



Riverside County

AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.

A private, nonprofit organization serving farmers throughout Riverside County since 1917

RIVERSIDE COUNTY FARM BUREAU CELEBRATES ITS 93rd YEAR

The Riverside County Farm Bureau (RCFB) celebrated its 93rd anniversary at its Annual Dinner Meeting held at the Desert Falls Country Club in Palm Desert on November 5th.

With over 100 members and guests in attendance, the celebration was a big success. The Riverside County Farm Bureau re-nominated Grant Chaffin as president to serve another year. Darl Young, Jr., Richard Schmidt, and Ellen Lloyd-Trover were nominated to serve as vice-presidents for another year. The new Board of Directors include: Lee Anderson, Linden Anderson, Steve Corona, George Cordero, Cindy Domenigoni, Ben Drake, Dan Hollingsworth, Larry Minor, Alex Sanchez, Greg Young, John C. Gless, Marlene Salazar-Pongs, Tony Schmidt, Andrian Zendjas, Andy Domenigoni, and Jeff Elrod. David Zeiders is a new Associate Director. President Chaffin remarked that the new board had a combined total of 326 years of RCFB experience.



Supervisor John Benoit on the left and RCFB President Grant Chaffin on the right.

The meeting's guest speaker was Supervisor John Benoit. Supervisor Benoit spoke on the importance of agriculture in Riverside County and thanked the RCFB for working closely with the supervisors and county staff to help resolve many agricultural issues facing the county. He mentioned, for example, the RCFB's role in helping in the revision of the Agricultural Grading Ordinance and again, thanked the RCFB for working closely with county staff members. The RCFB would like to thank Supervisor Benoit for taking time away from his busy schedule to speak at our Annual Dinner Meeting.

This year's Robert M. Howie Award was presented to Ben Drake. The Robert M. Howie Award is presented to an individual each year by the RCFB for outstanding service to Riverside County agriculture. Ben Drake has been the president of Drake Enterprises for 29 years. Based in Temecula, Drake Enterprises manages 825 acres of avocados and 400 acres of winegrapes. He is a 5th generation farmer in Riverside County. Ben has served on several boards and committees both locally, statewide and at the federal level during his career including past president of the Riverside County Farm Bureau, past chairman of the California Glassy Winged Sharpshooter Board and the Glassy Winged Sharpshooter Task Force, UC Riverside Chancellor's Agricultural Advisory Council, Riverside County Waste Management Task Force, past vice-president of the USDA Hass Avocado Board, past president of the Temecula Valley Winegrape Growers Association, past board member of the 4H All-Stars in Riverside County, and is currently a board member on the Rancho California Water District. Ben is also the current president of the Upper Santa Margarita Irrigated Lands Group. Thank you, Ben, for everything you have done and are currently doing for agriculture in Riverside County and congratulations once again on being this year's Howie Award recipient.



From Left to Right: RCFB President Grant Chaffin, RCFB Vice-President and Howie Committee Chairman Richard Schmid, Howie Award Recipient Ben Drake, and Howie Committee member Dick Kelley.

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Welcome New Members

We would like to "Thank You" for becoming part of the Farm Bureau Family.

.....CONT. FROM FRONT COVER

The Riverside County Farm Bureau would like to thank all of its members for their contributions to agriculture in Riverside County. We would also like to thank all of the sponsors who made the 93rd Annual Meeting possible. Our sponsors included Agri-Empire, American Ag Credit, Domenigoni Brothers Ranch, Jackson, DeMarco, Tidus and Peckenpaugh Law Corporation, State Compensation Insurance Fund, Temecula Valley Winegrowers Association, W.D. Young & Sons/Cocopah Nurseries, Arlan Knutson Insurance Agency, Big Horse Feed and Corona Ranch, Granite Construction, Jordan Central Implement Company, RDO Equipment Company, West Coast Turf, Crop Protection Services, and Heating and Air Conditioning Service Company (HASCO). The Riverside County Farm Bureau would also like to thank Grant Chaffin and Rachael Johnson for their gift basket donations and RCFB office manager, Stephanie Bell for her hard work and dedication to the RCFB. The Farm Bureau looks forward to serving its members and agriculture for another 93 years.

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Red Palm Weevil Found in Southern California

By Steven A. Pastor, RCFB Executive Director

With our great diversity of crops it's no wonder that Southern California always seems to be the hot bed of new insects and pests waiting to destroy our agriculture. In past years we have had the Mediterranean fruit fly, the Asian citrus psyllid, and the light brown apple moth to name a few. The latest insect to be discovered in Southern California is the red palm weevil (*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*).

This weevil was discovered in Laguna Beach (Orange County) in a Canary Islands palm in a residential area by a landscaper. The finding was confirmed by entomologists at the USDA-ARS Systematic Entomology Laboratory in Maryland. This is the first confirmed sighting not only in California but in the United States of the red palm weevil. According to Mark Hoddle, an entomologist and the director of the Center for Invasive Species Research at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), "The international trade in live palms is the most likely source for this pest. It was probably moved as eggs, larvae, or pupae hidden inside palms. These can travel great distances because they live with their food supply. Once larvae emerge as new adults, they abandon their original host plant and fly to new palms, traveling as many as 7 km (4.3 miles) in 3 to 5 days."

The red palm weevil is a large beetle like insect with a body length of 1 inch to 1.5 inches long. Originally from Southeast Asia, the red palm weevil has spread to Africa, Europe (Spain), and to the Mediterranean countries. UCR says, "The weevils have a long, slender snout which the female uses to penetrate palm tissue and create access wounds in which eggs are deposited. Adult weevils are predominately reddish-brown in the most typical form. The weevil collected in Laguna Beach has a single, contrasting red stripe running the length of the snout. The larvae are legless grubs, pale yellow with a brown head, some larger than 2 inches." This particular weevil likes to live in date, Canary, queen, and fan palms.

The red palm weevil is a potentially devastating new threat to California's palm trees; both for landscaping purposes and for the commercial date business. Riverside County produces approximately 90% of the nation's date crop which in 2009 was valued at \$33 million. Thomas O. Baldwin, the dean of UCR's College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences says, "A strong message needs to go out as soon as possible to arborists and others in industry to keep an eye out for this deadly pest. Unlike many previous agricultural pests, the red palm weevil is also an urban problem. We at the university have two ways to proceed: we assume the pest has already spread or we wait to see signs of it having spread. We are not willing to wait."

For more information or if you suspect you may have the red palm weevil in your landscaping or commercial nursery/farm, you can go online to www.cdffa.ca.gov/phpps/rpw or call the Pest Hotline at 1.800.491.1899.

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Winter months require extra care on the farm or ranch

By Mike Klimenko, Farm Bureau Group Manager

It's that time of year in California when the mornings are crisp and the days are short. For many of you involved in farming and ranching, it is a time to unwind a little and start preparing for the next growing season.

Winter maintenance frequently involves working indoors—something that is out of the norm for most farmers. Because of this change in routine, it is also a time when you may be more vulnerable to accidents, so it is imperative that you think before you act and don't cut corners.

The farm shop is one of the most dangerous places on the farm. It can present a wide variety of hazards: the shop environment can be hazardous if it is not well lit or not kept clean; the equipment is inherently hazardous because it is usually very heavy and it has spinning bits, revolving blades and rotating pieces; and the operations being performed can be hazardous if they are not done correctly.

Because doors and windows are frequently closed to keep out colder outside air, proper ventilation is very important. Adequate systems are needed to vent smoke, fumes and exhaust gases. Flexible pipe or tubing can be used to vent exhaust gases. Properly designed ventilation systems are required in welding and battery areas to remove smoke and fumes.

You may also find yourself working more with electricity as you maintain and repair your equipment for another year.

Electricity is the most widely utilized form of energy on the farm, but it is also potentially dangerous. Electrocutation is the greatest hazard associated with electricity. A person's inability to let go and detach oneself from the source of electricity may result in receiving a near-fatal or even fatal shock if the source of electricity is not shut down or removed.

Here are some other important tips for working with and around electricity.

- * Treat every electric wire as if it were a live one.
- * Inspect equipment and extension cords before each use.
- * Take faulty equipment or plugs with bent or missing prongs out of service for repair.
- * Only qualified electricians should repair electrical equipment or work on energized lines.
- * If a plug doesn't have three prongs or if the receptacle doesn't have three openings, make sure the tool is grounded in some other way before use.
- * Never try to bypass an electrical system by cutting off the third prong of a plug.
- * Turn off the power and report the smell of hot or burning plastic, smoke, sparks or flickering lights.
- * Stop using a tool or appliance if a slight shock or tingling is felt.
- * Never disconnect an electrical plug by pulling on the cord.
- * Whenever working on an electric circuit, the circuit should be turned off and locked out at the circuit breaker or fuse box to ensure that the circuit cannot be accidentally turned on.
- * Those who regularly work on or around energized electrical equipment should be trained in emergency response and CPR.

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ROPS and Rollovers, Lifesavers and Life-takers

Tractor rollover accidents are among the most frequent causes of farm fatalities. Rollovers also result in serious injuries that leave farmers disabled and many farm families in dire straits.

Yet according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), half of the 4.7 million tractors in use today don't have the one device that can prevent rollover deaths. ROPS, or rollover protective structures, create a protective zone around tractor operators that can prevent deaths and serious injuries when rollovers occur.

Nationwide Agribusiness, whose farm insurance is endorsed by CFBF, advises that rollovers occur more frequently than many people realize. On average, one of every ten tractor operators will overturn a tractor.

ROPS have proven to be extremely effective when tractors flip. There are an estimated 2,000 ROPS-equipped overturns a year, with no data to suggest these rollovers resulted in fatalities. When ROPS and seat belts are used together, they are estimated to be 99% effective in preventing deaths or serious injury.

The three types of ROPS available – a two-post frame (with solid fold-down versions), a four-post frame, and a ROPS with an enclosed cab – all perform the same duty, providing a protective zone that can save a human life.

Like airbags in cars, ROPS on tractors are designed and certified to withstand only one rollover. So if a tractor overturns, the ROPS should be replaced immediately. ROPS also should be inspected regularly for signs of rust or cracks, as these could cause a structural failure during a rollover. Altering a ROPS by drilling into or welding onto the frame, can weaken its ability to hold up in a rollover. Pulling or towing with a ROPS can result in a rear overturn.

Nationwide Ag recommends that older model tractors should be retrofitted with a ROPS based on manufacturers' specifications. ROPS for many older and smaller tractors often can be purchased for \$600 or less. Homemade ROPS are not recommended because they can easily fail if not designed, built or installed according to precise specifications of the manufacturer.

While many farmers do not wear tractor seat belts, and the best protection comes from the ROPS-seatbelt combination, a ROPS alone can still provide considerable life-saving defense in rollovers. So be sure to equip or retrofit with the ROPS that's right for your tractor.

For a no-cost policy review and Nationwide Agribusiness farm insurance consultation, contact a Nationwide or Allied agent, or locate one near you at nationwide.com/cfbf.



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Turkey demand hits seasonal peak

Turkey farmers say demand has improved the last few months, going into their peak sales period during the holidays. The California Poultry Federation says turkey supplies will be plentiful for Thanksgiving and that farmers sold turkeys at favorable prices. But the federation says consumers probably won't notice much difference in the retail price of the Thanksgiving bird, because grocery stores typically run specials on turkey before the holiday.

Citrus farmers work to keep pest at bay

So far, citrus farmers have been able to stave off a serious threat to their trees. Officials say they're encouraged by their progress as they battle an insect known as the Asian citrus psyllid. The pest has been found in parts of Southern California but has been kept out of commercial growing regions. And none of the insects found in California has carried a disease that kills citrus trees. The disease has caused severe losses in Florida citrus groves.

2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- * November 25th and 26th – RCFB office will be closed to observe the Thanksgiving holiday.
- * December 5th – 7th CFBF Annual Meeting in Monterey. Call the office for details.
- * There will be no Board of Directors meeting in the month of December.
- * December 24th – the RCFB office will be closed for the Christmas holiday.
- * December 31st – the RCFB office will be closed to observe New Years.

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