

# Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.  
A private, nonprofit organization serving farmers throughout Riverside County since 1917

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Photo provided by RCFB Executive Director Rachael Johnson.

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**Welcome New Members**

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



The Riverside County Farm Bureau has secured additional stock of disposable masks, please contact our office for availability and to arrange pick-up.

**Call our Office (951) 684-6732**

The Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office has a limited supply of N-95 masks solely for the protection of agricultural applicators and handlers that use pesticides labeled with N-95 requirements. Please contact their office at (951) 955-3045.



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## **PROP 15 HITS CALIFORNIA FAMILY FARMS WITH HIGHER PROPERTY TAXES**

### **DECEPTIVE MEASURE FAILS TO EXEMPT AGRICULTURE: WILL INCREASE FOOD PRICES FOR CONSUMERS**

Sacramento special interests have qualified Proposition 15 for the November 2020 California ballot. The measure would eliminate important, long-standing property tax protections for commercial and agricultural property that voters approved via Prop 13 many decades ago.

**Prop 15 would hike taxes by \$12.5 billion / year** – the largest tax increase in state history - costs that will be borne by small business, farmers and consumers throughout the state.

### **PROP 15 WOULD HIKE TAXES ON AGRICULTURE**

- Proponents are saying their measure won't impact agriculture, but they included language which exposes farmers to steep property tax hikes on all "fixtures and improvements". This legalese means **farmers will face tax increases on a wide range of farm property**, including:

Fruit and nut trees, vineyards, fences, barns, processing plants, dairies, irrigation systems, silos and tanks, storage sheds, feedlots, dams, paved roads, wind machines and much more. Source: Assessor's Handbook (CA State Board of Equalization), pg. 196

- The independent and nonpartisan state Legislative Analyst Office recently confirmed that these types of agricultural property are NOT EXEMPT from higher taxes under Prop 15.

### **PROP 15 TAXES EVERY STEP OF AGRICULTURE FROM FARM TO FORK**

- The measure doesn't just increase property taxes on agriculture – **it hikes property taxes on critical support industries as well**, like farm equipment dealers, transportation companies, and warehouses.
- Every step in the process of producing food and getting it to your local grocery store or restaurant – planting, irrigating, harvesting, processing, transporting, storing – is exposed to higher property taxes under this poorly timed and flawed measure.

### **PROP 15's HIGHER PROPERTY TAXES ON AGRICULTURE WILL INCREASE FOOD PRICES FOR CALIFORNIA CONSUMERS**

- California families were already struggling with the astronomical costs of living in this state before the recent economic crisis. Increasing taxes on California's family farmers and all the industries that support food production in our state will just make things worse.

**Californians can't afford higher prices on food.** Join the family farmers of California Farm Bureau and other leading agricultural organizations in opposing Prop 15 - the deceptive higher property tax measure.

Ad Paid for by Protect California's Family Farms, Save Prop 13  
a Project of the California Farm Bureau Federation.  
Committee major funding from  
California Farm Bureau Federation.

# COACHELLA VALLEY AGRICULTURAL PROPERTIES



**83.13 AC MARITA CITRUS RANCH  
WARM OASIS AREA  
PRICE: \$2,078,250 (\$25,000/AC)**



**91.8 AC SANTA ROSA CITRUS RANCH  
WARM OASIS AREA  
PRICE: \$2,295,000 (\$25,000/AC)**



**120 AC LEMONS FARMGROUND  
COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA  
PRICE: \$4,200,000 (\$35,000/AC)**



**20 AC ORGANIC DATE RANCH  
MECCA, CALIFORNIA  
PRICE: \$939,000 (\$46,950/AC)**

Please call for details or to receive information on additional agricultural properties at 760-360-8200



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# Riverside County Farmworker Housing and Wage Assistance Program Launched

A new program to protect essential farmworkers and food processing workers across Riverside County started taking applications on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020.

The Riverside County Housing for the Harvest program provides temporary housing options, including hotel and motel rooms, for COVID-19 positive or exposed agricultural workers if they are unable to self-isolate at home.

Riverside County is partnering with the TODEC Legal Center on this comprehensive program that also includes meals, transportation, wellness checks and a \$2,000 stipend to cover lost work.

Farmworkers seeking assistance through this program can call TODEC Legal Center at 888 863 3291. The application will be done over the phone, and the hotline will be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Assistance will be provided in English, Spanish and Purépecha.

"I am proud we have established this county program with the TODEC Legal Center to help the farmworker community and workers involved in food production across our county," said Supervisor V. Manuel Perez. "This will really help farmworkers protect their family members, and have the support to cover lost work. What a great day, on this Mexican Independence Day, September 16, a day of celebration, to have this program up and running for our community."

"I am very excited that our county family is partnering with the California Department of Food and Agriculture in recognizing our agricultural essential workers during these unprecedented times," stated Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner Ruben Arroyo.

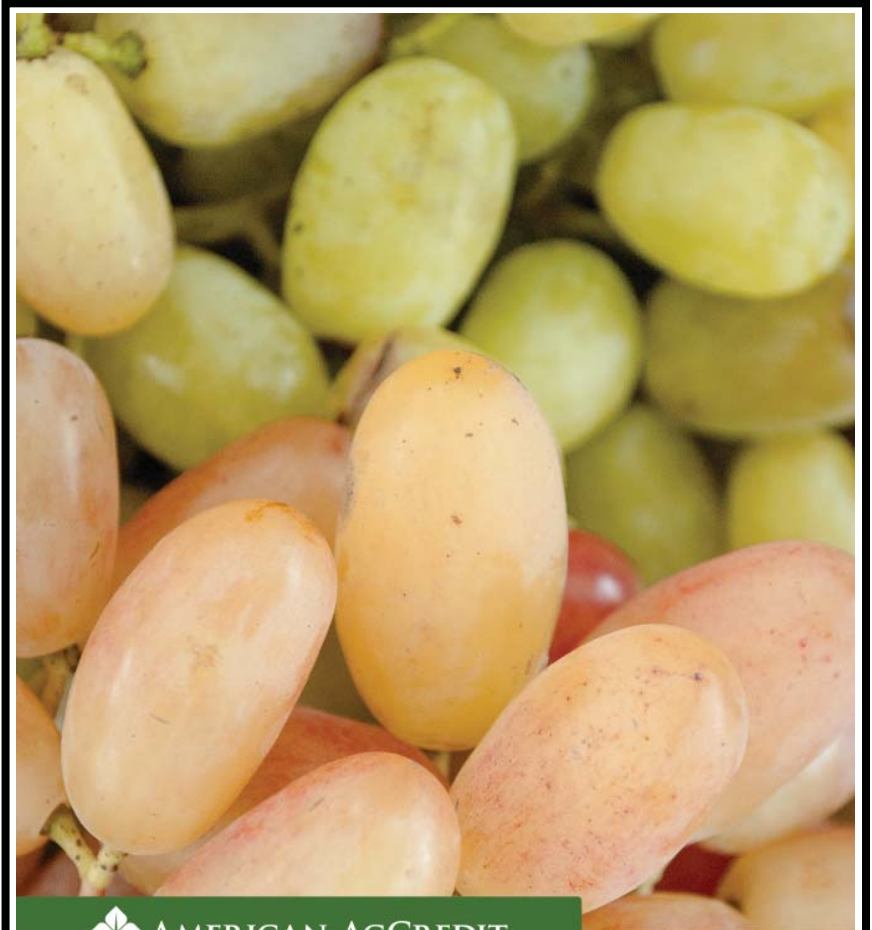
"We are proud to be part of this effort that recognizes and values our county's most vulnerable essential workers, by bringing long overdue relief to our county's pride, our farmworkers," said Luz Gallegos, Community Programs Director for TODEC Legal Center.

## USDA Assists Farmers, Ranchers, and Communities Affected by Western Wildfires

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of assistance for residents and agricultural producers affected by recent wildfires. The USDA has multiple agencies that provide financial and/or technical assistance to help farmers, ranchers and rural landowners recover from natural disasters. Please visit the USDA Disaster Resource Center at <https://www.usda.gov/topics/disaster>.

### Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool (USDA)

The USDA's Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool provides an overview of USDA disaster assistance programs that might be available to California farmers and ranchers depending on loss/damage, location, timing and impact. Local program availability and individual eligibility will be determined by the USDA servicing office. Learn about USDA disaster assistance programs that might be right for you by completing five simple steps at <https://www.farmers.gov/recover> or for more information about disaster programs in your area, contact your local USDA service center at <https://www.farmers.gov/contact>.



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# YEAH YEAH Agency Launches Farm-focused Marketing Service

Dedicated to Helping Ag Businesses Find Success on the Web and Social Media

The YEAH YEAH Agency, a new California-based marketing firm serving clients nationwide, is launching a unique, affordable service dedicated to helping farmers grow their business online. Whether it's updating an outdated website or managing social media to interact with customers and clients, YEAH YEAH's approach will result in more revenue and greater reach for farm businesses who want to be more effective online.

"As the Yellow Pages and classifieds era fades into the past, nearly all of our day-to-day business has moved to the web," said YEAH YEAH founder Josh Rolph, former head of California Farm Bureau's federal advocacy. "My company helps local farmers on a budget to modernize their website and social media communications to leverage the great business potential that exists for them online."

The new service for farmers begins with an audit and recommendations report of the farm's existing online presence and the option to allow YEAH YEAH to improve their social media by managing their posts and engagement with customers. Details can be found at <https://yeahyeah.agency/ag>.

"As tough a time as it is right now for ag, there are ways to improve business online," said Josh. "The one key secret to online success boils down to this: don't be boring! We capture what makes your farm unique and communicate that uniqueness to your customers, partners, and future business prospects."

YEAH YEAH creates original content farms can use online to stand out from the crowd. YEAH YEAH knows which social media platforms to use and when to strike when the opportunity is hottest. "Timing is everything," Josh emphasized, "and using the right words and media on the right social platform can make a big impact. That's what we do best."

YEAH YEAH Agency is a full-service marketing agency dedicated to making the world less boring online. Founded at the start of the pandemic, YEAH YEAH helps small businesses, organizations, and agriculture to stand out from the competition.

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## Organic farming lessons offered online

Farmers who want to learn organic production practices for California specialty crops can now get training at their convenience on their own computers. The organic farming training is designed by the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, Organic Farming Research Foundation and California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo.

"This course includes information from the latest scientific research conducted by our University of California colleagues across the state, and boils it down into practical information for beginning or transitioning organic farmers of fruit, nuts, vegetables and other specialty crops," said Sonja Brodt, UC SAREP academic coordinator for agriculture and environment.

The training program contains six learning modules: soil health, weed management, irrigation and water management, insect and mite pest management, disease management, and business management and marketing.

"We were able to draw on the expertise of 22 technical advisors, the majority of them from UC Cooperative Extension, UC campuses, and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, to ensure the scientific accuracy of the information provided," Brodt said.

The program provides a combination of written content, videos and do-it-yourself exercises that allow students to follow along at their own pace and test their grasp of the knowledge. Farmers may read or view any parts of the course they choose, in any sequence. No certificate or credit is given at completion.

"While it was developed for California specialty crop farmers, the content is based on foundational principles that are relevant to all organic farmers and our hope is that growers across the U.S. find it to be a useful resource," said Lauren Snyder, OFRF education & research program manager. The organic farming training is free. To obtain a link to the training, submit a request at <https://ofrf.org/beginning-farmer-training-program>.

Funding for this online training program was made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant AM170100XXXXG011. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



🕒 October 14, 2020 ~ 5:30 PM, Riverside County Farm Bureau Board of Directors meeting will be held by a Zoom Conference. If you are interested in participating, please call our office at (951) 684-6732.

## Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

### *Farm Bureau coalition supports wildfire bill*

A wildfire-mitigation bill goes before a U.S. Senate subcommittee Wednesday, and a coalition of Western state Farm Bureaus says the measure would help the region address its “catastrophic wildfire crisis.” Thirteen state Farm Bureaus and the American Farm Bureau express support for the bill, the Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act. It would implement projects to manage forests, remove hazardous fuels and accelerate post-fire restoration and reforestation.

### *Pandemic alters demand for mushrooms*

Mushroom farmers around California say they have reduced production as the pandemic cut demand from restaurants and other food-service customers. Shipments had hit record highs late last year, before customers began cutting orders as restaurants closed or reduced business. Several mushroom farmers say they have cut volumes as much as 30% as they adjust to see-saw markets. California ranks second in the nation in mushroom production.

### *Tomato farmers expect heat to reduce yields slightly*

Heat waves during the growing season have reduced the size of the processing tomato crop, but crop estimators still expect the harvest to be slightly larger than last year’s. Farmers say they believe the heat may reduce per-acre crop yields, but they still anticipate a good-sized supply for use in tomato products. Marketers say those products have sold well during the pandemic, as people seek foods to cook at home.

*“Farm Bureau Working for You”*



California Farm Bureau  
ANNUAL 2020 MEETING  
SAVE THE DATE  
SUNDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY  
DECEMBER 6, 7, 8 AND 9



## Hand Sanitizer Donation

The state of California has been offered a donation of 4,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, however they are in 275 gallon totes. Would your ag operation or organization be interested in a tote that large that can be used to refill smaller containers? If so, Please contact the Agricultural Commissioner's office at (951)955-3000.

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