

# Riverside County AGRICULTURE

The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

Our 78th Year of Publication: Volume LXXVIII, Number 11, November 2024.



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## **Welcome New Members**

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

## **Rodger D. Siems**

**(1929 - 2024)**

*Courtesy of Susan Holmes*



Rodger was born on August 5, 1929, in Fullerton, CA and grew up on a farm in Buena Park with his parents, Ted & Lucy Siems, and sister, Betty Siems Mahoney. In 1947, he graduated from Anaheim High school where he played football. During his high school years, Rodger joined DeMolay and was Master Councilor of Anaheim Chapter in 1948. He was Master Councilor during his first year of college and would drive from San Luis Obispo to Anaheim for meetings and events. He graduated college from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, majoring in Agricultural engineering.

Rodger was then drafted for the Korean War and joined the United States Air Force. In 1951, he was sent to Korea and traveled there on a ship from San Francisco. He returned a year later under the Golden Gate Bridge. In Korea, Rodger and his squadron started an orphanage for local children with donations from Anaheim Baptist Church.

Once returning home, Rodger continued to stay in the Air Force as a reserve. He transitioned back to working at his family's farm, which was moving from Anaheim to Hemet. Rodger farmed in Hemet for 44 years. Over the years he farmed alfalfa hay, oat hay, harmony corn, banana squash, specialty squash, Safflower, and oriental vegetables.

Rodger and Pat met in 1958 at the Anaheim Baptist Church. Pat remembers a red-headed man in uniform, and she was smitten. Within six months of meeting, they were married on March 21, 1959, and recently celebrated 65 years together. Rodger and Pat built a new home on the farm in Hemet and welcomed two daughters into their family, Susan & Sondra. Rodger was involved in all of his daughter's activities; 4-H Club, FFA, and Jobs Daughters. He was a proud father and loved being the father of the brides when his two daughters got married within the same year.

Rodger was actively involved in his community as well. He was on the Board of Directors for the Eastern Municipal Water District and served as their President and Vice-President during his terms. He was proud when Governor Pete Wilson appointed Rodger to the state water board.

Other involvement included Hemet Unified School District Board (1975-1985), Ryan Field Volunteer Fire Department (1969-1980) where he served as the 1st Chief, and Riverside County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (1964 – 2002) serving 38 years. He was the recipient of the Howie Award in 2008 and a Farm Bureau member for over 65 years and was a longtime member of the Lincoln Club of Riverside County.

Rodger was a Past Master of Hemet Masonic Lodge and served as a Grand Lodge Officer, Assistant Treasurer, in \_\_1993-1994\_\_. In his final weeks, Rodger was honored to receive his 75th year Diamond Jubilee Masonic pin. This achievement meant so much to him and his family.

Rodger's legacy lives on with his family. He is survived by his beloved wife, Patricia Siems, daughters Susan (Homer) Holmes and Sondra (Brian) Callahan, grandchildren Haley (Matthew) Marujo, Audrey (Jeremy) Scheetz, and Brandon Callahan, great-grandchildren Noah and Teagan Marujo, and Sutton Scheetz.

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# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FARM BUREAU (RCFB) CELEBRATES ITS 107th ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

*November 10, 2024, at Desert Falls Country Club, Palm Desert.*

Riverside County Farm Bureau President Richard Schmid kicked off the 107th Annual Dinner Meeting with a warm welcome to all members and guests in attendance. Director Linden Anderson led the Invocation, while retired RCFB Executive Director Steve Pastor recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Our esteemed guest speaker for the evening was Riverside County's 4th District Supervisor, V. Manuel Perez.

The Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates for the director and officer positions, in line with the bylaws of the Riverside County Farm Bureau, to serve during the 2024 – 2025 membership year. The following directors were re-elected for a one-year term: Dalton Abrams, Celeste Alonzo, Linden Anderson, Grant Chaffin, Steve Corona, Paul Cramer, Andy Domenigoni, Cindy Domenigoni, Dan Hollingsworth, Richard Schmid, Brad Scott, Ellen Way, and Andy Wilson. Marlene Salazar-Pongs returns to serve as a director, while new directors Rod Chamberlain and Richard Zapien were elected. Directors Andy Wilson and Paul Cramer were re-elected as Vice-Presidents, and Celeste Alonzo was elected as a new Vice-President. This year, Director Ellen Way was nominated and elected as Riverside County Farm Bureau's President, succeeding Director Richard Schmid, who held the position for 12 years.

The recipient of this year's Howie Award is Grant Chaffin, Director/Treasurer of the Riverside County Farm Bureau.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee, Howie Award Committee, and the Annual Dinner Meeting Committee for their hard work in making this year's event a success.

Our deepest appreciation goes to our special guest speaker, Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, as well as Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco and the Thermal Sheriff's Station East Rural Crime Team, Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner Delia Jimenez Cioc, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner Misael Martinez, Deputy Agricultural Commissioners Chris Blake and Rudy Valencia, University of California Cooperative Extension Area Director Rita Clemons, California Farm Bureau's (CAFB) 2nd Vice President Ron Peterson, Congressman Raul Ruiz's Director of Stakeholder Engagement Sharya Hernandez, Senator Stephen Padilla's District Representative Armando Avalos, and Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson's District Representative Misael Tovar Diaz for contributing to the success of our 107th Annual Dinner. We would also like to sincerely thank our sponsors for their generous contributions and Desert Falls Country Club for their exceptional food and service.

We look forward to continuing our mission of supporting the agricultural community in Riverside County through advocacy, education, and collaboration. The dedication and hard work of our members and partners are what



Photo L-R: Past President Richard Schmid, Director/Treasurer Grant Chaffin, Incoming President Ellen Way, Director's Linden Anderson and Stephen Corona, RCFB Executive Director Rachael Johnson, Vice President's Paul Cramer and Andy Wilson, and CAFB 2nd Vice President Ron Peterson.

make events like the Annual Dinner possible, and we are excited about the opportunities and challenges that the coming year will bring.

As we move forward, we are committed to furthering the interests of our farmers and ranchers, ensuring that they have the resources and support necessary to thrive. We encourage all members to stay engaged and active in the Farm Bureau's activities, as your participation is crucial to our success.

Thank you once again to everyone who attended and contributed to this year's dinner. We look forward to seeing you all again next year for another memorable occasion. Until then, let's continue working together to strengthen and support our vibrant agricultural community.



## Message from Past-President Richard Schmid;

As my tenure as President of the Riverside County Farm Bureau comes to a close, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've shared together. It has been a profound honor to serve our agricultural community, standing shoulder to shoulder with the farmers and ranchers who work tirelessly to feed our state, our nation, and indeed, the world.

Ronald Reagan once said, "There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit." This sentiment captures the spirit of our Farm Bureau perfectly. Our achievements aren't about individual recognition; they're about collective action and shared purpose.

Together, we've tackled the complexities of water management, fought for sound agricultural policies, and stood firm against harmful bills and regulations that threatened our livelihoods.

We've supported the next generation of agricultural leaders, investing in students who will one day carry the torch forward. And we've worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the vital role agriculture plays in our economy and our community.

For years—perhaps decades—the Farm Bureau has quietly gone about its work, often without fanfare, ensuring that the voices of farmers are heard in the halls of power. Many don't realize how many legislative battles we've fought—and won—or how often we've kept harmful proposals from even seeing the light of day. Our team has been there, behind the scenes, defending our interests, even when we didn't know we needed them.

If the average farmer were aware of the sheer volume of proposed legislation, rate increases, and tax hikes that we've successfully countered, they'd be astounded. And that's the beauty of this organization—we do the hard work so that you can focus on what you do best: farming and ranching.

I am immensely proud of what we've accomplished together. Our strength lies in our unity, in our willingness to come together for a common cause.

As I prepare to step away from this role, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each of you—our resolute members, our hardworking staff, and our valued community partners. Your passion, resilience, and unwavering commitment have been a constant source of inspiration for me. It is your stories, your challenges, and your triumphs that fuel our mission and drive us to push for meaningful change.

Though my time as President is ending, my dedication to this community and to agriculture remains as strong as ever. Thank you for the trust you've placed in me and for allowing me to serve. Together, we've laid a strong foundation, and I'm confident that the Riverside County Farm Bureau will continue to thrive in the years to come.

Thank you and may we all continue to cultivate a brighter future for agriculture.

## Remembering Paula Muskey

We are deeply saddened to announce the sudden and unexpected passing of Paula Muskey, our longtime colleague and friend at the Arlan Knutson Insurance Agency.

Paula was a top-notch agent, well-respected in the insurance world, and known for her unwavering dedication to her clients. To many of us, she was more than just an agent—she was a friend who truly cared about those she served.



In recent years, amid California's ever-evolving insurance landscape, Paula worked tirelessly to ensure her clients were protected and satisfied with their policies. Her commitment and expertise helped so many through challenging times. Paula's loss is profound and she will be greatly missed by everyone whose lives she touched. Gone far too soon, she leaves behind a legacy of kindness, professionalism, and dedication.



Agricultural teachers devote countless hours and often their own resources to make a difference in the lives of their students and inspire the next generation of agricultural leaders.

That's why Nationwide®, California Farm Bureau and California FFA Foundation work together to bring recognition and important funding to California's outstanding ag educators. The Golden Owl Award® awards \$500 to six finalists and \$3,000 to the grand prize winner, California's Agricultural Educator of the Year.

Honor an ag teacher you know by nominating him or her today. Nominations are being accepted September 1 to January 16.

Go to [GoldenOwlAward.com](https://GoldenOwlAward.com) to find out more and complete a nomination today.



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# GRANT CHAFFIN

## A 5th generation Californian Awarded the 2024 Howie Award

Grant was born and raised in Los Angeles, yet agriculture is deeply embedded in his heritage. His grandfather, Dr. Lawrence Chaffin, originated from a farming background in Farmington, Utah. Although Dr. Chaffin's career was primarily in medicine, he maintained a profound connection to agriculture and began acquiring farmland in the Palo Verde Valley in 1946. Although Dr. Chaffin's career was primarily in medicine, he maintained a profound connection to agriculture and began acquiring farmland in the Palo Verde Valley in 1946.

During his high school and college years, Grant frequently accompanied his grandfather on trips to the farm. These experiences laid the groundwork for his passion for agriculture, which he describes as “the germination of my farming experience.” After graduating from the University of Southern California in 1990, Grant relocated to the family farm.

From 2006 to 2012, Grant served as President of the Riverside County Farm Bureau, advocating for the significance of agriculture. He stated, “Agriculture is not just an American tradition but a valued asset in our history and our future; we must preserve it.”

Chaffin Farms operates as a diversified field and row crop enterprise, cultivating alfalfa, cotton, wheat, onions, garlic, potatoes, and various forage grasses.

In addition to his agricultural pursuits, Grant is a licensed private pilot. He is married and has two children, and he enjoys spending time with his family, riding horses, and engaging with the outdoors.

Grant's commitment to both his family and the land has become a hallmark of Chaffin Farms. Over the years, he has implemented sustainable farming practices, focusing on soil health and water conservation, which have not only improved crop yields but also ensured the farm's longevity for future generations. His dedication to innovation and stewardship has earned him recognition within the agricultural community.

Grant often reflects on the lessons his grandfather imparted to him, emphasizing the importance of resilience and adaptability in farming. These values have guided him through challenges, such as fluctuating market conditions and environmental concerns, allowing Chaffin Farms to thrive in an ever-changing landscape.

Beyond his professional life, Grant is actively involved in community outreach, sharing his knowledge and passion for agriculture with local schools and organizations. He believes in educating the next generation about the vital role farming plays in society and encourages young people to consider careers in agriculture.

Through his leadership and vision, Grant continues to build on his family's legacy, ensuring that Chaffin Farms remains a vibrant and essential part of the community, fostering a deep appreciation for the land and the bounty it provides.



### The Robert M. Howie Award

The Robert M. Howie Award is an annual honor bestowed by the Riverside County Farm Bureau to celebrate exceptional service and commitment to agriculture in Riverside County. Established in 1983, this award pays tribute to Robert M. Howie, who retired in 1982 after 28 years of dedicated service as the County Agricultural Commissioner. Each year, the Riverside County Farm Bureau presents this award to remind our industry of Bob Howie's unwavering dedication and to inspire similar commitment in others.



## Congratulations

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

## ATTORNEY/LEGAL SERVICES

### J. Doling Law, PC – (844) 894-4440

Jenny L. Doling, Esq.  
36-915 Cook Street, Suite 101  
Palm Desert, CA 92211  
Website: [www.JDL.law](http://www.JDL.law)

**Services offered:** Represents farming and agriculture clients throughout CA in Chapter 12 Debt Reorganization and other related debt and tax resolution matters. (Serving all of California) FB Member Discount: 10% Discount on attorney fees to all California Farm Bureau Members.

### Jackson Tidus – (949) 851-7409

Michele A. Staples, Esq.  
2030 Main Street, Suite 1500  
Irvine, CA 92614  
Website: [www.jacksontidus.law](http://www.jacksontidus.law)

**Services offered:** Legal services to agricultural landowners including land use, water rights, real estate and environmental law.

## ELECTRICAL

### Sparky's Electric - (951) 279-1722

2440 Crazy Horse Lane  
Norco, CA 92860

**Services offered:** Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Electrical needs. FB Member Discount: 10% Discount when mentioned at time of dispatch.

## EQUESTRIAN

### KingsWay Farm – (951) 312-8704

Terry Paine  
43750 Los Caballos Road  
Temecula, CA 92592

**Services offered:** Boarding, Breeding, and Training. Specializing in 3-day Eventing.

## EQUIPMENT AUCTIONS

### Vantage Auctions, Inc. – (951) 228-9040

521 Silver Street  
Lake Elsinore, CA 92530  
Website: [www.vantageauctions.com](http://www.vantageauctions.com)

**Services offered:** Full-Service Construction and Agricultural Equipment Auction.

## INSURANCE

### Arlan Knutson Insurance – (951) 683-3730

Paula Muskey or Jennifer Bacalia  
P.O. Box 64109  
Irvine, CA 92602  
Website: [www.arlanknutsoninsurance.com](http://www.arlanknutsoninsurance.com)

**Services offered:** Home, Auto, Farm and Commercial Insurance needs. Serving Los Angeles County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, San Diego County.

## IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

### Rain for Rent – (760) 344-5850

Manuel Gaitan  
3397 CA-86  
Imperial, CA 92251  
Website: [www.rainforrent.com](http://www.rainforrent.com)

### Rain for Rent – (800) 742-7246 Toll Free

6400 Fischer Road  
Riverside, CA 92507  
Website: [www.rainforrent.com](http://www.rainforrent.com)

**Services offered:** Temporary liquid handling solutions including pumps, tanks, filtration, irrigation, and spill containment. The Irrigation store carries most major brands of irrigation supplies and equipment.

## PEST CONTROL & WEED ABATEMENT

### AG IPM – (951) 809-1213

Consulting and Applications  
Richard Zapien  
17130 Van Buren Blvd., #222  
Riverside, CA 92506  
Website: <https://ag-ipm.com>

**Services offered:** Weed Abatement, Pest Control, Farm and Orchard Management. State Licensed and Bonded.

## WINERIES (LOCAL)

Baily Vineyard & Winery  
33440 La Serena Way, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 676-9463  
Website: [www.bailywinery.com](http://www.bailywinery.com)

Bel Vino Winery  
3515 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 676-6414  
Website: [www.belvinowinery.com](http://www.belvinowinery.com)

Carter Estate Winery and Resort  
34450 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (844) 851-2138  
Website: [www.carterestatewinery.com](http://www.carterestatewinery.com)

Danza del Sol Winery  
39050 De Portola Rd, Temecula, CA 92592  
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Website: [www.europavillage.com](http://www.europavillage.com)

Falkner Winery  
40620 Calle Contento, Temecula, CA 92591  
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Website: [www.falknerwinery.com](http://www.falknerwinery.com)

Foot Path Winery  
36650 Glen Oaks Rd, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (951) 265-9951  
Website: [www.footpathwinery.com](http://www.footpathwinery.com)

Gershon Bachus Vintners  
Christina Falik  
37750 De Portola Road, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (877) 458-8428  
Website: [www.gershonbachus.com](http://www.gershonbachus.com)

Leoness Cellars  
38311 De Portola Rd, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (951) 302-7601  
Website: [www.leonesscellars.com](http://www.leonesscellars.com)

Mount Palomar Winery  
33820 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 676-5047  
Website: [www.mountpalomarwinery.com](http://www.mountpalomarwinery.com)

Oak Mountain Winery  
36522 Va Verde, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (951) 699-9102  
Website: [www.oakmountainwinery.com](http://www.oakmountainwinery.com)

Palumbo Family Vineyard  
40150 Barksdale Cir, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (951) 676-7900  
Website: [www.palumbfamilyvineyards.com](http://www.palumbfamilyvineyards.com)

Peltzer Winery  
40275 Calle Contento, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 888-2008  
Website: [www.peltzerwinery.com](http://www.peltzerwinery.com)

Ponte Winery  
35053 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (877) 314-9463  
Website: [www.pontewinery.com](http://www.pontewinery.com)

South Coast Winery Resort & Spa  
34843 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 566-4622  
Website: [www.southcoastwinery.com](http://www.southcoastwinery.com)

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Website: [www.thorntonwine.com](http://www.thorntonwine.com)

Wiens Family Cellars  
35055 Via Del Ponte, Temecula, CA 92592  
Phone Number: (951) 694-9892  
Website: [www.wienscellars.com](http://www.wienscellars.com)

Wilson Creek Winery  
35960 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA 92591  
Phone Number: (951) 699-9463  
Website: [www.wilsoncreekwinery.com](http://www.wilsoncreekwinery.com)

Temecula Valley Winegrowers Association  
P.O. Box 1601  
Temecula, CA 92593  
Phone Number: (800) 801-9463  
Website: [www.temeculawines.org](http://www.temeculawines.org)

**(Business Members of Riverside County Farm Bureau receive one listing free in the category of their choice. If you would like to be listed or rates for non-members, please call RCFB at (951) 684-6732.)**





# Thank You

**Your commitment to quality and sustainable growing practices has not gone unnoticed. Thank you for your tireless efforts from planting to harvest. Your passion and dedication are appreciated and helped make the 2024 season a success.**



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The official publication of Riverside County Farm Bureau, Inc.



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



There will be no Regular Board of Directors meeting in December 2024. The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. More details will be announced at a later date.

## Food and Farm News

Courtesy of CFBF

### *Achieving organic targets may require creating new markets*

In April, Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration announced California will aim to convert 10% of its cropland to organic agriculture by 2030. Those targets could be a heavy lift in light of recent trends in organic acreage. In 2022, the most recent year with data reported, about 4% of the state's cropland was organic, and after years of expansion, the share of acreage that was organic had declined for two straight years. Some stakeholders are pushing for the state government—as a major food buyer for schools, prisons and other publicly funded institutions—to leverage its purchasing power to create the market needed for California to achieve its goals.

### *Probiotics and prebiotics: hype or health?*

Consumers may have noticed a recent trend in food and beverage products labeled probiotic or prebiotic. The products often say they "support a healthy gut" or "boost your immune system" by providing good microbes that are often missing from people's diets. But how can consumers know if these products are really good for them? A new episode of the University of California, Davis, podcast Unfold took a closer look at the proliferation of probiotics and interviewed Maria Marco, a microbiologist and professor in the department of food science and technology at UC Davis.

### *Program seeks to boost consumption of organic dairy products*

To boost access to organic dairy products in schools and youth programs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has allocated \$15 million to launch the Organic Dairy Product Promotion Program. The initiative is aimed at increasing consumption of organic dairy products among children and young adults while creating new opportunities for small and mid-sized organic dairy farmers. Through the program, USDA will enter into cooperative agreements with four lead organizations.