

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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Between The Furrows is a monthly publication of the SCCFB. Members receive a subscription as part of their membership investment.

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President's Message Cycles



ARNETT YOUNG, PRESIDENT

At this time every year, I am reminded of cycles. I believe it is mostly because things usually pick up in local agriculture. Planting of vegetables are in full swing, the apple orchards will soon be blooming, and berry plants are taking root. Natural cycles, like the water cycle as we look for rain, or temperature cycles as we look forward to warmer weather, are evident. The day length begins to noticeably increase this time of year and I tend to notice the lunar cycles as well. All these cycles bring me joy as they remind me of how time is changing. However, there is a new cycle that has developed over the past two years that should disturb us all.

In the United States, Covid-19 illnesses and deaths are spiking in January/February for the second time in as many years. Obviously, this is not considered a cycle since this is only the second year; it is, however, a pattern. One major cause of this pattern may be obvious to all; holiday travel and gatherings facilitate the spread of Covid to oneself and others. These spikes require communities to develop stricter face mask, testing and vaccine recommendations/protocols. Then the inevitable accusations arise that these measures don't work because "look at California". It has some of the strictest measures yet still has the highest total number of cases/deaths in the nation. Is this true?

I decided to investigate this. It is true that California has both the highest number of cases/deaths compared to all 50 States and 6 territories as a raw number. In fact, the top three populous states, California (1), Texas (2), and Florida (3) all rank in the same order as population for the total number of cases/deaths. California has much stricter Covid protocols than both Florida and Texas, so are they not working? Or are we just seeing that California's population is the defining reason for why we have the highest numbers?

California's Covid protocols stand out as strong, compared to Texas and Florida, when the comparison is made apples-to-apples, as a rate cases/deaths per 1 million people. In the number of cases by rate, California ranks 41st (193,888 per million) compared to Texas 37th (202,654 per million) and Florida 7th (246,945 per million). When comparing Covid deaths per 1 million people, California ranks 38th (1,994 per million), with Texas 29th (2,701 per million) and Florida 17th (2,969 per million). Using 2020 census data, we can translate these numbers into real lives. If Texas had the same protocols as California, Texas would have had 255,489 fewer cases and saved 20,606 lives. Florida would have had 1,142,752 fewer cases and saved 21,000 lives.

The numbers are clear; Covid protocols work. California is doing its part in trying to mitigate Covid; it's time others do the same for the sake of everyone. ■

National Agriculture Day Luncheon - Wednesday, March 16, 2022

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 <p>Plan tips for: PASSING THE FARM TO THE NEXT GEN</p>	 <p>Have a Champion and Prioritize the Discussion There should be someone at the farm who is dedicated to moving the process forward.</p>
 <p>Recognize Each Other's Point of View Listen and recognize each other's point of view as valid, regardless of whether you agree or not.</p>	 <p>Understand the Financial Picture The next generation should have access to the finances for the best chance of success.</p>
 <p>Write Down Your Rough Draft for Transition of Assets and Management Write down your vision or ideas to ensure everyone is on the same page. This draft will help you finalize it with a professional.</p>	 <p>Get Help as Needed from a Facilitator A facilitator or mediator with experience in family meeting and succession planning helps create a sense of fairness. They'll help set the agenda of family meetings, ensure nothing is missed, and help reluctant participants become more involved.</p>

For more information, please visit <https://emcenter.org/5-tips-for-passing-the-farm-to-the-next-generation/>



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ASK MARK

Mark Bolda, Farm Advisor, Strawberries & Caneberries UCCE

Skunks? What Do I Do?

Q. I've got a skunk under my porch and I want it out! What do I do?

A. Skunks and other animals under porches or other nooks around one's home are not uncommon in coastal California, and so there is naturally a good literature available from UC Cooperative Extension on how to handle this situation.

Beyond the shelter that the space under your porch provides, skunks also like being around where people live because of the ready availability of water and food – they like berries, fallen fruit and insects. While they are not aggressive and given the choice will flee rather than release their scent, they end up spraying dogs fairly often because dogs approach rapidly and bark at them.

Outside of trapping, which can be difficult and after which skunk must be euthanized because it is not legal to relocate skunks, a good way to get them out from under your porch is to exclude them by blocking the opening from where they are coming and going. To ascertain when the skunk is out, put a little bit of flour in front of the opening and examine the patch for footprints shortly after dark when one would expect the skunk to exit. Once it has left, the opening can be sealed up and closed. It is important though to know that there are no young left behind (most kits are born in the spring), and if there are you can put in a one-way outward swinging gate (a ½ inch mesh hardware cloth hinged at the top and left loose on the other three sides is good). The hardware mesh must be bigger than the opening on the outside, so the skunk can push its way out but not back in. This

will allow the other skunks to leave as well without being able to come back in again. If the young are not yet mobile, you will have to wait or remove them another way.

Also, putting floodlights beneath the porch to illuminate the space there facing outward through the skunk's entry point will help in getting them to go somewhere else.

Once you have successfully removed the skunk from under your porch, you should look to exclude any others from coming in there again. The best way to do this is put up screen or simply block them out. Make sure the screen or blocking material is tight, and also buried some six inches underneath the soil, because skunks will work hard and dig to get into a good space like under a porch.

This information comes from the excellent "Skunks" section of the excellent UC IPM Guidelines for Pests of the Landscape and Garden. Most any issue can be found here, with descriptions of the problem and common sense guidelines on how to solve them. Just type in the issue and then UC IPM Guidelines in your search engine and you should get right there.

The above has been a short description of how to exclude skunks from underneath a porch of a residence. For more assistance on this issue, please contact Mark Bolda, UCCE, Santa Cruz County, 831 763 8025 or mpbolda@ucanr.edu. ■

THE WATER NANNY

Ode to Henry Miller Water History in 2 Acts

On the east edge of Mount Madonna Park are the ruins of three large homes, the summer residence of Henry Miller, the California Cattle King. His usual residence was in Los Banos, summers in the Santa Cruz Mountains were preferred. He owned the largest cattle company west of the Mississippi River, with almost two million acres of grazing land. His company, Miller & Lux, was the largest freight shipper on Southern Pacific. He had friends in the legislature and State Supreme Court, but mostly liked to manage his ranches stretching throughout California, Nevada and Oregon.

The Miller & Lux cows needed water as well as land. He was not shy about taking a favorable interpretation of laxly enforced "environmental" laws of the time, which encouraged the elimination of swamps with the Swamp Land Act of 1850. If you could row a boat across the land, and drain it, you owned it. Miller strapped a row boat to a buckboard and "rowed" across much of the San Joaquin Valley. Tulare Lake, once the largest in the West, is now the town of Corcoran (Miller was not solely responsible).

Miller was particularly instrumental in fashioning California pre-1914 water law. California initially followed riparian



water law, land bordering a river can withdraw the water, and this right transfers with the property. It benefits the early landowners,

like Miller. Water is in short supply in California and there were many precedential legal cases involving Miller & Lux. As it turns out, the Southern Pacific attorneys retired to the State Supreme Court, where the railroad's largest customer fared well. The alternative water rights theory is appropriation, which is the first to use even if not the adjoining landowner. Miller was later to arrive in Nevada where he argued for appropriative rights before the Nevada Supreme Court, also packed with railroad cronies, and Nevada has the opposite water law to California, a possible coincidence.

The system of riparian rights makes sense back East, and England, where water and rivers are plentiful, but was uniquely

followed in the West only in California. This changed in 1914 when water rights were first regulated by the state. Landowners with pre-1914 riparian rights got to keep them, new rights were more prescriptive. In reality riparian rights are simple to understand, even if unfair. California, since 1914, had incrementally created a complex, multi-headed, system of State and Federal water laws, regulations and court opinions, which is neither simple nor fair.



The change in water rights allowed for the construction of dams, water diversion, canals and millions of homes in the southern California desert (including Los Angeles). To build a dam on a river, existing riparian rights downstream were traded in for preferential contractual water rights for the same water, now delivered by water district canal. The Delta Mendota and California Aqueduct brought water to the arid Westside. Various complex formulas control who gets what water during a drought, a farmer with preferential contractual rights may get 50%, while their neighbor receives 15%. The Colorado supplies water for farmers in Imperial and Riverside Counties for a fraction of the cost we pay for just pumping water from our wells. Courts ruled that fish get their share too, which is necessary, but arbitrary in application.

All of this is arguably managed by unelected bureaucrats at the Bureau of Reclamation and the State Water Resources Control Board. Until a few years ago, when they cut water allocations, farmers made it up by pumping water from their wells. As your Nanny has repeatedly opined, this all changed with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) which now limits well water usage to "sustainable" levels. This all results in a total lack of predictability for farmers in many regions of the state. *"Too bad that all the people who really know how to run the country are busy driving taxi cabs and cutting hair."* (George Burns) **And everyone lived happily ever after . . . ■**



FAVORITE RECIPES

Abraham Lincoln Cake

Abraham Lincoln, America's 16th president, had some favorite foods, including apples, bacon and oysters. But among his favorites was an almond cake made by his wife Mary Todd Lincoln.

FOR THE CAKE:

6 large egg whites
2 cups sugar, divided
1 cup butter
3 cups flour
1 Tablespoon baking powder

1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 cup buttermilk
1 1/4 cups blanched almonds, toasted & finely chopped

FOR THE FROSTING:

1 1/2 cups sugar
2/3 cup water
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar

3 egg whites
salt, to taste
1 teaspoon vanilla
sliced almonds, optional for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 10-inch tube pan. Beat the egg whites until frothy. Then add 1 cup sugar into the egg whites while beating them, until stiff peaks form. Set aside.

Cream together the butter and the remaining 1 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Set aside. Combine the vanilla and almond extract with the buttermilk. Set aside. Stir the almonds in the flour mixture. Then, add both the butter/sugar mixture and the buttermilk mixture into the dry ingredients, do so in thirds and mixing until just combined. Gently fold the egg whites mixture into the batter, careful not to deflate it or overmix it. Pour the batter into the prepared tube pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 1 hour.

While the cake bakes, in a heavy saucepan on the stovetop, over medium heat, combine the 1 1/2 cups sugar with the water and cream of tartar. Bring the mixture to a boil, using a wetted brush to remove any sugar crystals. Cover the mixture and let it boil until a candy thermometer reads 245°F, for about 3 minutes. Beat 3 egg whites with some salt, until glossy and peaked. While you beat the egg whites, slowly and gradually pour the syrup mixture in. Continue beating until the mixture is cool and the frosting is soft and fluffy. Fold in the vanilla.

Remove the cake from the oven and allow it to cool completely before frosting. Garnish with sliced almonds.

Interesting Trivia

Here are 30 (this is 27-29) awesome facts about California, the sunniest state in the U.S.

- California is the only state that has hosted both the Summer and Winter Olympics – the Summer Olympics will be held there once again in 2028.
- California is the world's fifth-largest supplier of food. California is also the largest producer of food in the U. S.
- California contains the most diverse environment in the world – it varies from hot desert to subarctic depending on latitude and elevation.

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Matt, Meghan, Mary & Mark
Clifton

I am a Farm Bureau member because the agricultural industry is filled with hard working, resilient individuals. In Santa Cruz County, we are surrounded by such a strong agricultural community that motivates and pushes members like myself to learn from each

other, and work towards bettering the industry. I am proud to say that my whole family currently works in agriculture, and I will always support and participate in all the Farm Bureau events.

Mark M. Clifton, Dealer Relationship Manager-Central Coast
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WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

CCCE customers who own commercial agriculture businesses or businesses directly supporting the Ag industry located within the counties of Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz.

WHY ELECTRIFY?

- The Central Coast Ag community communicated an interest to invest in cleaner technology to improve air quality for surrounding communities and farmworkers
- Replacing fossil fuel powered equipment with new electric equipment will reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions
- Providing extra incentives for small and medium farming operations will tighten up gaps in equitable access to cleaner technologies
- **Switching to new electric equipment provides cost savings opportunities**

WHEN ARE PROGRAM INCENTIVES AVAILABLE?

- The Ag Electrification program runs through October 2021 - September 2022
- **Incentives support up to 70-100% of total project cost, not to exceed \$30,000 (depending on project type)**
- Incentives are available on a first come, first served basis until funds are fully reserved



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Fire Insurance



Alan Smith

The legislature continues to regulate the homeowners' insurance market after the catastrophic wildfires in recent years. Three new laws are of particular interest.

The first is Assembly Bill 2756: residential property insurance.

This law amends sections of the California Insurance Code. In some areas of California, some residential property insurers have reduced their fire risk exposure by issuing a "difference in conditions policy" that eliminates insurance for fire damage. Instead the difference in conditions policy is intended to be paired with a separate fire policy to give the homeowner equivalent coverage to the usual homeowner's policy. The Legislature found that the insurance carrier's notice to policyholders of renewal sometimes does not clearly inform the homeowner of the reduction in coverage and the need for the supplemental fire policy.

So, after July 1, 2021, the new law requires an offer for a new policy or renewal that does not cover fire insurance to clearly say so in the statement on the front of the insurance policy and include information on alternative California fire insurance opportunities and the "California Home Insurance Finder" (https://interactive.web.insurance.ca.gov/apex_extprd/?p=400:50). It also requires the insurance company to get a signed statement from the policyholder and gives up to 60 days and requires that a reduction or elimination of coverage include a description of the reduction or elimination and finally, requires that any notice of non-renewal include the specific reason for the non-renewal. The purpose apparently is to make sure that policyholders in high risk wildfire areas of the state who often face non-renewal reduction in coverage become aware of what's going on.

This law also imposes certain standards about additional building code update coverage and the scope and that policies that do not provide building code upgrade coverage say so on their declarations page.

The second new law is Assembly Bill 3012: residential

property insurance. This is a sister bill to AB56. This law requires notices of non-renewal for residential property insurance expiring after July 1, 2021 explaining how the California home insurance finder can help find a homeowner's insurance policy. It also requires development of a clearing house to help reduce the number of policies and provide for California admitted insurers. This law also requires additional living expense coverage under certain circumstances and if there's a loss, it provides for additional living expense coverage.

The third new law is Assembly Bill 872 also dealing with residential property insurance. This bill changes the California Insurance Code to also address problems involving wildfires. It prohibits a policy that provides coverage for additional living expenses from limiting the homeowner's right to recovery if the home is rendered uninhabitable. This was seen as needed where a home is not physically destroyed but is uninhabitable because of other emergency situations such as lack of a water supply. This law also gives the insurer the ability to provide alternative housing. And it requires living expense coverage to be provided for at least 2 weeks with additional 2-week extensions if there is a state of emergency and an order by the civil authority (i.e. the city or county) restricting access to the home. It also requires the insurer to provide advance payments and living expenses under certain circumstances. It enlarges the definition of damages available to the policyholder to rebuild or replace at another location and finally it requires the insurer to offer a 60-day grace payment for payment of premiums on policies within an area where a state of emergency has been declared.

These bills expand several consumer protections related to residential fire insurance. Be sure to carefully read any notices from your fire insurance or homeowner's insurance carriers. Contact your insurance professional or your attorney if appropriate. ■

NEWS FROM RCD

Written by Dan Hermstad, Agriculture Program Specialist
Resource Conservation District, Santa Cruz County

Approaches To Determine How Much Water To Put On

It's very common for watering to be done according to a schedule, such as following picking or simply twice a week for an hour. Sometimes labor shortages are determining how often valves are turned on and off. The ideal is to water exactly to what the crop needs as this will save money on power and water costs while also saving overall on water use. To do this there are two primary ways to determine how much water crops are using.

Evapotranspiration (ET) is the water lost through the plants leaves and soil. It can be monitored to know how much water to replace in the soil. This is the equivalent of tracking the miles you have driven, (fuel you have used) to know how much fuel to add to the tank. Unless measuring actual ET in a specific field (only Tule sensors do this), this requires the use of a specific crop coefficient to adjust the reference ET measured at a nearby CIMIS station. With just a few numbers, this can be a relatively simple calculation that provides precise information about crop water needs.

Soil moisture can be measured directly with instruments and sensors. This is the equivalent of a gas gauge that measures the amount of fuel in your "tank". Your tank being the soil and the fuel being the water. You then need to know how low you can run the tank before the crop starts to feel water stress. Most sensors available measure the volume of water in the soil. Tensiometers measure the pressure exerted on plant roots the same way that plants experience water stress. You'll then need to apply water to keep your soil at a moisture level that is optimal for your crop.

Many programs, sensors and other equipment are available these days to assist in knowing when a crop needs water and how much to put on. RCD staff can assist in determining what setups might be best for your operation.

Once you know how much water the crop needs you need to know exactly how long to run your system to apply that amount of water. Knowing irrigation system details such as flow rate, ■

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

National Agriculture Day Spring Luncheon

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds
March 16, 2022

105th Annual Meeting

Rodgers House Patio, SCC Fairgrounds
June 23, 2022

California State Fair

Cal Expo, Sacramento, CA
July 15 through July 31, 2022

28th Annual Golf Tournament

Golf Course to be determined
July 22, 2022

Santa Cruz County Fair

September 14 through September 18, 2022

Annual Directors' Dinner

November 3, 2022
5:45 p.m.

CFBF 104th Annual Meeting

Monterey, CA
December 4-7, 2022

Agri-Culture

14th Annual Down To Earth Women Luncheon

Driscoll's Rancho Corralitos
May 12, 2022
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

14th Annual Testicle Festival

Estrada Deer Camp
August 27, 2022
3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

26th Annual Farm Dinner

Location to be determined
October 22, 2022
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

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USDA Deregulates LBAM



Nearly 15 years after it was first detected in Alameda County and soon thereafter confirmed in several Bay Area counties including Santa Cruz and Monterey, USDA has removed the Federal Domestic Quarantine for Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) effective December 17, 2021. Initially LBAM was considered a pest with a high-risk rating by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The rating was based on the wide host range of the pest and the potential for crop loss as well as its limited distribution in the world (reported in Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Great Britain, Ireland, and Hawaii). The detection of LBAM in California triggered the Federal Domestic Quarantine which restricted the movement of plant and commodity shipments within the U.S. Santa Cruz growers were required to sign a compliance agreement with USDA/CDFA and regulatory inspections by Federal, State and County officials were put in place to prevent the movement of LBAM outside the county. Finds of suspected LBAM larvae by officials during inspection resulted in shipments and lots being held until the pest was officially identified by the CDFA laboratory. If LBAM was detected, the treatment options available to growers were limited and the movement of commodities outside of the quarantine area were prohibited until it was determined that LBAM had been eradicated from the production site. Efforts to eradicate the pest from California in the early years were unsuccessful. Over the years as USDA and CDFA evaluated the risks and learned more about LBAM, several commodities were identified as low risk for pest dissemination and those commodities were removed from quarantine restrictions. Growers were also offered exemptions for certain commodities that were harvested and packed in a manner that reduced the risk of spreading the pest. Continued evaluation and surveys by USDA and CDFA over the years has confirmed that LBAM does not present the threat to agriculture and our environment initially thought. The federal deregulation of LBAM means there is no longer a requirement to certify commodities free from LBAM when moving commodities within the US. However, LBAM continues to be a concern to our international trade partners. As an example, LBAM host commodities (including berries and leafy greens) produced in Santa Cruz County may enter or transit British Columbia, Canada if accompanied by a Federal Phytosanitary Certificate. Growers wishing to ship to British Columbia, Canada are required to sign a compliance agreement issued by the County. The agreement requires each grower to scout production fields for the presence of leaf rollers and to respond if LBAM is detected. Although USDA has removed the LBAM restrictions for movement of commodities within the US, LBAM may continue to be regulated by our international trade partners. It is hoped that in the future international restrictions on LBAM will also be lifted. ■

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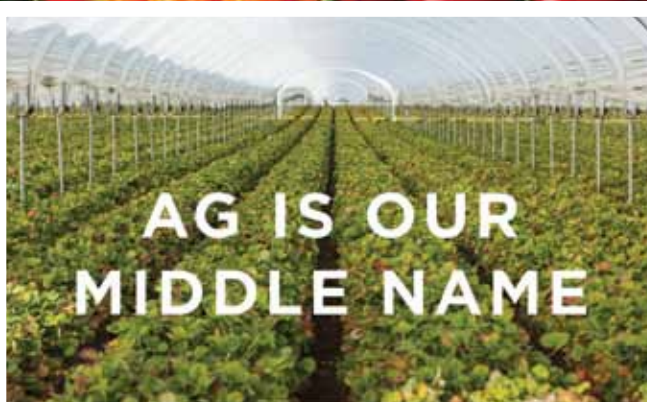
CALENDAR

FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 25
Poster and Poetry Contest
Deadline

MONDAY - FEBRUARY 21
President's Day Observed -
Office Closed

THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 24
Board Retreat

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 16
National Agriculture Day
Spring Luncheon



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