




Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

AGRICULTURE'S IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY

By Steven A. Pastor, Executive Director

On June 22nd, I attended the third annual Riverside County Water Symposium in Indian Wells. The symposium, co-hosted by the Riverside County Farm Bureau (RCFB), dealt with the new environmental and urban conservation programs and guidelines being implemented by various water agencies throughout Riverside County.

As Riverside County and the state continue to urbanize, a greater awareness of environmental and urban water requirements has increased the pressure on farmers and ranchers in Riverside County as well as farmers and ranchers throughout the state to use water more efficiently and to make more water available for urban and environmental uses. According to the California Department of Water Resources, it estimates that the state's developed water supply is 78 million acre-feet. "Of that 78 million acre-feet, 46 percent is used by the environment, 43 percent is used on farms, and 11 percent is used in homes and businesses." Water supplies to California's farms are declining. Between 1999 and 2000, as a result of new regulations and laws, approximately 1 million acre-feet of water was reallocated from farms to improve the environment and for urban needs throughout the state.

Unfortunately, the water taken from Riverside County and the state's farmers and ranchers will probably never be returned and there is a great possibility that more and more water will be needed for environmental and urban needs as the county and state's population continues to grow. It is estimated that California will grow from 29.8 million people in 1990 to approximately 46 million people by 2020, a 54 percent increase. Currently, there are over 2 million people in Riverside County alone.

Farmers and ranchers have seen this scenario coming for many years; a tremendous increase in urbanization and environmental need for water means a lot less water for agriculture needs. Fortunately, most farmers and ranchers are very pro-active and will take a positive step to grow the same amount or more food and/or fiber with less and less water. They are doing this through improved, more efficient irrigation techniques.

According to the California Farm Water Coalition, "California farmers increase their water application efficiency through various farm management practices, including improved plant varieties, laser guided leveling of land, irrigation techniques and delivery systems designed to ensure optimum efficiency for specific crops and applications, and water recycling programs." California Polytechnic State University's Bio-Resource and Agricultural Engineering Department head, Ken Solomon, states, "The three basic techniques for irrigating crops are surface (border-strip, basin, and furrow), sprinkler, and micro-irrigation (drip, bubbler, spray and sub-surface drip). All of these methods have proven highly efficient when properly managed."

Farmers and ranchers have a variety of tools available to assist them in making their irrigation methods as efficient as possible. Some of these tools include computer software programs that can help with on-farm irrigation management, and mobile irrigation management laboratories that bring irrigation science directly to the farm. These mobile irrigation labs provide irrigation system evaluations to farmers and a summary of possible water and dollar savings.

In summary, according to the California Farm Water Coalition, "It should be underscored that a shortage of water is perhaps the best incentive to conserve. Agriculture rarely has all the water it needs to produce crops on all available land. Farm managers use water in the most efficient way possible to produce the greatest return. This dictates the choice of irrigation method."

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Printed by Layton Printing, La Verne, California.



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Sustaining Members Continued

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WHY JOIN FARM BUREAU?

Many farmers as well as individuals have asked why should they join Farm Bureau or continue their membership? The answer is very simple. First, Farm Bureau is the most powerful farming organization in California. It represents over 88,000 farmers, ranchers, and individuals who support agriculture. The Farm Bureau is the unified voice of California's diverse agricultural industry, which makes Farm Bureau extremely influential, as well as the most recognized agricultural organization in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. At the local level, the Riverside County Farm Bureau offers local service and is very focused on fighting regulatory and tax burdens at the local level.

Second, Farm Bureau offers a great value for the money. Farm Bureau offers expert political representation at the local, state, and federal levels. It is a great source of current information from everything from politics to leadership development to various outreach and advocacy programs. Farm Bureau also offers outstanding member savings programs including \$500 Dodge rebates, Allied Insurance discounts, Farm Bureau Bank services, amusement park discounts, savings at Boot Barn, and a 20% discount from Lenscrafters.

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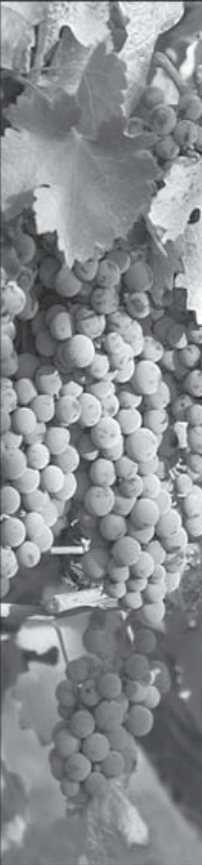
RCFB Director Lee Anderson has been a life-long farmer in the Coachella Valley for over fifty-one years. Lee grows dates and citrus crops. A graduate of Coachella Valley High school in 1947, Lee received an A.A. degree from Palomar Junior College in 1949. In August 1950, Lee married Lois Love and together they raised six children. Lee and Lois are now the proud grandparents of fourteen grandchildren.

Lee has been involved in the Riverside County Farm Bureau since 1959. He has served on various Farm Bureau committees including membership, air quality, solid waste, and the budget committee. He has also served on the Citrus and Date Committees for the National Date Festival and the Junior Livestock Auction Committee for the National Date Festival.

In 1991, Lee received the prestigious Robert M. Howie Award from the Riverside County Farm Bureau for his life-long service to Riverside County agriculture.

In his spare time, Lee enjoys watching his grandchildren play baseball and other sports.

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Howie Award Nomination Form

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**Riverside County Farm Bureau
21160 Box Springs Road, #102
Moreno Valley, CA 92557**
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***Any forms received after September 1, 2006 will not be considered for the award.**

Because (why should your candidate receive the Howie Award) (use extra pages or attach resume/supporting information if available):

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Take Care When Dealing With Electricity

By Brian Watson, Farm Bureau Group Manager

Electricity plays an important role on farms and ranches—powering equipment and tools and providing light in farm shops and maintenance buildings. But electricity can be dangerous as well and most farmers and ranchers are not experts when it comes to working with it.

When properly maintained, electricity provides a clean, reliable power source. But occasionally there are problems or interruptions in the delivery of electricity to the desired location, and when that happens some repairs may be required. It is important that everyone on the farm be aware of the likelihood of serious injury if there is accidental contact with electricity.

Electrocution is the greatest hazard. Compounding the danger when a person receives an electrical shock is the fact that the electrical current seems to grab hold. It is difficult to detach oneself from the electrical current until the electricity is shut down. Frequently in situations of electrocution, would-be rescuers find themselves becoming victims themselves when they grab hold of the injured person in an effort to pull them away. Don't let this happen to you or anyone else.

Burns are the most common injuries that result from electrocution. These burns many times are especially bad because they often extend quite deep into the tissues of the human body, which increases the difficulty of treatment and recovery.

Prevention is one of the best ways to avoid electrocution. As farm operators, it is important to make periodic inspections of electrical equipment and the electrical leads going to that equipment. Look for broken outlets, cracked cables, bare wires, improperly grounded tools and other preventable situations.

Equally important is proper training. No one should work on electrical problems without proper experience and knowledge. Never work on an electrical problem until the power is shut down and there is no chance of someone else switching power back on before the repairs are completed. When repairing equipment, make sure the power is locked out and tagged to prevent anyone from turning on the power prematurely.

Another source of danger from electricity in rural areas is overhead power lines. We've all seen newspaper reports of workers getting seriously injured or killed when a metal ladder or irrigation pipe they are carrying makes contact with an overhead line. When a person is busy working on a task such as irrigating or harvesting, it is very easy to forget about the presence of nearby power lines. If you employ irrigators or harvesters, be sure to remind them frequently about the potential danger from power lines.

Just one thoughtless moment can result in a tragedy on your farm, so I encourage farmers and ranchers to be proactive with both prevention and training relating to electricity. Use common sense with electricity and follow through to ensure that others do the same.

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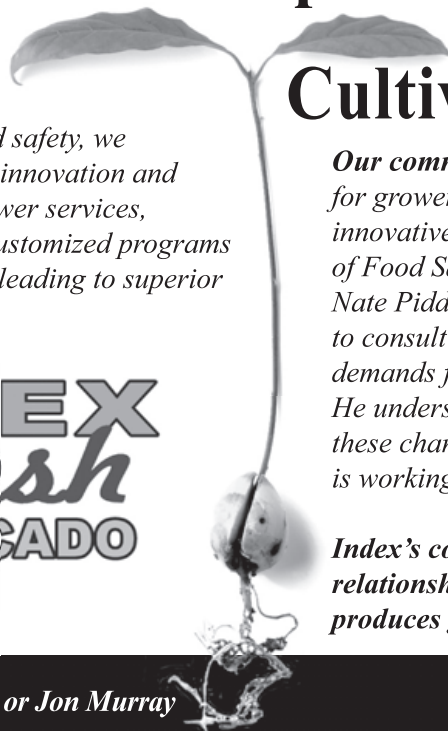
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