

## Cooperative Extension embraces new opportunities

By Christopher Smith

It appears that 2015 could be a watershed year for Cooperative Extension in Ventura County. The University of California is completing the sale of some

***This facility would accommodate our agricultural and environmental communities' needs for professional meeting-conference space, ... field and laboratory research space [and] serve as a hub for sharing ideas and stimulating innovation ...***

surplus property that was part of the Thelma Hansen Endowment. We have an opportunity to use the proceeds from this sale to seed the development of some *grande scale* projects that will benefit Ventura County agriculture and natural resources for decades to come.

As a prelude to this opportunity, the UC Research Extension Centers system, which oversees the Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center (HAREC), is completing a strategic planning process, and the Hansen Advisory Board, which oversees and advises university leadership on use of Thelma Hansen Endowment funds, will be completing its program-strategic plan this year on the long-term use of the endowment. And I have made no secret of my vision for a regional research and education center located in Ventura County.

My vision is based upon conversations with growers, the community and UCCE advisors. The center I envision would serve the agricultural and natural resource interests in Ventura and other Central Coast counties that share many of the growing qualities and commodities cultivated in a Mediterranean climate.

My vision is for a facility that will attract additional resources into the county to complement current research and seed new innovations in agriculture. This facility would accommodate our

agricultural and environmental communities' needs for professional meeting-conference space, and field and laboratory research space. It will serve as a hub for sharing ideas and stimulating innovation, provide the breadth and depth of technological and physical resources to advance innovation, and attract national and international agriculture professionals (growers, engineers, scientists, environmentalists, etc.) to our county to learn, contribute and be a part of a rich and vibrant agricultural and natural resources community. This is our future.

Meanwhile, we continue in our tireless efforts to engage in research. Although we are limited in the resources at the HAREC, we have launched several new projects. One of these is a study with strawberries, examining alternate chemical amendments for anaerobic soil disinfection prior to planting (Ventura UCCE advisor, Oleg Daugovich). Another is a study of inoculation of soil with entopathogenic fungus to assess a potential symbiotic impact on strawberry root growth and health, with the added benefit that the fungus is a pathogen to the dreaded Bagrada bug, which overwinters in the soil (San Luis Obispo UCCE advisor, Surendra Dara).

We have also just initiated an alternate *Tamarixia* rearing study with Associates Insectary (Santa Paula), to assess new techniques and food sources with the goal of enhancing the availability of *Tamarixia* predatory wasps to combat our infestations of Asian citrus psyllid. And later this year we hope to initiate a broad range of studies on nutrition, irrigation, water quality (including runoff), and pest bio-control on berries grown under hoop tunnels. In addition, we continue ongoing research to assess cultivation techniques for dragon fruit, a new potential fresh market commodity for county growers, as well as maintaining an "archival" repository for orchard tree stock (citrus and avocado).

The Thelma Hansen Fund Research *(continued on page 3)*

### What's Inside?

- Use extra care when working around tractors
- NCRS offers drought assistance to local growers
- Field to Fork 2015
- Member Benefits

# Use extra care when working around tractors

By Mike Burns

The farm tractor is without a doubt the most important tool a farmer has on his property, but it is also the most dangerous. More than a fourth of all



agriculturally related deaths in the United States each year involve tractors.

Many times, these accidents are the result of rollovers. Other times they involve someone being

struck by a tractor or being caught in the power take-off (PTO) shafts.

By their very nature, accidents can be prevented. But for this to occur, everyone working with and around tractors and other pieces of farm equipment must be made aware of the potential dangers and the proper steps that they must take to prevent a mishap. This education process should begin with the farm operator and his foremen instructing all employees of proper safety practices.

Here are some important check-points to cover in any tractor safety program:

- Walk around and do a visual inspection before operating the tractor.
- If the tractor doesn't have a rollover protective structure (ROPS) and seat-belt, have them installed.
- Fields are loaded with booby traps such as ditches and steep, slippery slopes. Be aware of them, as they can flip a tractor.
- Drive at a safe speed, whether on a field or highway.
- Do not allow anyone other than the driver to ride on a tractor – no exceptions.
- Do not carry loads higher than recommended in your tractor's operator's manual.
- Widen the tractor's wheelbase to help prevent rollovers.

- Do not hitch to anything other than the drawbar for pulling.
- Keep all shields and guards in place.
- Turn off the engine whenever you get out of the driver's seat or cab.
- Use common sense: turn off the engine when filling the fuel tank and don't smoke while fueling.

Studies show that safe work practices are vital in reducing injuries and deaths involving tractors. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the operator's platform clear of debris?
- Is the reflective "slow moving vehicle" emblem posted?
- Are the lights and flashers operational?
- Are the tires properly inflated?
- Are the hydraulics free of leaks?
- Can the brakes be locked together?
- Is the fire extinguisher in place?
- Is there a fully supplied first aid kit on board?

State Fund's safety and health services are offered at no extra charge to policyholders and include educational programs, materials, and inspections, such as:

- Ergonomic evaluations, air sampling, and onsite inspections that can save employers thousands of dollars in injuries and illnesses.
- Electronic pamphlets, manuals, booklets, and safety sheets.

- Assistance in Cal/OSHA Compliance.

State Fund recognizes that your loss prevention efforts affect the frequency and severity of injuries and illnesses in your work environment. Our experience shows that with informed planning and education, workplace injuries and illnesses can be reduced or eliminated. We are committed to the belief that a safe workplace can increase worker productivity and lower your workers' compensation costs.

— Mike Burns is Farm Bureau Group manager for State Compensation Insurance Fund. Contact him at [mjburns@scif.com](mailto:mjburns@scif.com). State Fund has operated for 100 years, is California's largest provider of workers' compensation insurance, and a vital asset to California businesses. State Fund offers diverse and comprehensive products and services that provide a strong and stable option for employers and injured employees with fast, reliable claims service and medical indemnity benefits. State Fund's loss prevention services — provided to policyholders at no additional cost — ultimately help save businesses money. Call your broker or visit [www.statefundca.com](http://www.statefundca.com) for a quote.

## Save the Date! for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual

From

# Field to Fork

A celebration of food, farms and farm workers

"From Field to Fork" is a fund-raiser for House Farm Workers! The event brings together farmers who produce Ventura County's agricultural bounty, chefs who celebrate that bounty on their menus, and the farm workers whose labor makes it all possible.



**Date:** Thursday, July 23  
**Time:** 4:30-8 p.m.  
**Place:** The Walnut Grove at Tierra Rejada Ranch, 3370 Sunset Valley Road, Moorpark  
**Information:** [housefarmworkers@verizon.net](mailto:housefarmworkers@verizon.net)

**Ticket sales start May 22.**



Enjoy a four-course gourmet dinner while helping promote safe, decent and affordable housing for Ventura County farm workers.

## NRCS offers drought assistance to local growers

Support for Ventura County farmers and ranchers coping with the effects of drought is available through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Oxnard.

Producers concerned about meeting environmental regulations or continuing to farm with increased water costs or reductions in water availability are encouraged to contact NRCS right away. Soil scientists, agronomists and engineers are available to help producers understand what options exist for their water situation and soil type, and can help develop a plan to continue farming operations with limitations on water while keeping production goals in mind.

Additionally, NRCS programs and staff can provide assistance in the following areas:

### Soil

Farmers without access to adequate water to produce a crop may find themselves thrust from a water crisis into a dust crisis. Options for protecting fields vulnerable to wind erosion may include

cover crops, residue management, converting to less water intensive crops, mulching, or other practices.

### Rangeland

Ranching without rain is tough. Managing livestock to take advantage of available grass while protecting areas from overuse may be made easier with tools such as livestock watering systems and fencing. Grazing management plans help make the best use of what forage remains on the ranch.

### Water

For farmers who have access to water and want to make every drop count, NRCS can help develop irrigation water management plans, provide funding for soil moisture monitoring equipment, and help offset the cost of replacing exhausted, broken-down tile drains. Assistance also is available for replacing outdated irrigation systems, filters and pumps to improve water use and energy efficiency.

For more information about any of these services, contact Dawn Afman at (805) 984-2358, Ext. 101.

## Cooperative Extension *(cont'd from front page)*

and Education Grants program has been revised to refocus funded research efforts on Ventura County interests, as stipulated in the Thelma Hansen Endowment to the university. Our education team continues its efforts in agriculture education through student field trips to the HAREC, and classroom-based programs at county schools. The Master Gardener program, which now boasts in excess of 240 extensively trained Master Gardeners, has expanded its public education efforts towards water issues and urban landscaping to reduce water usage. And our 4-H youth program continues its long tradition of educating and engaging youth in hands-on agriculture projects.

While we continue our efforts to advance agriculture and natural resources in the county, we also look forward to new avenues to assist our home gardeners and commercial growers in new ways and with new innovations. We hope that in the near future our community will join us in capitalizing on new opportunities to build, to innovate, to educate, and to ensure the continued success of an industry (agriculture!) that in many ways is a key part of the quality of life we so much enjoy in Ventura County.

— Christopher M. Smith is director of UC Cooperative Extension Ventura County and the Hansen Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Contact him at [cmwsmith@ucanr.edu](mailto:cmwsmith@ucanr.edu).

## Member Benefits

### TICKETS & DISCOUNTS

*Farm Bureau members qualify for discounts on admission to many of Southern California's most popular theme parks and other attractions. To take advantage of any of these special offers, drop by the Farm Bureau office at 5156 McGrath St. in Ventura. You can also place an order and pay by phone, and have the tickets mailed to you. For more information, contact Cissy Perez-Haas at (805) 289-0155. Have your membership number handy. We accept Visa and MasterCard.*

**Aquarium of the Pacific** — Adult (12+ yrs): \$19.95 (save \$9); Child (3-11 yrs): \$11.95 (save \$3). *Valid thru 12/31/15.*

**California Adventure and Disneyland 1-Day Park Hopper** — Adult (10+ yrs): \$144 (save \$6); Child (3-9 yrs): \$139 (save \$5). *Valid thru 12/31/15.*

**Cinemark & Century Theatres** — Platinum ticket, valid all show times at all Cinemark & Century locations: \$8.75 (savings \$2.75). *Additional premiums may be applied for specially priced films and/or events priced higher than normal box office. No expiration.*

**Knott's Berry Farm** — Buena Park/Palm Springs. Adult (12+ yrs) \$36.95 (save \$28.05); Junior (3-11 yrs) Senior (62+ yrs) \$32.95 (save \$2.05). *Valid thru 12/31/2015.*

**Legoland** — "E" tickets only. Adult (13+ yrs) \$74.95 (save \$10.05); Child (3-12 yrs) \$69.96 (save \$9.05). *Includes 2nd day free ticket within 90 days of 1st visit.*

**Resort Hopper Ticket** — "E" Ticket only. Adult (13+ yrs) \$79.95 (save \$29.05); Child (3-12 yrs) \$74.95 (save \$28.05). *Includes 2 visits to Legoland, including new Waterpark (seasonal) and 2 visits to Sea Life Aquarium. Valid thru 12/31/2015.*

**Magic Mountain** — \$43.50 (savings \$26.49) General use ticket (3 yrs. +). *Valid thru 9/27/15.*

**Regal Cinemas** — Unrestricted tickets \$8.75 (regularly \$9.50 Sun.-Thurs, \$10 Fri.-Sat). *Good at Edwards, Regal, Signature and United Artists Theaters. No expiration.*

**San Diego Safari Park** — (Formerly Wild Animal Park) Adult-African Tram Safari: \$40.75 (save \$7.25) (12+ yrs); Child-African Tram Safari: \$33 (save \$5) (3-11 yrs). *Africa Tram Safari includes admission, unlimited use of the Journey into Africa Tour, Conservation Carousel and other shows/exhibits. Valid through 12/31/15.*

**San Diego Zoo** — Adult (12+ yrs): \$40.75 (save \$7.25). Child (3-11 yrs): \$33 (save \$5). *Includes admission, unlimited use of Guided Bus Tour, Express Bus, Skyfari Aerial Tram and all shows & exhibits. Valid through 12/31/15.*

**See's Candy** gift certificate — One-pound box \$15.45 (Save \$2.05). *No expiration.*

**"E Tickets"** — **Disneyland:** 1 day/1 park, 2 day/1 park, 2 Day Park Hopper. **Universal Studios,** buy 1 day, get "2015" FREE (3+ yrs). *Valid thru 12/31/15. Blackout dates apply after first visit.*

# FARM BUREAU OF VENTURA COUNTY

5156 McGrath St., Suite #102  
Ventura, CA 93003-7305

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Oxnard, CA  
Permit #424

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

 Printed on recycled paper.

## Board of Directors

Fred Van Wingerden, President\*  
Scott Klittich, First VP\*  
Jan Berk, Second VP\*  
Danny Pereira, Secretary\*  
Katie Brokaw, Treasurer\*

David Borchard Phil McGrath  
Chris Garmon Chris Sayer  
Ted Grether David Schwabauer  
Ed McFadden William Terry  
David Ross\*\*

Chief Executive Officer  
John Krist

\* Member, Executive Committee

\*\*Advisory member, YF&R chairman

### MISSION STATEMENT

We represent the broad and dynamic interests of the agricultural industry through our diverse membership. We serve members by delivering services, promoting policies, developing coalitions, and fostering community action that will ensure the long-term success of agriculture in Ventura County.

#### • FOUNDERS CIRCLE

Beardsley & Son  
Farm Credit West  
Leavens Ranches  
Rabobank  
Terry Farms Inc.

#### • PLATINUM MEMBERS

AGQ Laboratories  
Elaine Cavaletto  
Deardorff Family Farms  
Dullam Nursery  
Faria Family Partnership  
Fruit Growers Lab Inc.  
Gimlin & Udy Insurance Agency  
Limco Del Mar Ltd.  
Limoneira Company  
Jonathan Pinkerton  
Rancho Simpatica  
Rio Farms  
San Miguel Produce Inc.  
Saticoy Lemon Association  
Southland Sod Farms  
Dorcas Thille TT

#### • DIAMOND MEMBERS

Ag Rx  
Randall Axell  
Bob Jones Ranch Inc.  
John W. Borchard Jr.  
John W. Borchard Ranches Inc.  
Boskovich Farm Inc.  
Brokaw Nursery LLC  
Brokaw Ranch Co.  
Crop Production Services  
DeMartini Enterprises LLC  
Farmers Irrigation Company  
Friedrich Ranch  
Hallwood, Inc.  
Index Fresh  
Kimball Ranches El Hogar  
Larry Walker Associates  
Mission Produce  
Nunes Vegetables  
William Orcutt  
Oxnard Lemon Co.  
Oxnard Pest Control Assn.  
Pecht Ranch  
Rancho Limcado  
Sundance Berry Farm  
Travis Ag. Construction  
Fred Van Wingerden

#### • GOLD SEAL MEMBERS

Ag Land Services  
Anacapa Berry Farms  
Anacapa Homes LLC  
Associates Insectary  
Barkley Ins. Agent Brokers  
Bennett's Honey Farm  
J. David Borchard  
Katie Brokaw  
Mike Brucker  
Burns Equipment Services, Inc.  
C.W. Petit Inc.  
Calavo Growers  
Camulos Ranch  
Humberto Candelario  
CAPCA-Ventura County  
Chapter  
Lee Cole  
DeWitt Petroleum  
Jack M. Dickenson  
Duda Farm Fresh Foods Inc.  
Scott Dunbar Ranch and  
Land Broker  
Estate of William Worthington  
Flying M Ranch  
Edward Friel  
Friends Ranches Inc.

Gardena Nursery  
R. Logan Hardison  
Ron Hertel  
Joseph Maulhardt Trust  
John McGrath  
Phil McGrath  
Naumann Land Development  
Newhall Land Farm Company  
Otto & Sons Nursery  
Petty Ranch LP  
Quality Ag Inc.  
Dick and Martha Richardson  
Santa Rosa Berry Farms LLC  
Chris Sayer  
Sierra Pacific Farms  
Sunnyland Nursery  
Tierra Rejada Farms LP  
Underwood & Sons LLC  
White Seed Co.  
Yamamoto Farms

FARM  BUREAU  
OF VENTURA COUNTY

5156 McGrath St., Suite 102 • P.O. Box 3160 • Ventura, CA 93006  
Telephone 805-289-0155 • Fax 805-658-0295 • www.farmbureauvc.com