

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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Welcome New Members

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

HJTA collects over half a million signatures for Repeal the Death Tax initiative, misses November ballot

The Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association announced today that nearly 560,000 signatures were collected on petitions to Repeal the Death Tax, less than the 874,641 signatures needed to qualify the initiative for the November ballot.

The results of the all-volunteer, grassroots campaign exceeded HJTA's previous effort to restore the constitutional right for parents to transfer their home and limited other property to their children without any change to the property tax bill. The taxpayer organization's 2022 initiative campaign collected more than 402,000 signatures, also in an all-volunteer effort without paid signature gatherers.

HJTA's proposed initiative aimed to restore the parent-child transfer exclusion from reassessment for a home and limited other property, a right that was removed from the constitution by the fine print of Proposition 19 in 2020.

"Most voters were not aware that Proposition 19 contained a provision that would imperil their own family's ability to transfer property between the generations without a tax increase," said HJTA President Jon Coupal. "A \$50 million advertising campaign for Prop. 19 emphasized only its benefits for wildfire victims and for seniors moving to a new home."

The parent-child transfer exclusion from reassessment originally was added to the state constitution in 1986. By that time, eight years had passed since the enactment of Proposition 13, and families inheriting their parents' property were shocked at the increase in the tax bill when the property was reassessed to market value at the time of inheritance.

In response to political pressure, the Legislature created the parent-child transfer exclusion, passed it unanimously, and put it on the ballot as Proposition 58. Voters passed it with over 75% approval.

"Our polling shows that the parent-child transfer exclusion would pass by the same margin today," Coupal said. "As more Californians learn about what has occurred, and how this "death tax" provision of Proposition 19 will affect their own families, we believe the political pressure on the Legislature will intensify."

Sen. Kelly Seyarto (R-Murrieta) previously introduced Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA) 4, which would restore the parent-child transfer protection to the constitution. SCA 4 was voted down in its first committee hearing despite compelling testimony from witnesses including Los Angeles County Assessor Jeffrey Prang. SCA 4 was granted reconsideration and could be heard again.

HJTA is currently reviewing all the available data from the initiative effort and considering next steps.

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Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) Quarantine Information

Due to detections of the Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) in parts of Riverside County, Riverside County is under an effective Invasive Fruit Fly Quarantine.

The Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office is here to assist growers, packers and shippers with compliance agreements for movement of fruit and vegetables within the quarantine area.

Residents - We Need Your Help!

- Now is a critical time for residents in fruit fly quarantine areas to protect their backyard fruits and vegetables from invasive fruit flies.
 - To prevent the spread of invasive fruit flies through homegrown fruits and vegetables, residents living in the invasive fruit fly quarantine areas are urged not to move any fruits and vegetables from their properties.
 - Fruits and vegetables may be consumed or processed (i.e., juiced, frozen, cooked, or ground in the garbage disposal) at the property where they were picked.
 - If they are not consumed or processed, please dispose of them by double-bagging in plastic bags and putting the bags in the garbage bin for collection, not green waste.
- For more information on what else residents can do, <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov> or <https://rivcoawm.org>
- You can find a description of the quarantine and an updated map of the quarantine area, OFF Fact Sheet, and Pre-Harvest Treatment Requirements.
- For more information, please email EDowns@rivco.org

Bill Introduced to Extend the Pierce's Disease Control Program and PD/GWSS Board

To help defend the California winegrape industry from the invasive glassy-winged sharpshooter, deadly Pierce's disease, and other serious winegrape pests and diseases, Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay) introduced Assembly Bill 1861.

California grape growers vote on the PD/GWSS Referendum, which funds the PD/GWSS Board's research work and certain program activities, every five years. The next vote will be in spring 2025, which would extend the winegrape assessment through 2031.

"The wine industry is integral to the economic success of the Central Coast and all of California," said Addis. "I'm excited to author AB 1861 that extends a crucial line of defense for our wine industry against invasive disease. We have a track record of collaboration among state, local, federal government, and the industry itself when it comes to battling Pierce's disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. I'm proud to extend this collaboration and to be part of the ongoing success of California's wine regions."

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Enrollment opens for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers program

The California Bountiful Foundation, the 501(c)3 science, research and education nonprofit organization of the California Farm Bureau, will begin enrollment Feb. 21 for a new program called Expanding Our Roots: Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Mentorship Program.

The program has a website where beginning farmers and ranchers with one to 10 years of farming and ranching experience in California may enroll for free in the mentorship program.

Farmers and ranchers interested in serving as mentors may also sign up via the webpage. Mentors are financially compensated for providing six hours of mentoring services to beginning farmers and ranchers.

The program will allow 200 beginning farmers to be paired up with mentor farmers and ranchers with more than 10 years of experience. Half of program participants must be specialty crop growers. Under program funding requirements, priority consideration will be given to socially disadvantaged farmers and military veterans in farming and ranching.

Mentoring will focus on a range of topics, including market access, climate stresses, navigating the regulatory system, production management and business aspects of farming in California.

The program will also provide educational workshops that offer insights on regulations for farming and ranching in California. Additionally, participants will learn about financial incentives, including grant opportunities that can help them fund conservation management practices and climate-smart agriculture. They will be exposed to resources from the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources and UC Cooperative Extension.

Grant funding for this project was made possible through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

“This program is designed to bring our agricultural community even closer together as a family through mentoring opportunities,” said Dr. Amrith Gunasekara, science and research director for the California Bountiful Foundation. “Mentoring the new generation of farmers and ranchers by experienced farmers and ranchers will ensure agriculture and food security is sustained into the future.” For more information, please visit www.californiabountifulfoundation.com/programs-and-services



Avocados have been commercially grown in California for over one hundred years. However, our local farms are now facing extinction due to skyrocketing production costs and the unrestricted supply of foreign fruit that has driven prices down to unsustainable levels. California grown avocados are fresher and have a smaller carbon footprint than imported avocados. They also meet stricter quality standards, for food safety, environmental protection, and labor laws. Avocado Growers of California (AGC) believes that our local industry can

become profitable again by improving production, cutting input costs, and strategically marketing our fruit to our local community. In addition, the AGC seeks ways to leverage state and federal government entities to aid in farm sustainability. Our State and local Governments recognize that having a thriving domestic agricultural economy and community is vital to the future of our country. The AGC strongly believes that through our collection of voices and our knowledge will be a thriving industry once again.

ACG, created in 2023 by growers tired of failed CAC marketing campaigns, the flood of cheaper imported avocados, and declining farm gate pricing trends for California fruit. As the 2024 avocado season gets underway, the industry experts suggest prices may be better this year due to fewer expected volumes from California and Mexico. However, that does not change AGC's purpose, as the California avocado industry's complex issues have evolved over the last 20 plus years and the threat to our industry necessitates urgent and sustained actions by us as growers.

Become a member today! Please visit us at www.avogc.com for more information.

Fresh Citrus Fruit Movement Updates for Oriental Fruit Fly

Effective immediately, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is temporarily modifying conditions for the movement of fresh citrus fruit from the non-core areas of the Oriental fruit fly (OFF) quarantine in San Bernardino and Riverside counties for the duration of the 2024 harvest season.

Currently, growers in the San Bernardino and Riverside OFF quarantine area have the ability to conduct pre-harvest bait treatments or two post-harvest treatments (methyl bromide fumigation with a subsequent cold holding period or irradiation) in order to move fresh citrus fruit from non-core areas of the quarantine to areas outside of the quarantine for packing or processing. However, due to the imminent harvest period, neither of these options are economically viable for citrus production in the San Bernardino and Riverside OFF quarantine and at this time and USDA has authorized a modification to provide relief to growers.

This Federal Order establishes a new treatment approach under which fresh citrus fruit from non-core areas may enter domestic commerce outside of the quarantine using an alternative fumigation and subsequent cold treatment method. For clarity, this method is not applicable to fruit grown in the core area, which is comprised of a 0.5-mile radius surrounding the detection of an adult fruit fly or larvae.

This modified approach applies only to the San Bernardino and Riverside OFF quarantine for the 2024 harvest season. It does not permit international export of fresh citrus fruit from this area unless the citrus meets existing export certification requirements for regulated articles from fruit fly quarantine areas.

To review the new post-harvest treatment approach for the interstate movement of fresh citrus fruit from the non-core areas of the San Bernardino and Riverside OFF quarantine, including grower requirements, grove requirements, and monitoring, treatment and inspection requirements, please visit the www.aphis.usda.gov.

To review a full list of the current harvest and crop management requirements in place for all other invasive fruit fly species and quarantines, please visit CAFruitFly.com.

If you have any questions about the updates from APHIS, please reach out directly to the Southern California Cooperative Fruit Fly Project contact Dayna Napolillo at Dayna.Napolillo@cdfa.ca.gov.



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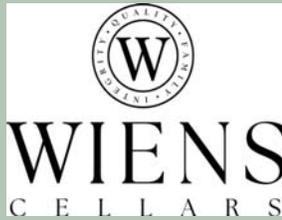
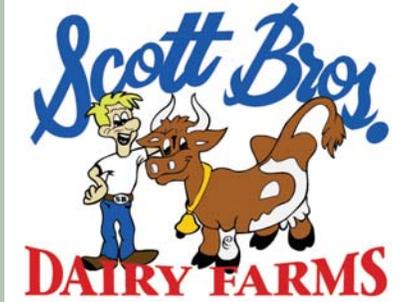
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IRCHLB VII Set for March 2024

The seventh International Research Conference on Huanglongbing (IRCHLB) will return on March 26-29, 2024, to the Riverside Convention Center in Riverside, California. The conference is sponsored and organized by the Citrus Research Board (CRB), and will bring researchers, regulators, and citrus industry members from around the world together to continue the discussion of tackling the spread of Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) and huanglongbing (HLB). The sixth IRCHLB was held in Riverside in 2019 with more than 400 attendees from around the world.

The theme of this year's conference is "transitioning research to field reality," and will feature invited keynote speakers to provide research and technical updates regarding the global status of HLB, as well as technical and poster sessions presented by many of the leading researchers from around the world. IRCHLB will also allow these scientists time to foster collaborations to advance their research and discuss notable and emerging ideas.

Registration is now open at www.irchlb.com. The cost per attendee will be \$550 USD. Registration will end March 15, 2024.

Please contact the Citrus Research Board at events@citrusresearch.org or call +1 (559) 738-0246 with any questions regarding the conference.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



The next Board meeting will be held in person at Farm Bureau office and via Zoom Conference on Wednesday, March 13, 2024. Please call our office at (951) 684-6732 for more information.

Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

USDA offers grants up to \$250,000 to inspire 'value-added' farm products

Federal funding is available under the Value-Added Producer Grants program to help farmers and ranchers generate new products and create marketing opportunities. The U.S. Department of Agriculture may award up to \$75,000 for planning activities or up to \$250,000 for capital expenses related to producing and marketing value-added agricultural products. USDA said it is interested in proposals for initiatives aimed at reducing pollution and increasing resilience to impacts of climate change. Some \$31 million in funding is available through the program.

Imperial Valley farm harvests jalapeños as Sriracha supplies improve

A vegetable farmer in the Imperial Valley has pulled off an improbable feat that may be helping to solve an urgent supply shortage—at least for those who crave some extra heat in their rice, soup, noodles or stir-fry. If you tried to buy a bottle of Huy Fong Foods' Sriracha in recent years, you may have gone home emptyhanded. The company shuttered its processing plant in 2022 after running out of its key ingredient: fresh jalapeños. Now, Huy Fong is in production again, and a mystery buyer contracted massive quantities of the pepper from Imperial Valley grower Alex Jack of Jack Brothers, Inc.

Wine sales slow amid messaging discouraging drinking

Winemakers in the U.S. and abroad are struggling to sell their product, and leaders in the sector are increasingly focused on anti-alcohol messaging. A news organization that collects data on wine, beer and spirits, reports that 2023 was the third consecutive year of negative volume growth for U.S. wine sales, following more than a decade of flattening consumption. Some in the wine sector have traced the origin of negative health messaging around wine to a 2018 study published by The Lancet, which found there was "no safe level" of alcohol consumption.