of utility ratepayers, helping secure **more than \$25 million in savings**. That included forestalling an increase of **\$10.3 million in energy costs** over a three-year period (2022–24) for San Diego Gas & Electric agricultural customers. In addition, Farm Bureau successfully fought to secure over **\$15 million in energy savings** in 2022 for farm customers of Southern California Edison.

\$15 MILLION

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ENGAGING

for the next

FARMING GENERATION

Farm Bureau Extension provided **10 continuing education courses** in English and Spanish for **428 registrants**. We conducted **7 retirement plan webinars** for **357 attendees**. On farms and ranches, we provided 22 health and safety sessions, also in English and Spanish, for **209 participants**.

Farm Bureau wrapped up its **41st annual photo contest** Sept. 30, awarding a total of **\$2,500 in cash prizes**. Amateur photographers among the membership were invited to enter photos showcasing California's agricultural bounty from their personal perspectives. Award-winning photos are published in winter issues of *Ag Alert* and *California Bountiful* magazine and showcased on Farm Bureau websites and social media channels. Meanwhile, **41 entries were submitted** to the **3rd annual Farm Dog Contest**. The grand prize winner, from Kern County, received a **\$1,000 cash prize** and recognition at the California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and in Farm Bureau publications and digital media.

47 Young Farmers & Ranchers attended the Leaders Meeting held in July in San Luis Obispo. The meeting included farm tours, leadership development sessions, program planning and networking.

7 Farm Bureau members from **6 counties** participated in Leadership Farm Bureau, learning about advocacy and federal and state agricultural issues while meeting legislators in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. and touring farm regions in North Carolina.

75 collegiate memberships were awarded to California FFA members who attended the Sacramento Leadership Experience Conference.

Meanwhile, the California Farm Bureau Scholarship Foundation awarded **\$212,500 in scholarships** to **49 students** seeking to pursue careers as farmers or ranchers or in other agricultural ventures.

The California Farm Bureau held **15 Grow in the Know sessions for 52 county Farm Bureaus** and **distributed \$40,520 in funds** to help **23 of them** in local efforts to generate new membership.

Farm Bureau offered **29 member benefits** in 2022, including a retirement plan administered by Nationwide and a new initiative—in partnership with the National Immigration Forum—to provide naturalization application services and counseling for eligible employees of Farm Bureau members.

COMMUNICATING

OUR AGRICULTURAL STORY

Farm Bureau's communications and publications team widely shared our message in 2022, while covering critical news impacting farmers and ranchers and continuing to illustrate the contributions—and bounty—of California agriculture.

Our *Ag Alert* newspaper **published 710 articles**. Its **46 issues** included **12 editions of our new County Corner feature** highlighting our local Farm Bureaus working on behalf of California's agricultural communities.

Farm Bureau publications won **3 first-place journalism awards** in a national competition sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation, bringing home prizes for news reporting and commentary writing for *Ag Alert* and feature writing for *California Bountiful* magazine.

More than **2.5 million television viewers** tuned in for episodes of our *California Bountiful* television program, which was broadcast in **8 "over the air"** broadcast outlets in California and nationally via RFD TV.

The **6 issues of California Bountiful magazine** featured **95 articles on California farms and foods** for general interest readers and published 32 recipes highlighting California farm products. As a new feature in 2022, the Farm Bureau logo was included in **37 articles** that highlighted Farm Bureau members. Meanwhile, *California Bountiful* magazine articles were republished in *Sactown* magazine's September/October issue, with **4½ pages** featuring *California Bountiful* content.

Additionally, Farm Bureau distributed **22 press releases** and uploaded **1,016 social media posts to 26,653 followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram**.

Our California Farm Bureau website drew **312,716 page views**. The *California Bountiful* site attracted **172,474 views** and *Ag Alert*'s online edition had **188,952 views**.



41 ENTRIES

were submitted to the 3rd annual Farm Dog Contest.



2.5 MILLION

viewers tuned in for episodes of our California Bountiful television program.

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE RESEARCH

In 2022, the **California Bountiful Foundation**, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific and research arm of the California Farm Bureau, launched a research clearinghouse to compile scientific data on agriculture, water and the environment with a goal of promoting studies on critical matters affecting California farm communities.

The Bountiful Foundation **collaborated with 16 organizations** in 2022. It funded **3 research projects**, applied for **9 scientific grants**, made **7 presentations** and **published 3 articles**.



The Foundation partnered in 2022 with Californians for Smart Pesticide Policy in supporting **2 studies by ERA Economics**, a Davis-based consultancy specializing in the economics of agriculture and water resources in California. One ERA Economics analysis examined potential economic impacts for farmers if California policy members followed a European Union directive to phase out certain commonly used pesticides. It found that, if the standard were applied to California's **\$2 billion annual lettuce crop**, it would increase farmers' production costs by **more than 12%**, crop yields would drop **by 5% to 10%** and lettuce prices at grocery stores would jump by **up to 8.2%**.

INSPIRING STUDENTS

about contributions of agriculture

More than 100,000 copies of the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom's **16-page** educational newspaper, *What's Growin' On?*, were distributed. Shared among children and adults alike, the publication was seen by hundreds of thousands of additional readers. The **20th annual edition** focused on the **16 farm commodities** for which California produces as **much as 99%** for consumers throughout the U.S. That astounding figure was shared with another **14,000 students** throughout California who tuned in to California Farm Day, hosted by the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, to learn about California's **99% Club**.

13,725 educators viewed Ag in the Classroom resources online, downloading more than **9,366 lesson plans and other materials**.



The Ag in the Classroom program awarded **\$47,428 to 375 educators** throughout California through its annual grants to expand agricultural literacy efforts. In 2022, **25 teachers** were awarded Literacy for Life grants and **350 teachers** received Taste and Teach Grants.

175 educators and supporters attended the California Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Ventura, with **41%** being first-time attendees.



COLLABORATION

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