

Notes from the CEO

By John Krist

Delegates from Farm Bureau of Ventura County joined those from 52 other county farm bureaus earlier this month in Anaheim at the 91st annual meeting of the California Farm Bureau Federation. Attending on your behalf to consider

policy proposals and by-law amendments were President Leslie Leavens-Crowe, First Vice President Jonathan Pinkerton and Treasurer Ed McFadden. Immediate past president Scott Deardorff served as alternate.

Besides debating policies that guide the organization's legal, political and educational agenda, the delegates also elected a slate of officers to lead the organization for the next two years. Although incumbent Doug Mosebar of Santa Barbara County sought re-election, the delegates instead chose

Paul Wenger, a third-generation farmer from Modesto, to serve as president.

Wenger, who grows walnuts and almonds, becomes the 15th president of the state's largest farm organization. He has been a statewide officer of the organization since 1997, when he was elected second vice president. He was elected first vice president in 2005.

Delegates elected Kenny Watkins of Linden as first vice president of the organization. Watkins had been second vice president of the Farm Bureau since 2005. He raises beef cattle and grows alfalfa, processing tomatoes, walnuts and grain hay.

A farmer from Oroville, Jamie Johansson, was elected second vice president. Johansson serves as a vice president of the Butte County Farm Bureau and is a former state chairman of the CFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee. He grows olives and operates an olive oil company.

Eight members were newly elected to the CFBF Board of Directors: Dennis Atkinson of Lebec, Matt Conant of Rio Oso, Mich Etchebarne of Modesto, Cathie Pierce of Cathays Valley, John Pierson of Vacaville, David Roberti of Loyalton, John Vevoda of Ferndale and Norm Yenni of Sonoma.

Maria Azevedo of Merced was elected to chair the statewide Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee and

will serve as an advisory member of the CFBF board.

Ventura and Santa Barbara counties continue to be represented on the CFBF board by David Schawbauer of Leavens Ranches, currently a member of our Board of Directors and a past president of Farm Bureau of Ventura County.

FBVC recognized for excellence

Farm Bureau of Ventura County also received special recognition during the CFBF annual meeting for its accomplishments in membership and public outreach. We were honored as one of only 14 counties to have achieved the voting membership goal for all four quarters last year. We also received Activity of Excellence Awards for our efforts in membership and public relations, and we received a President's Program Award for having the best membership program of any county Farm Bureau in our size category (1,300-1,900 members).

I am especially proud of our President's Program Award for membership. We increased our voting membership by 3 percent in 2009 – a year when statewide voting Farm Bureau membership declined by 2 percent overall.

Young Farmers & Ranchers continuing to grow

Ventura County's recently revived Young Farmers & Ranchers group is holding its first official barbecue this month, and is looking ahead eagerly to the future. Already, the group has a couple dozen participants, and has chosen a new and energetic executive board consisting of Chris Della Maggiore (chairman), Will Terry (vice-chairman), Christopher Garmon (treasurer), and Mike Rutledge (secretary). In addition, Chris Garmon now represents District 4 (Ventura and Santa Barbara counties) on the YF&R State Committee.

Future meetings of the local YF&R group will be on the third Thursday of the month at locations to be determined. For more information about the group and upcoming events, please visit the group's Facebook page (search for keywords "Ventura County young farmers and ranchers") or contact Will Terry at (805) 216-5430.

With the daunting challenges currently facing the industry, the timing couldn't be better for young agriculturists to become involved in YF&R and Farm Bureau, and to begin preparing for a leadership role. Please pass the word to anyone you know who's between the ages of 18 and 35.

Weather service upgraded

Our recently upgraded Agricultural Weather Forecasting Service received its first serious test during this month's

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Water, air monitoring workshops scheduled

By *Mary-Ann Warmerdam*

The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) encourages your participation in upcoming workshops on our ongoing discussions regarding how best to protect two environmental resources: surface water from pesticides used in both agricultural and urban settings; and air quality via a proposed monitoring network.

Surface water

In response to continued pesticide detection in surface water and despite efforts to control discharges, DPR staff began meeting with stakeholders in 2009 to discuss draft concepts and language prior to initiation of a formal process to adopt regulations.

DPR adopted regulations in 2007 to protect surface water from agricultural insecticides applied during the dormant season, but monitoring by our staff, other state departments and researchers show pesticides continue to be detected

at unacceptable levels.

The workshop discussions will focus on three draft documents: potential requirements to protect surface water, a flowchart that provides a visual description of the potential requirements and criteria used to identify approximately 70 pesticides we believe need further restrictions to protect surface water. The documents and additional information are posted at: www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/emon/airinit/workshops_airwater.pdf.

The surface water workshops are scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon on Feb. 11, March 26, April 28 and May 11 at the California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters building at 1001 I St. in Sacramento in the Sierra Hearing Room. They will be Webcast at www.calepa.ca.gov/Broadcast.

Air monitoring

We have resurrected our plans for an air monitoring network that were put on hold for several years while our staff

developed and implemented several sets of regulations to reduce volatile organic compound fumigant emissions and responded to lawsuits challenging those regulations.

The workshop on the draft air monitoring plan is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. Jan. 26 in the Byron Sher Auditorium, also at Cal/EPA headquarters. The network will sample ambient air for multiple pesticides in several communities over the next three to five years beginning in 2010. Data collected will be used to evaluate and improve protective measures against pesticide exposure.

Although the communities being considered for monitoring are in the San Joaquin Valley and the Central Coast, the data collected may be used to improve protective measures statewide. Information about the air monitoring network is posted at: www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/emon/airinit/air_network.htm.

Expanded authority

In October, the Structural Pest Control Board (SPCB) was transferred to DPR from the Department of Consumer Affairs as part of Gov. Schwarzenegger's directive to consolidate and streamline state government.

DPR currently regulates all pesticide use in agricultural, industrial and institutional settings. Under the direction of DPR, county agricultural commissioners enforce pesticide laws and regulations, including pesticide use by structural pest control licensees. SPCB regulates the structural pest control industry, licensing businesses and individuals who conduct structural pest control.

Under an agreement, the Department of Consumer Affairs will continue to manage SPCB functions through June 30, 2010, including examination, licensing and complaint resolution activities. The agreement provides time for DPR, Consumer Affairs and SPCB to plan how best to integrate responsibilities, information technology and administrative functions, and for DPR to explore the pros and cons of several options to make state licensing and enforcement of pesticide use more efficient.

— *Mary-Ann Warmerdam is director of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Contact her at (916) 445-4000.*

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quick cold snap, and the system appears to have performed well under the pressure of heavy use.

As you may remember, earlier this year we transferred the forecasting system to a new computer platform, launched email and Web download options for forecast delivery, and pulled the plug on our confusing array of local and long-distance phone lines, replacing them with a single toll-free access number (1-888-756-3276).

Anyone using the [weather forecasting] system without paying for it is in effect raising the subscription fee for those who do pay. That's not just cheating, it's stealing from other growers.

The few complaints we received during this process were mostly from system users who found themselves locked out after calling in or logging on only once or twice a day (the system limits calls to three per day per personal identification number). When we looked into the complaints, we found that in most cases the complaints were from growers using PINs already assigned to other subscribers.

Please be aware that it is a violation

of the terms of the subscriber agreement to "loan" your PIN number to another user or to disseminate the forecasts to those who are not paying for the service. This is not just a record-keeping issue or a technical detail. Because the system is operated on a break-even basis, and because nearly all the operation and maintenance costs are fixed, the subscription fee is intended to fairly distribute system costs to all users. The more registered users, the lower the per-user cost.

In other words, anyone using the system without paying for it is in effect raising the subscription fee for those who do pay. That's not just cheating, it's stealing from other growers. If you are using the system without paying, please contact us at (805) 289-0155 and we'll be happy to help you do the right thing.

Mark your calendar

The Agricultural Commissioner's Office will host a free pesticide-container recycling event on Feb. 11. Growers will be able to drop off their empty containers at Fruit Growers Supply, 980 W. Telegraph Road., Santa Paula.

Although the event is free, you need *(continued on back page)*

Four from county chosen for Ag Leadership

Four local residents have been selected to participate in the California Agricultural Leadership Program (CALP), one of the premier agricultural leadership opportunities in the United States.

Their class, the 40th selected in the program's history, was recently inaugurated in Sacramento.

Ventura County's participants are Yissel Barajas of Oxnard, Scott Beylik of Fillmore, Mike Richardson of Fillmore, and Melissa Varcak of Moorpark.

CALP also honored Farm Bureau President Leslie Leavens-Crowe as one of four recipients of this year's Profiles in Leadership Award. The awards recognize CALF alumni for leadership, dedication, and service to industry and community. Leavens-Crowe, a partner and office manager of Leavens Ranches, is a graduate of CALF Class 34.

Barajas is the director of philanthropy at Reiter Affiliated Companies (RAC), the largest year-round fresh multi-berry producer in the world. Reiter's philanthropy program, through the Healthy Lifestyle Initiative, focuses on reducing health risks to obesity, diabetes, and related diseases among farm workers. Barajas also administers RAC's local giving program with a focus on meeting identified community needs. The daughter of farm workers, Barajas is the board vice president of the Ventura County Homeless and Housing Coalition, board treasurer of the California Coalition for Rural Housing, and a member of Ag Futures Alliance and the Ventura County Farm Worker Housing Task Force. Barajas has a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in urban planning from UCLA.

Beylik is the third generation farmer of Beylik Family Farms, established in 1971. He is co-owner of the farm with his father, who retired from the farm in 2005. Beylik Family Farms markets 100 percent of its produce at local farmers markets – 20 markets weekly, year-round – serving Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles counties. The main production of the 21-acre farm is greenhouse tomatoes and cucumbers. Squash, peppers, melons, artichokes, basil and avocados are produced seasonally. Beylik graduated from Fillmore High School in 1987, attended community college, then transferred to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, in 1989.

Richardson is the CEO of a citrus and avocado ranch management corporation in Fillmore that he co-owns with his wife,

Heather. Quality Ag was started 10 years ago as a citrus ranch management operation. As commodities began shifting toward avocado production, so did Quality Ag. Richardson's operation manages 300 acres of citrus and avocados, including about 100 acres that he owns or leases. Richardson has diversified, and Quality Ag now has 45 employees in four divisions, including ranch management, irrigation installation, weed abatement, and agricultural construction. Richardson graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural business and a minor in plant protection.

Varcak is a business manager at Dole Packaged Foods in Westlake Village. As manager of the frozen fruit product line, she is responsible for new product development, marketing, research, profitability and day-to-day challenges that arise on the business. Her role is much like a small business owner within a larger company. Varcak has worked in consumer packaged goods companies since graduating from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, in 2002. Five years later she received her MBA from the University of California, Irvine.

The priorities for CALP are to create leaders who can make change for the long-term viability of California agriculture, are able to engage and positively influence society, and can participate in communication networks that enhance California agriculture. It has been in operation since 1969 and has more than 1,000 alumni, including such leaders as U.S. Reps. Devin Nunes and George Radanovich, Secretary of Food and Agriculture A.G. Kawamura, Secretary for Natural Resources Mike Chrisman, state Sen. Abel Maldonado, Assemblyman Jim Nielsen, and Department of Pesticide Regulation Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam. Graduates are leaders in their communities and in the agriculture industry.

At seminars during the next two years – delivered by CALP's four partner universities and other academic institutions – instruction will focus on inner (understanding self), outer (understanding how to lead others), and global (understanding the inter-related nature of today's issues) leadership. Through classroom and experiential learning, class members will deepen their understanding of leadership theory and learn leadership skills such as communications and public speaking. They will participate in a 10-day national seminar during the first year and a 15-day international seminar during the second year.

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 (Age 12+): \$18.95 (save \$5); Child (age 3-11): \$10.95 (save \$1). Valid through 12/31/10.

California Adventure and Disneyland 2Fer Ticket — Adult (age 10+): \$72; Child (age 3-9): \$62. Valid through 4/24/10. First visit may be to either park; second visit must be to other park within 30 days of first visit. One person per party must show proof of California residency.

California Adventure and Disneyland one-day Park Hopper — Adult (age 10+): \$76 (save \$21); Child (age 3-9): \$68 (save \$9). Valid through 4/24/10

Knott's Berry Farm — Adult (48" tall): \$29.95 (save \$22.04); Junior (age 3+, under 48" tall): \$22.99 (save \$2.04). Valid through 3/31/10.

Legoland — General use ticket: \$51.95 (save \$15 adult, \$5 child). Triple Park General: \$62.95 (save \$24 adult, \$14 child) Valid through 12/31/10. Includes two visits to Legoland, including new Water Park opening Memorial Day weekend, and two visits to Sea Life Aquarium.

Magic Mountain — General use ticket: Adult (48"+ tall): \$25.95, (save \$29.04); Child (under 48" tall): \$16 (save \$11.50). Valid through 12/31/10.

Regal Cinemas — Unrestricted tickets \$8.25 (regularly \$9.50 Sun.-Thurs, \$10 Fri.-Sat). Good at Edwards, Regal, Signature and United Artists Theaters. No expiration.

San Diego Sea World : "Two Days of Fun" — Adult (age 10+): \$57.95 (save \$11.05); Child (age 3-9): \$52 (save \$7). Valid through 12/31/10.

San Diego Wild Animal Park — Adult (age 12+): \$31.95 (save \$5.05). Child (age 3-11): \$23.95 (save \$3.05). Valid through 12/15/10.

San Diego Zoo — Adult (age 12+): \$31.95 (save \$5.05). Child (age 3-11): \$23.95 (save \$3.05). Valid through 12/15/10.

See's Candy gift certificate — One-pound box \$12.95 (save \$2.65). No expiration

Universal Studios — Two-day ticket (age 3+): \$59 (save \$10). Valid 1/1/10 through 12/31/10. First use must occur by 5/31/10. Buy a Day, Get 2010 Free: \$69. Valid through 6/30/10. Includes 15 blackout dates.

Board of Directors

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MISSION STATEMENT

We represent the collective interests of the agricultural industry, for the benefit of our members, in political and policy interactions with our urban and rural neighbors. We seek to be aggressive in promoting the interests of our members and are committed to the long-term success of agriculture in Ventura County.

FARM BUREAU OF VENTURA COUNTY

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 www.farmbureauvc.com

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to make an appointment by calling (805) 933-2926, Ext. 244 (leave a message). Containers must be empty, clean and dry. A complete description of the eligibility requirements is at www.interstateagplastics.com.

The ag commissioner also plans a series of continuing education courses next year, covering various legal and regulatory topics. The first will be from 8 a.m. to noon on Jan. 13 at the PWA conference room, 11251-A Riverbank Drive, Saticoy. It will focus on 2010 permit conditions, online pesticide use reporting, pesticide application inspections, and changes in hazard communication regulations.

The sessions are free and provide up to three hours of continuing education credits approved by the Department of Pesticide Regulation. To reserve a spot, contact Korinne Bell at (805) 933-2926, Ext. 235.

— *John Krist is chief executive officer of the Farm Bureau of Ventura County. Contact him at john@farmbureauvc.com.*

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