

Between the Furrows

A Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau Monthly Publication

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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8th Annual Testicle Festival



(L-R) CJ Miller, co-chair, and Dennis Webb enjoy a beautiful day at the 8th Annual Testicle Festival

The Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau held its 8th Annual Testicle Festival at Estrada Deer Camp in Watsonville on Saturday, August 27th. The rocky mountain oysters were served as hors d'oeuvres and the sauces were enjoyed and judged by the record-crowd attending. A full chicken barbeque was served for dinner, with s'mores, made around the campfire, for dessert. The event also included a raffle, live and silent auction.

It was announced that Mara Miller Spahn of Watsonville won the "It's All in the Sauce" contest at the 8th Annual Testicle Festival. The contest invites attendees to prepare and bring their favorite dipping sauces for everyone to try out with the rocky mountain oysters served as appetizers. Mara's sauce was the favorite of the sauces entered in the competition. Janet Estrada of Watsonville won the coveted "Best Sauce Name" section of the contest with her

"Sweet Balls of Mine" sauce.

There was also a competitive horseshoe contest at the Testicle Festival. The winning team was comprised of Fred Chamberlain and teammate Ricardo Am Rhein. All contest winners were presented with plaques commemorating their triumphant performances.



(L-R) Tony Gomez, Watsonville City Councilmember
Trina Coffman-Gomez and candidate for the US House of
Representatives, California District 20, Jimmy Panetta

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President's Message

DAVID VAN LENEP, PRESIDENT

"The difference between early 20th Century America and now is a shift in social value attributed to our environment. The teeth of that sentiment was the subsequent passing of bodies of law designed to prevent horrendous pollution and protect certain core resources."

Regulation Contemplation

Laws and regulation are part of our everyday existence; generally something positive if they solve a problem or protect you, or negative if some edict causes you some additional burden or expense.

I operate in a field drowning in regulation and permits designed to pigeonhole operations so tightly as to remove any reasonable possibility for significant environmental impact. It is a tall order.

Most people who manage or own much land, produce natural resources, farm or ranch are in a similar predicament. Most of us, at the drop of a hat, can provide a laundry list of nonsense or outlandish regulations that have negatively affected us in some manner. Even those embarking on beneficial restoration, or public works projects complain about the gauntlet of agencies, permits and laws that mire down reasonable review of a project. It is all true; and drives the cost up for everyone. Current laws, and new interpretations of old laws, enforcing agencies and permits have gone so far as to make many of us shake our heads in dismay, curse the whole process like Charlton Heston in Planet of the Apes, or just do something else.

So, it is not without irony and thoughtful contemplation to assert that I am glad some of those laws exist. Not all but some, certainly in their original context of basic environmental protections.

Allow me to explain. Over the last several months the Rio Olympics and the deplorable conditions of the ocean and waterways has been a hot news topic. Understanding the workings of the media, it may be overblown, but shocking even if only half true. It is hard to put in context with our contemporary societal values. Rio is not the only place with these problems, it is just in a fishbowl currently. China had similar problems in the last Olympics, and in some parts of the world those conditions are commonplace.

When you stop and think, it was not too many decades ago that many U.S. waterways had similar conditions. Remember the Cuyahoga River in Ohio; it caught fire.

President's Message - Continued on Page 8

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ASK LAURA

Steve Tjosvold, Farm Advisor, UCCE

Potting Soil is a Primary Source of Root Pathogens and Must Be Managed

Q: How does a nursery plant with apparently clean potting soil get root diseases and how can this be managed?

A: Soil-inhabiting plant pathogens can be found in non-sanitized potting media, crop debris in the potting media, and anything that has contacted the ground, such as equipment, tools, irrigation hoses, and workers' hands and shoes. Containers in a nursery should not sit directly on the ground. Many root infecting pathogens can be moved with water from a contaminated pot or area on the surface of the ground and infect roots of a nearby plant. Likewise during a rainstorm or, in some cases, during sprinkler irrigation, pathogens can be splashed from the contaminated ground or pot onto nearby plants. Benches or similar structures that support plants above the ground can eliminate or minimize this. In greenhouse structures, concrete floors or other impervious surfaces are ideal for walkways between benches. Floor surfaces should be kept clean of debris, soil, or planting media. After a crop cycle and between crops, benches should be washed clean of plant debris and soil. Benches should be allowed to dry because this can kill sensitive plant pathogens. Metal and plastic benches are ideal because they can be cleaned and sanitized readily. Wooden benches should be regularly painted with copper-containing paints to eliminate fungi or other types of pathogens. Benches can be sprayed with diluted chlorine bleach (0.5 % sodium hypochlorite solution) or other suitable disinfectant. This should be done after the benches have been thoroughly cleaned of all potting media and plant debris that would inhibit the activity of most disinfectants. Benches should be

allowed to dry before they are used again. There are many clever ways to raise pots and containers off the ground. Where benches or other support are not feasible for cost or other reasons, the soil should be covered with gravel and weed cloth. Gravel supports containers above the drainage water; the weed cloth (which also reduces weed germination) helps reduce splash and can be cleaned of soil and plant debris between crops.

Pots, flats, tools and irrigation equipment such as piping or emitters can have clinging contaminated soil and plant debris and should never be reused without thoroughly washing them to remove all clinging particles. They can then be treated with a disinfectant such as diluted chlorine bleach. The bottom of clean shoes can be sanitized with disinfectants such as quaternary ammonium compounds.

Potting media should not be reused, as the risk of pathogen carryover is too great and not worth the savings in most cases. Even some newly formulated mixes may benefit from steam treatment if the sources of the media are unknown or unreliable. Contact the soil formulator of these products to insure they are free of pathogens. Aerated steam is the most efficient way of sanitizing potting media. Portable steam generators are available for sale or rent for small batches, and commercial greenhouses may use the steam from boilers used for heating greenhouses. For most situations, aerated steam treatment of 140° to 160°F for 30 minutes will kill the most problematic pathogens while preserving the natural microflora of the growing medium. Store and handle potting media so it does not come in contact with the ground or water runoff. Cover the media when not in use.

THE WATER NANNY

Phoenix

The Seal of San Francisco shows a majestic phoenix rising from out of fire. Prophetically, the City Seal was adopted in 1859, decades before the Great Quake. In 1906 the earth shook SF into mythical lore, and the fires burned for days. Like a great city recovering from the calamity of war San Francisco rebuilt itself into the City of Light in time for the Pan Pacific Exposition in 1915.

The 2007 financial crisis hit State government like a slow moving earthquake. Towns and agencies with weak fiscal foundations were particularly hard hit. Stockton and Vallejo collapsed into bankruptcy. To shore up state coffers much "discretionary" spending was stopped, like annual payments to county fairs.



Santa Cruz County Fair had a foundation eroded by time and fiscal neglect. Overspending and abandoned marketing could have closed the fair, which was only saved by a community of volunteers. The fair is again blossoming; so check it out for yourself. It opens on Wednesday, September

14th with the Opening Day Barbecue, sponsored by the Farm Bureau and prepared by the Watsonville Firefighters Association, and runs through Sunday, September 18th. Don't forget to stop by the Farm Bureau's booth which won a Silver Medal at the State Fair.

What about the other 360 days of the year? Sure the fair is fun, and again a success, but the fairgrounds need tending year-round. After the carnival and cows go home the fairgrounds are seldom empty. It is a great potential community resource. Nowhere else in the county is there the same collection of event forums, from horseshows to wedding, for races to conventions.

As farmers, well really entrepreneurs, we always try to maximize our returns. How would you maximize this opportunity to turn the fairgrounds into a year-round City of Light and increase revenues? There are great resources to start with; the fair halls, Harvest, Crosetti, Fine Arts, and

Heritage Hall, room for flea markets, a great lawn, Rodgers House, horse shows, races, acres of parking and an almost secret RV park, 105 acres in all. The Ag History Project is a big draw too. Some things fall back to sleep after each fair, like the 4H livestock barns, chicken and floriculture buildings.

Fair Manager, Dave Kegebein, has done a great job restoring the fair to its 20th century glory, for which he earned the Chamber Man of the Year award this year. Repairing roofs and straightening out sewer lines leave little public perception of change. New paint would be cool, so long as it is not government green. The fairgrounds, with the financial aid from the Fairgrounds Foundation, needs to work on this change toward the new and improved Fair and Event Center.

What about better use of the race track, the largest block of property. The concession lease can't last forever. There are other uses that could draw more participation on a weekly basis. Maybe replace the large livestock barn and auction arena with a new 50,000 sq.ft. multi-use building with animals during the fair and conventions the other 51 weeks. How about featuring Paddy Smith Park as a premier wedding location (nuptials by the waterfall) paired up with a remodeled Fine Arts building. Just add a kitchen and replace the north wall with large glass sliding doors so the reception overlooks the park. Recognize the horse arenas (there are 3) have become a bigger draw with an improved entrance. There are many other and better ideas. As a community we can polish the jewel that is our fairgrounds so its luster can be seen from far away. "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." (Thomas A. Edison)





FAVORITE RECIPES

Lobster Corn Fritters

In early August we visited Massachusetts and Connecticut. We spent some time up around Cape Ann, Boston and Cape Cod and the seafood in those places is amazing. Our next stop was Mystic, Connecticut and this is where we found Lobster Corn Fritters. They were served with a chipotle aioli sauce and a tartar sauce and were mighty delicious. Probably not something I would make on a regular basis, but they are definitely a real treat if you like lobster. They made a great lunchtime treat for me! I've added a couple of sauce recipes for you to try also. Enjoy!

1 cup finely diced onion
1 cup finely diced red bell pepper
1 1/2 cups diced cooked lobster meat
3/4 cup fresh corn kernels
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup milk

3 tablespoons chopped parsley leaves
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 teaspoons chili-garlic paste
1 cup flour
2 tablespoons baking powder
1 quart canola oil



Mix all the ingredients except the oil, adding the flour and baking powder last.

Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan or a small deep fryer until it reaches 350°F to 375°F. With a tablespoon, shape the fritters into small two-bite sized balls and drip carefully into the heated oil. Using tongs, roll the fritters around in the oil until they are deep golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove and drain on a brown paper bag or paper towels. Serve with the sauce.

Red Onion Cocktail Sauce:

1/2 cup ketchup
1/2 cup minced red onion
1/2 cup diced tomato
2 tablespoons prepared horseradish
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
4 dashes of hot sauce

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and serve with the fritters.

Chipotle Aioli

1 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
2 minced garlic cloves
2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
1 teaspoon chipotle chile powder or chipotle hot sauce

Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk mayonnaise with chives, garlic, lime juice and chipotle chile powder or chipotle hot sauce to taste. Season with salt and pepper; chill until ready to serve with the fritters.



"Humor oils the wheels of life and helps to keep it running smoothly."

Dorothea Kopplin,
Something to Live By



California Lawmakers Vote to Expand Overtime Pay for Farmworkers

On August 29th, California lawmakers passed a bill, and if signed by the governor, the law would make the Golden State the first to require the agricultural industry to meet the federal labor standards applied to most other industries.

Starting in 2019, the new law would gradually expand overtime pay for California's estimated 825,000 farm workers. Currently, farmworkers who put in more than 10 hours a day receive overtime. (California is one of the few states that require overtime pay for farmworkers.) By 2022, anyone who works more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week would be eligible for overtime pay, bringing the agricultural industry in line with national standards.

California's economy is fueled in large part by its agricultural output. More than a third of all vegetables and two-thirds of all fruit and nuts sold in the United States come from the state. Its agricultural industry raked in more than \$50 billion in 2014.

As reported, the vote was 44-32 in favor of the overtime bill.

NATIONWIDE SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Margie Piercy, Director, Business Development

Preventing Common Farm-Vehicle Accidents

Safely navigating large agricultural equipment over rural roads to and from the fields is a challenge for even the best drivers. Nationwide reminds you to consider the following rules on the safe operation of your equipment to help reduce the number of farm-vehicle accidents on America's rural roadways.

The basics: Most states allow leeway regarding the use of implements of husbandry on public roadways. For the most part, regulations for size and type of equipment don't apply when you operate agricultural equipment on roadways. But you need to be aware of bridge and road embargos to help prevent serious injury and damage to roadways and equipment.

The increase in size of agricultural equipment makes it almost certain that portions will extend left of center when operated on public roads. Courts have generally upheld the right of equipment operators to use public roads, but that doesn't give immunity from liability should you have an accident when the size of your equipment is in direct violation.

Accidents are more prevalent at certain times of the day. Operating in the morning presents an increased risk as people head off to work and school. Drivers are usually in a hurry and often lack the patience to follow a slow-moving vehicle. The same is true during afternoons and early evenings as schools let out and people are returning home from work.

Don't forget about the trailer. When pulling trailers, operators often rely on the lights from the power unit as their warning system. This can increase the risk of collision because these lights can become obstructed by the roadway curving or the large loads being pulled, such as large hay bales.

Recommendations for avoiding farm-vehicle accidents: Before pulling onto the road, you must understand the hazards of driving and the importance of sharing the road with others. Never allow an inexperienced or untrained driver to get behind the wheel. Regulations require drivers to be trained on how to operate the specific equipment they are assigned to use and to how to navigate the equipment in the environment they're operating in.

Because the potential for accidents is high, we offer common-sense tips to road safety and other preventive measures to common farm-vehicle accidents to help keep America's rural roadways safe.

Let's look at the following scenarios to learn more:

Left-turn collisions: The left-turn collision is one of the most common accidents involving articulating farm vehicles, such as a tractor pulling a tool bar and nurse tank. When attempting to make a left turn, equipment operators commonly pull to the right in order to make a wide left turn. Motorists behind the equipment may view the movement of the equipment to the right as permission to pass.

Accidents may be prevented if equipment operators use equipped turn signals or hand or arm signals when operating older equipment. Before committing to the turn, operators should pay close attention to oncoming traffic and check all mirrors or look over their shoulder to ensure motorists are not trying to pass.

Rural bridges: Large farm equipment and old bridges don't mix. Before crossing a rural bridge, make sure your vehicle weight will not damage the bridge or cause it to collapse.

Because rural bridges are often very narrow, allow oncoming traffic to clear the bridge before starting across. This reduces the total weight on the bridge and gives you more space to maneuver.

Tractors, combines and sprayers have high wheels with tires that have large lugs to facilitate traction. If you pull right to cross the bridge with oncoming traffic, your tires can easily come into contact with the guardrail and subsequently cause your equipment to climb the rail or even tip off the bridge.

Passing cars: When driving a slow-moving vehicle, there will always be other motorists wanting to pass. You should never wave a driver to pass. Ultimately, it's the passing driver's responsibility to pass – not yours.

You shouldn't drive with half of your vehicle on the shoulder either. As the passing vehicle straddles the center line, your

Rural Road Safety - Continued on Page 11

California Supreme Court Traces History of Regulation of Organic Crop Labeling

A California Supreme Court case decided late last year held that California consumer remedies laws were not pre-empted by the federal Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA). *Quesada v. Thyme Farms, Inc.*, No. S216305 (December 3, 2015). The case is also interesting because the Supreme Court also traced the history of state and federal regulation of organic crops in California from the 1940s to the present. "The first use of the word 'organic' to describe a method of farming in which the farmer strove for improved natural soil condition through the use of natural additions of manure and compost and the avoidance of chemical amendments" traces to the 1940s, perhaps not coincidentally the time when use of synthetic pesticides first became widespread." . . . Oregon enacted a first-of-its-kind state organic certification law in 1973. (citations omitted). California followed in 1979, modeling its statute on Oregon's template." . . . "In 1990, Congress responded. The Organic Foods Act (7 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq.) directs the establishment of national baseline standards for the production, labeling, and sale of organic products."

Herb Thyme, a California herb-growing operation grew herbs by both conventional and organic methods. Herb Thyme had several herb-growing farms in California and most of them used conventional methods. One farm was organic and was certified. All herbs were processed in the same packaging and labeling facility and the blended product was sold as organic. Herb Thyme also apparently labeled as organic some herbs which were grown conventionally.

Michelle Quesada said she purchased Herb Thyme products at a premium price believing they were 100% organic. She alleged that Herb Thyme mislabeled its products "Fresh Organic" and misused the "USDA Organic" seal when it mixed organic and conventionally grown herbs in the same package.

Ms. Quesada filed a state court class-action lawsuit under California law alleging violations of the California Consumer Remedies Act, the California Unfair Competition Law and the False Advertising Law.

Herb Thyme defended saying among other things that Ms. Quesada's claim was pre-empted by the OFPA which Herb

Thyme alleged had exclusive authority to regulate labeling and marketing of organic products and expressly and impliedly preempted California's truth-in-lending laws.

The trial court agreed with Herb Thyme and granted judgement at the pleadings stage before trial in favor of Herb Thyme. The California Court of Appeal agreed with Herb Thyme and affirmed the trial court. But the California Supreme Court reversed and held that state law claims that regulate labeling and marketing of organic products were not pre-empted by the OFPA.

This case is a good read as it traces the evolution of federal and state organic regulatory programs and discusses the intersection of organic food labeling and consumer law.

Link to case: <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ca-supreme-court/1719957.htm>

President's Message - Continued from Page 2

Even today, people dump trash, couches, appliances and you-name-it into the creeks or off the side of the road, or even on the road for that matter.

The difference between early 20th century America and now is a shift in social value attributed to our environment. The teeth of that sentiment was the subsequent passing of bodies of law designed to prevent horrendous pollution and protect certain core resources.

For myself, I take for granted the good water quality, safe food and relative lack of garbage and waste strewn about, because most of my life has occurred after the shift.

Over time these laws have expanded well beyond the original intent of lawmakers 50 years ago, to an outlandish almost Orwellian degree, and in dire need of revamping.

Looking past all of that, I do appreciate the basic intentions of the laws, and the benefits to people and the environment.

Farm Practices That Save Water On The Farm

We all know that changes in irrigation equipment and methods can affect how much water is used on the farm. In fact, the preponderance of information and dialogue between growers and water management experts seems to concentrate on irrigation water management, scheduling, and changing or upgrading irrigation systems so that water use and delivery minimizes waste.

Guess what? There are many other non-irrigation related practices that can save an enormous amount of water on the farm and these practices are often overlooked by growers trying to use less during each irrigation. Practices such as: reduced and/or modified tillage; land leveling; row arrangement; fallowing with cover crops in rotation; mulching, vegetative practices; changing to lower water using crops or

varieties; wind and water erosion control practices; and soil fertility improvements including the incorporation of more organic matter. For example: Increasing organic matter by 1-2% per acre can reduce water use on that acre by as much as 20,000 gallons.

On the other hand, farm cultural activities and operations can have an adverse affect on soil quality and the ability of the soil to hold water for crop use. Affects such as increased soil erosion and compaction and the removal of fertile top soil and/or organic matter to mention only a few. For more information on ways to conserve more water from activities other than changes to irrigation systems and irrigation water management contact the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service at 475-1967 or the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County at 464-2950.

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AG NEWS

Rural Road Safety- Continued from Page 7

equipment may sideswipe it if you have to swerve to avoid an oncoming mail box, road sign or other obstruction.

Always drive with the left side of your vehicle to the centerline, even though the width of your equipment extends onto the shoulder. If a vehicle needs to pass, the driver will have to make that decision based on the law and safe opportunity to do so.

Rear-end collisions: On contouring roads, it's easy for a car traveling at higher rates of speed to be surprised by a larger, slower-moving vehicle, especially around a sharp bend or after the crest of a hill. It's difficult for drivers of faster, smaller vehicles to judge the speed and gap distance of a larger piece of equipment.

You can help avoid rear-end collisions

by monitoring your mirrors for fast-approaching vehicles and making sure your vehicle's warning devices, such as SMV signs, are clearly visible. When moving large ag equipment on heavily traveled paved roads, you should utilize an escort vehicle.

Single-vehicle accidents: Single-vehicle accidents typically occur when an operator drives on the road's shoulder, which may be soft, wet or steep, causing the vehicle to tip over. Accidents also occur when operators strike stationary objects such as mailboxes, guardrails, signs or telephone poles.

Driving on the shoulder is often hard to avoid. But you can reduce the chance of an accident by knowing where shoulder hazards are before you start out.

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Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

WEDNESDAY - SEPTEMBER 14
Santa Cruz County Fair
Opening Day BBQ
Apple Pie Baking Contest

SATURDAY - SEPTEMBER 17
Santa Clara County Farm to
Table Dinner

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 22
Agricultural Policy Advisory
Commission

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 29
Board of Directors' meeting

FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 30
Focus Agriculture, Session 8

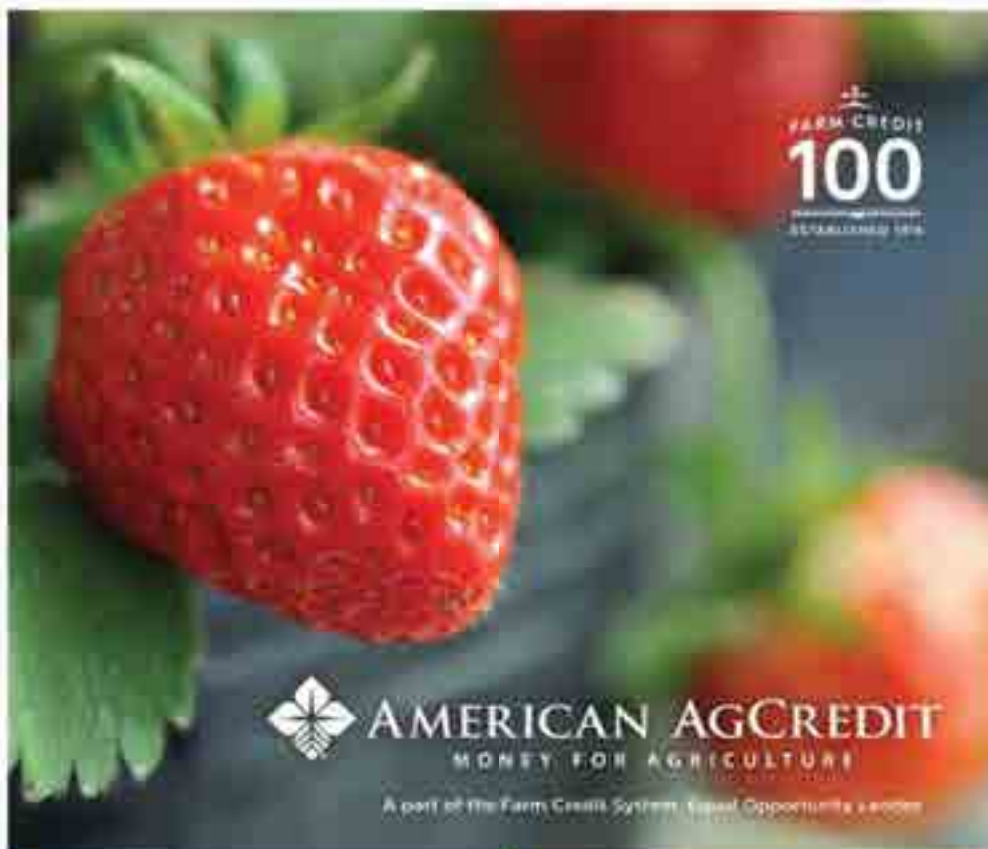
WEDNESDAY - OCTOBER 5

- Legislative Committee
meeting
- Executive Committee
meeting
- Membership Committee
meeting

MONDAY - OCTOBER 10
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Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY - OCTOBER 12
Young Farmers & Ranchers
meeting

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