



Riverside County

# AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

## John Snyder Appointed Agricultural Commissioner



When he was just a teenager, John Snyder got his parents' OK to dig up every square inch of their backyard and plant one of the city's most diverse vegetable gardens. Maybe it was the satisfaction of watching the small crop blossom that hooked Snyder on agriculture.

"Nothing like a fresh-picked, vine-ripened tomato to give you that immediate sense of satisfaction," said Snyder, Riverside County's new agricultural commissioner. "You put something in, you get something out."

His interest in agriculture grew into a job caring for exotic plants at a local nursery. Although he enjoyed the work, "I wanted to do something more important," Snyder said.

For a short time, Snyder worked in the agricultural commissioner's counterpart in Los Angeles County before joining Riverside County's office in 1983. Since August 2000, he has been the county's sealer of weights and measures, verifying the accuracy of gasoline pumps, grocery scales and other commercial measurement devices.

On July 1st, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors appointed him agricultural commissioner. Snyder, 45, replaces Agricultural Commissioner James Wallace, who retired in April.

One of Snyder's greatest concerns is making sure agriculture remains competitive and viable within Riverside County's vision for the future. In a world where exotic diseases threaten wine grapes, citrus crops and poultry, government must regulate industries and sometimes restrict the movement of certain high-risk commodities, he said.

"But not over-regulate and over-burden farmers to the point where they spend more time filling out forms and sitting through meetings than they do farming," Snyder said.

Through community outreach, he wants to promote locally grown produce and develop more certified farmers' markets.

"I want people to know that the ag industry has an advocate in Riverside County," Snyder said. "I'm here to represent their interests within the county's vision."

In his role as an advocate, Snyder intends to identify issues and maintain contact with legislators to keep the agricultural agenda fresh in their minds. The issues include pesticide use, the availability of labor and farmers' access to affordable utilities. Snyder was born in Cuba, N.Y., and moved with his family to Orange County when he was 2 years old. He is a graduate of Cal Poly, Pomona.

### Inside This Issue...

Ag Alert Named Best .....	2
Country of Origin Labeling ....	3
Methyl Bromide .....	4
Great Summertime Recipes ...	6
Farm Bureau Fence Signs .....	8

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## Ag Alert named best Farm Bureau publication

The California Farm Bureau's weekly newspaper, Ag Alert®, has been judged best state Farm Bureau publication in its class, in an annual competition. The award was presented at the American Farm Bureau Federation Information Conference, held last week in Bismarck, N.D.

Ag Alert was named best tabloid-sized publication among large state Farm Bureaus (those with more than 60,000 members). The judging summary for the award praised the newspaper for its "clean layout and well-done articles." The critique also noted Ag Alert's "good reporting on issues, research and production."

Two Ag Alert associate editors earned "honorable mentions" in the competition. Kate Campbell was cited twice, for a news story about state farm-labor legislation and a feature report about the impact of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, on their first anniversary. Christine Souza received an honorable

mention for a photograph of a farmer who serves as a volunteer firefighter.

The Farm Bureau's bimonthly magazine, CaliforniaCountry®, earned an honorable mention in the magazine category. Steve Adler, the magazine's editor, received an honorable mention for his photo essay depicting wildlife living on farmland in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The weekly Farm Bureau television program, also titled California Country, received an honorable mention for regular television programs. California Country reporter Jim Morris, photographer Kevin Burke, editors Scott Monaco and Todd Popple earned an honorable mention for a news story about rural crime prevention. The American Farm Bureau competition drew 238 entries from 30 state Farm Bureaus.

*-- News items credited to California Farm Bureau Federation.*



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# FB: Country-of-Origin Labeling Should Proceed

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 26, 2003 – The American Farm Bureau Federation today reaffirmed its support for country-of-origin labeling (COOL) laws, which it believes can be implemented “in a fair manner to all producers without large costs and burdensome paperwork requirements.”

In testimony before the House Agriculture Committee, Colorado Farm Bureau President Alan Foutz said country-of-origin labeling is simply a program that allows consumers to differentiate between U.S. and foreign products and gives U.S. agriculture producers the chance “to promote the excellent products they take great pride in producing.”

The process does not have to be onerous or costly, Foutz said, because the Agriculture Department has stated support for a process verification system that can be used by all segments of the agriculture industry to verify country-of-origin claims.

Farm Bureau supports a process verification system for livestock producers so they can verify any claims made to the packer regarding country-of-origin. “Livestock producers with assembled herds of U.S., Canadian or Mexican stock will have to set up a system to segregate their animals in order to verify any claims they make as to country-of-origin,” Foutz said.

“Obviously these producers will have more work to do than a producer with all U.S. born and raised animals (but) this is a reality of the law and our producers are willing to work with USDA to verify the origin of their animals.”

Currently, country-of-origin labeling is voluntary for meat, seafood, peanuts and fresh fruits and vegetables, but is scheduled to become mandatory after Sept. 30, 2004. Foutz told committee members that a voluntary, rather than mandatory, labeling program would be ineffective.

“A mandatory program is the only way to get all segments of the food chain coordinated to label final products for consumers,” he said. Foutz cited the mandatory nutrition labeling program as a success, despite its opposition by the food industry.

The House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday passed the agriculture spending bill for fiscal 2004. The bill contained language prohibiting the Agriculture Department from using 2004 funds to implement the farm bill’s COOL provision for meat and meat products.

“It is important to carry out the law as passed in the farm bill and not separate commodities during implementation because it weakens the entire labeling program,” Foutz said.



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# GREATER DEPENDENCE OF IMPORTED FOOD UNLESS ACTION IS TAKEN ON METHYL BROMIDE

American consumers could see greater dependence on imported food from countries where methyl bromide is less regulated unless Congress takes action, according to testimony today before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality. California Farm Bureau Federation President Bill Pauli said consumers could suffer most from the U.S. phase-out of methyl bromide.

Pauli asked whether the American government will allow its consumers access to U.S. food produced using less methyl bromide, or compel them to consume imported food with the unrestricted use of methyl bromide.

The Mendocino County farmer suggested that if the American government wants to allow its consumers access to U.S. food produced using less methyl bromide, then Congress must take steps necessary to encourage the Administration to either renegotiate the Montreal Protocol as soon as possible, or provide a legislative fix freezing the U.S. phase-out of methyl bromide.

In accordance with the Montreal Protocol created to govern international trade, methyl bromide production and use was required to be phased-down in stages until reaching the total phase-out by 2005 for developed countries, and 2015 for developing countries.

“In the end, American consumers will suffer most from the U.S. loss of methyl bromide,” Pauli claimed. “The phase-out means the U.S. will increase dependence on imported, international food sources that are less regulated, less reliable and less safe.”

Pauli testified that the phase-out of methyl bromide will lead to increased imports from China and other developing countries that can continue to use methyl bromide long after the U.S. and other developed nations have been cut off.

He said that alternatives proposed thus far have limited real-world use due to application restrictions and other concerns. Despite more than \$120 million invested in development of alternatives, no other product functions as efficiently as methyl bromide.

Approximately 90 percent of strawberry acreage in California is fumigated with methyl bromide prior to planting. Methyl bromide also is an important post-harvest treatment used to meet sanitary standards set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for grains, dry beans, raisins, prunes, figs, dates, almonds and walnuts.

Pauli emphasized repeatedly that methyl bromide is a crucial production tool in providing consumers with a safe and reliable food supply.

A complete copy of CFBF President Bill Pauli’s testimony today before the House Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality can be found at [www.cfbf.com](http://www.cfbf.com).

-- News item credited to California Farm Bureau Federation.

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# News in Brief...

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## **BEEPOPULATIONSTARTS TO RECOVER**

Wild bees are making a comeback in California, and that's encouraging news for farmers and beekeepers. Wild bee colonies were nearly wiped out by a parasitic mite that arrived in California in 1990. Now, experts say bees may have developed resistance to the mites, or the mites may have weakened. In any case, they're observing more wild bees. Farmers rely both on commercial and wild bees to pollinate crops.

## **SALAMANDER PROTECTION PROPOSED**

Farmers in two coastal counties say they're pleased, but still cautious, after a federal agency eased rules protecting a species of salamander. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says it plans to upgrade the California tiger salamander to "threatened" ... rather than "endangered" ... in Sonoma and Santa Barbara counties. It will also be listed as threatened in other parts of the state. The protection could bring restrictions on land declared to be salamander habitat.

## **HEATHASTENS HARVESTS**

Triple-digit temperatures in the California desert this week will hasten ripening for a number of fruit and vegetable crops. Imperial Valley farmers are picking melons, sweet corn and onions, and have just started harvesting fresh-market tomatoes. They report excellent tomato quality, and say the warming trend will improve supplies. Farmers say early-season prices are strong for all varieties, especially vine-ripened tomatoes.

## **WILL WINERY BANKRUPTCIES INCREASE?**

In a sign of the difficult times in the wine industry, at least two Sonoma County wineries have filed for bankruptcy protection in the last six months. Some observers predict additional wineries may seek protection from creditors. Those creditors often include farmers who are awaiting payment for their winegrapes. But a spokesman for the Family Winemakers of California said he expects few of the state's 13-hundred wineries to file for bankruptcy.

## **SHARPSHOOTER TREATMENTS TO START**

Pest fighters plan to start treatments in northern Porterville today (Tuesday), in their continuing battle against the glassy-winged sharpshooter. The insect spreads a disease that kills grapevines and other plants. Tulare County officials say they want to treat urban ornamental plants now, and then attack the sharpshooter in nearby citrus groves. A task force says it plans a similar strategy in other infested areas.

## **STATESAYS FOOD-SAFETY PLAN IS IN PLACE**

The state veterinarian says California has an "excellent" surveillance program to protect the state from mad-cow disease. The Canadian government quarantined two more ranches yesterday (Wednesday), as it traced the origin of a single beef-breeding cow found to have the ailment. Cattle shipments from Canada into the United States remain banned. Few beef cattle from Canada are imported to California. Only 47 have entered the state in the past three months.

## **JUCESQUEEZING BECOMES A SPECTATORSPORT**

Buying a cup of coffee nowadays can have entertainment value, as you watch your cappuccino being made. A California cooperative wants to make buying a glass of orange juice just as entertaining. Sunkist Growers has begun marketing a juicing machine that allows fresh-squeezed juice to be made to order at restaurants and hotels, often while the customer watches. The machines can accommodate grapefruit and lemons as well as oranges.

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-- News items credited to California Farm Bureau Federation.

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- 1 cup Nonfat Dry Milk
- 2 cups Water
- 1 cup of Ice Cubes
- 1 six ounce can of Frozen Juice Concentrate (orange, Pineapple, Grape or any fruit blend.) (You can also use Fresh Fruit like 1 Banana or 8 strawberries.)

Pour nonfat milk, water, and chopped ice into a bowl or into your blender. Add frozen juice concentrate and beat with an egg beater or blend in blender until foamy and smooth. You can serve your smoothie right away, or put in the refrigerator and drink it later.

### Fruity Fruit Salad

- 3 Apples, diced
- 2 Bananas, peeled and sliced
- 2 Oranges, peeled & seeded, cut into small pieces.
- 1/2 cup of any other fruit you may wish to use
- 1/2 cup of Raisins
- 1/2 cup of Orange juice
- 1/4 cup of Lemon juice
- 1/4 cup of unsalted nuts; Walnuts or Almonds (optional)

## Recipes for Summer



Cut up and measure your fresh fruit and raisins and put into a mixing bowl. Add nuts and mix (optional). Add orange and lemon juice and mix. Put the mixture in the refrigerator and chill for 1/2 hour or longer.

### Easy Shrimp Salad

- 3 pounds prepared macaroni salad from your local deli
- 1 pound frozen salad shrimp, thawed (pre-cooked, shelled, deveined, and de-tailed variety)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh green pepper
- 3 hard-boiled eggs, chopped (optional)
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon dill weed
- salt & pepper to taste

Combine the above ingredients and chill overnight (to let flavors mingle). This is easy, delicious, does not heat up your kitchen, and is absolutely great to take to picnics. Enjoy!

### Southwestern Old Styled Barbecue Sauce

- 1/2c ketchup
- 1-1/2T liquid smoke
- 1-1/2T apple vinegar
- 1-1/2T worchester sauce
- 1/2t chili powder
- 1/2t onion powder



Blend all ingredients together. Refrigerate 4 hours. Transfer mixture to saucepan and heat on low for 15 minutes. Sauce can be used as a topping, during cooking or to baste beef.

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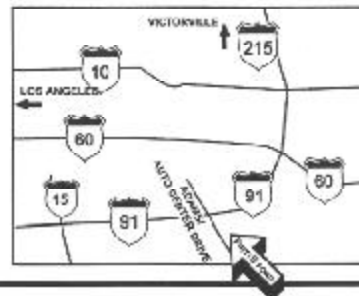
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