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America's Egg Farmers Say "Thank You"

Full-page ad in The Wall Street Journal shares message of gratitude, patience

The American Egg Board released a national, full-page ad in The Wall Street Journal on behalf of egg farmers across the country extending their appreciation to consumers, and the retail, foodservice and manufacturing customers who rely on eggs for their businesses.

"This has been an incredibly challenging time for the egg industry. Our egg farmers are in the fight of their lives," said Emily Metz, president and CEO of the American Egg Board. "We know how frustrating it is when people find empty shelves or unusually high prices at the store. And we know our restaurant, grocery and food manufacturers are frustrated, too. Egg farmers feel the same way, and we're working on solutions. These challenges are especially difficult during spring celebrations like Easter and Passover, when eggs hold such an important place in cherished family traditions."

In partnership with animal disease experts, veterinarians, and state and federal government leaders, the egg industry is working tirelessly to impede the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza, also called HPAI or bird flu, on the nation's farms. The entire system of egg production, nationally, has been severely disrupted due to the ongoing outbreak of HPAI. Since the outbreak began, more than 130 million egg-laying hens have been lost due to the disease. This year alone, the disease accelerated dramatically, resulting in the loss of more than 31 million hens.

Recently, the USDA announced a five-pronged approach to address HPAI and the related egg supply and price challenges, which includes vaccination research, temporary egg imports, biosecurity, disaster relief and regulatory changes.

"The Administration's plan to combat avian influenza is a road map toward restoring the egg industry," said Metz. "While there is no quick fix to recover from an outbreak that is now in its fourth year, focusing on these innovative strategies is a critical step forward in addressing this unprecedented systemic disruption in our egg-production system."

"Egg farmers are doing all they can to restore the egg supply and get those eggs back to stores and to our custom-

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Thank you for your trust in egg farmers. We don't take it lightly.

We understand having affordable and available eggs matters. We know that eggs are an integral part of spring celebrations, including Easter, Passover and Mother's Day.

America's egg farmers are in the fight of their lives against an invisible threat called highly pathogenic avian influenza, also known as HPAI or bird flu. It's taken more than 130 million hens from our national flock—disrupting the egg supply and raising prices.

The entire egg production system is stressed as it has never been before. It's affected every part of our business, and there's no quick fix.

We appreciate you sticking with us through this time, and we ask for your continued patience.

Farmers are resilient; we have been for generations. From our families to yours, thank you for continuing to include eggs in your spring traditions.

— America's Egg Farmers

Visit for more information and resources: www.incredibleegg.org

ers at a more affordable price. We could not be more grateful for the outpouring of concern from everyone who loves eggs—from grocery shoppers to our valued business partners," said Metz. "Egg farmers want everyone to know how much that matters, to say thank you in a very public way, and to ask for America's patience as they fight this terrible disease."

To learn more about HPAI and the egg industry's response, please visit [IncredibleEgg.org/valueofeggs](https://www.incredibleegg.org/valueofeggs).

About the American Egg Board (AEB) and the Egg Nutrition Center

Home of the Incredible Egg, the AEB supports America's egg farmers in its mission to increase demand for eggs and egg products through research, education, and promotion. The AEB is located in Chicago, Ill. For more, visit [IncredibleEgg.org](https://www.incredibleegg.org).

SOURCE American Egg Board

Summit to showcase California agritourism best practices, May 14-15

Ag producers, other stakeholders invited to register for event in San Diego County



everyone together to begin shaping a collective future of agritourism in California," Callahan added.

She noted that representatives from producer and community-based organizations, state and local governments, and destination marketing organizations are all encouraged to attend – as well as tourism and economic development professionals.

The second day of the summit begins with a panel featuring Karen Ross, secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture; Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California; Paul Towers, executive director of Community Alliance with Family Farmers; and leadership of the Governor's Office

of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz).

"The summit will not only highlight the diversity and creativity of local agritourism but also spark conversations about how tourism organizations can better support and showcase these experiences across California," said Darlene Ruiz, one of the summit organizers at the UC Cooperative Extension office in San Diego County. "It's an opportunity to foster partnerships that strengthen both local economies and community pride."

The first day of the summit comprises tours of exemplary agritourism businesses in the area, and culminates in a special evening reception, hosted by California Grown, at The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch.

"UC Cooperative Extension values the partnerships developed over the years with agritourism businesses throughout the region," said Jan Gonzales, community education supervisor with UCCE in San Diego County. "We're excited to coordinate with several of them and share with summit participants some of the diverse agritourism industry in our county."

Register for the California Agritourism Summit at <https://bit.ly/2025CAAgTourismSummit>.

Businesses interested in supporting the summit can learn more here: <https://na.eventscloud.com/website/83086/becomeasupporter/>.

Funding for the California Agritourism Summit was made possible, in part, by a grant agreement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Services and supported by USDA/National Institute of Food and Agriculture under Award number 2023-70027-40445.

Given market fluctuations and climate volatility, many agricultural producers are seeking additional sources of farm-related revenue to pay their bills. Agritourism is one avenue, and it could take the form of offering event venue space, on-farm educational tours and classes, or experiences to work on a farm or ranch.

On May 14-15, 2025, the California Agritourism Summit will provide farmers, ranchers and other key stakeholders a unique opportunity to explore agritourism ventures and develop productive partnerships. Interested parties are encouraged to register by April 30 for this gathering in San Diego County.

The event will feature practical tools to start or expand an agritourism business, expert panels, roundtable discussions, presentations, networking opportunities and tours of successful agritourism operations. The summit is organized by the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) and UC Cooperative Extension in San Diego County.

"This is an exciting time for agritourism in California – in 2025, California Jobs First and Visit California both released plans in which the majority of regions across the state specifically identified agritourism as a priority area for economic and tourism development," said Rachael Callahan, statewide agritourism coordinator for UC Agriculture and Natural Resources and SAREP.

"With a legacy of on-the-ground agritourism efforts and this recent recognition of agritourism's importance at the state level, the summit is an important opportunity to bring

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Agtonomy's 3rd Generation Software Platform Redefines Real-World Autonomy Across Agriculture and Turf

Smarter workflows, expanded equipment support, and AI-driven fleet intelligence reduce labor costs and boost sustainability for orchards, vineyards, fields, and green spaces.

Agtonomy, a trusted provider of automation and AI solutions announced the release of its third-generation Agtonomy Platform™, the most advanced software platform for agriculture and land management. Formerly known as TeleFarmer™, the latest update introduces enhanced fleet intelligence powered by Physical AI, new equipment platform support for mixed fleets, expanded capabilities for diverse crops, turf and open-field operations, and a new name that reflects its growing range of real-world applications across industries.

Unlike other autonomous solutions that rely on extensive infrastructure or operator oversight, Agtonomy's platform delivers true turnkey autonomy—ready to perform from day one without pre-mapping or local base stations. By combining embedded connectivity with vision-based navigation and advanced AI, Agtonomy continues to raise the bar for practical automation in agriculture, enabling broad adoption faster.

"There's a big difference between testing autonomy in controlled environments and deploying it in the real world," said Tim Bucher, co-founder and CEO of Agtonomy. "Permanent crop autonomy is one of the toughest challenges in agriculture. Our platform has been refined through years of experience navigating narrow rows with high value crops on either side and no margin for error. This latest update takes that expertise further—expanding application while maintaining our commitment to reliability and precision."

Key Features of the Third-Generation Platform

Infrastructure-Free Autonomy

On the latest Agtonomy-Enabled platforms, integrated cellular and Starlink connectivity, combined with vision-based navigation, eliminates the need for local base stations or manually driven record-and-repeat paths. The result is true autonomous operation from day one, with simplified setup and reduced costs.

Where 3D satellite imagery is available, site setup can be completed remotely,

eliminating the need for an on-site visit and streamlining deployment.

Turf & Open-Field Automation

The platform now supports autonomous mowing and task execution across diverse environments such as golf courses, sod farms, pastures, municipal green spaces, and open fields. Agtonomy-Enabled equipment executes these tasks with industry-leading precision, helping reduce labor costs while improving consistency and coverage.

Enhanced Fleet Intelligence with Physical AI

Agtonomy's Physical AI enables a single operator to manage 10+ tractors simultaneously—with no practical upper limit. As the system learns from real-world operations, fleet efficiency continues to improve.

Expanded Equipment Support

The platform now supports mixed-fleet operations across various equipment types, including new equipment integrations like the factory-fit Bobcat CT4045 diesel tractor—a robust solution for demanding autonomous tasks.

A Proven Platform for the Real World

As Agtonomy enters this next phase of scale and adoption, the company remains focused on what matters most: making automation truly usable. Backed by years of field experience in the most unforgiving environments, the platform is not only smart and scalable, but deeply practical.

"This update is all about removing barriers for operators," said Nic Fischer, head of software at Agtonomy. "No base stations, no complicated mapping—just tap a few buttons and let your equipment do the work autonomously. Its practical autonomy for all operators day one."

With a flexible platform that adapts to different terrains, tasks, and equipment, Agtonomy is empowering operators to do more—with less effort, less complexity, and the precision today's operations demand.

Learn more or request a demo, visit www.agtonomy.com or follow us on LinkedIn and YouTube.

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Propane's Growing Role in Organic Food Production

How propane supports organic farming through flame weeding, soil steaming, frost protection, and more.



Organic farming continues to gain traction nationwide due to increased consumer demand for healthier and more sustainable food options, but organic farmers face a unique set of challenges. Processes like weed management, frost protection, and soil sterilization all must be done without the use of pesticides and synthetic chemicals.

Because propane is a clean, non-toxic fuel source that does not contaminate soil or water, it is an ideal choice for organic food production. From flame weeding systems to irrigation engines, propane helps organic farmers increase productivity while staying true to the eco-conscious principles at the center of organic farming.

Flame Weed Control: A Chemical-Free Alternative

Weed control is one of the greatest challenges in organic farming, as traditional herbicides are not an option. Propane-powered flame weeding systems provide an effective and sustainable alternative. These systems use controlled flames to destroy weeds by heating plant cells to the point of rupture, effectively eliminating unwanted vegetation without harming the soil or beneficial microorganisms. Unlike mechanical tilling, flame weeding reduces soil erosion and compaction, preserving soil health and structure while eliminating the need for chemical intervention.

Wind Machines: Protecting Your Crops and Bottom Line

Frost can be a major threat to organic crops, particularly in early spring and late fall. Propane-powered wind machines help protect delicate crops by mixing warm air from higher altitudes with cold air near the ground, preventing frost formation. These machines provide an energy-efficient solution to protect orchards, vineyards, and vegeta-

ble crops, ensuring high yields and minimizing losses due to unexpected temperature drops.

Soil Steamers: Healthy, Disease-Free Soil

To grow healthy food, it's important to start with healthy soil. The newly released, commercially available propane-powered soil steamer is a revolutionary tool for sterilizing soil naturally. Propane is used to quickly heat

See Propane's growing role next page



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Propane's growing role

continued from previous page

water to the high temperature needed to create powerful steam that effectively eliminates soil-borne diseases, pests, and weed seeds without the need for synthetic fumigants.

This method is particularly useful for greenhouse operations and high-value specialty crops, offering a sustainable way to maintain soil fertility and prevent disease outbreaks, all while meeting organic certification standards.

Propane's Versatility for Organic Farming and Beyond

In addition to the more specialized propane-powered agriculture equipment for organic farmers, propane is a versatile energy source that can be used to power your entire farm. The same propane that can be used to power flame weeding systems, soil steamers, and wind machines, can also be used to power irrigation engines, grain dryers, water or building heating systems, and more.

Propane-powered equipment provides organic farmers with a reliable and eco-friendly energy source that enhances productivity while maintaining strict organic standards. Whether it's through flame weeding, wind machines, soil steamers, or essential farm operations like irrigation and heating, propane continues to be an asset in modern organic agriculture. By integrating propane into their farming strategies, organic producers can cultivate healthier crops, reduce environmental impact, and meet the increasing demand for sustainable food production.

By Michael Newland, director of agriculture business development at Propane Education & Research Council

California Avocado Season Is Here, and It's The Largest One In Years



"Recipe and photos courtesy of the California Avocado Commission"

California avocado season has arrived, bringing exciting news for its biggest fans: California growers are estimating their largest avocado harvest since 2020, with an estimated 375 million pounds of this locally grown favorite on its way to grocery stores and restaurants across the West in the weeks and months ahead.

"California avocado season is something true avocado lovers look forward to every year - it's a time when they can get delicious, premium quality fruit that's also locally grown and sustainably farmed," said Terry Splane, vice president of marketing at the California Avocado Commission. "After months of careful tending by the state's 3,000 dedicated avocado growers, the trees are filled with fruit and we're eager to share this harvest with everyone."

According to Splane, California's avocado groves - spread across ideal growing regions in the state - are thriving thanks to growers' stewardship of the land and their long-term investments in the crop, leading to one of the largest harvests in many years.

While small shipments of California avocados have begun arriving at some local stores in recent weeks, the season is officially kicking off now, with peak availability expected from spring through summer. Most of the fruit will be found in grocery stores and restaurants from Southern California to Washington state and select retailers throughout the nation, ensuring an abundant supply of locally grown, ethically sourced avocados. For those eager to track down some fresh, delicious California avocados in their area, CAC offers a handy store locator at CaliforniaAvocado.com/store-locator.

Grown with Care, Enjoyed with a Passion

California's avocado farmers grow premium quality avocados by prioritizing sustainable farming practices, worker well-being and support for their communities. Grown in the rich soil of California, warmed by its sunshine, cooled by gentle coastal breezes and tended to by these dedicated growers, California avocados have an exceptional taste and rich, creamy texture.

"While California avocados are a seasonal treasure, this year's robust harvest means more people will have the

chance to enjoy them," added Splane. "From energizing morning smoothies to fresh superfood salads and quick and easy guacamole, there's no better time to savor the best of what California has to offer."

California avocado enthusiasts can access seasonal recipes like these and more at CaliforniaAvocado.com, and follow along on Facebook at Facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados, and on Twitter and Instagram at [@ca_avocados](https://twitter.com/ca_avocados).



California Avocado Superfood Salad

Serves: 4

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Total Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 8 cups kale and/or baby spinach leaves
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1/2 tsp. fine sea salt, or to taste
- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup diced, cooked sweet potato
- 1 cup halved grape tomatoes
- 2 ripe, Fresh California Avocados,* seeded, peeled and sliced horizontally

Instructions

1. Slice kale and spinach into fine shreds. Place in a mixing bowl and with clean hands massage half of the olive oil into the shredded greens. Place on a serving platter or individual plates and sprinkle with a little of the salt.

2. Heat the remaining oil in a medium skillet on medium heat. Add the walnuts and stir to coat with the oil. Toast for 2 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently and being careful not to burn them. Remove from the pan and let cool slightly. (This step may be prepared ahead of time or may be skipped if you prefer not to toast the walnuts.)

3. Meanwhile arrange the blueberries, sweet potatoes, grape tomatoes and avocado slices on top of the kale and spinach, leaving space for the walnuts.

4. Add walnuts to the salad and sprinkle the remaining salt over all.

*Large avocados are recommended for this recipe. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. If using smaller or larger size avocados adjust the quantity accordingly.

California Dairy Sustainability Summit 2025



The 2025 California Dairy Sustainability Summit brought together industry leaders and dairy farmers, which included several Dairy Council of California Board Members. Dairy Cares and the Dairy Council of California were among the hosting organizations. Dairy Council of California was represented by five team members, including Ashley Rosales, RDN, who was a key contributor to the planning committee, helping ensure that dairy's role in a healthy, sustainable diet was weaved into the summit. Our team also hosted a booth, engaged in valuable networking, and gained insights from diverse breakout sessions.

One of the summit's highlights was the morning session presentation, *Nourishing a Sustainable Future: Dairy Protein Delivers*, by Mitch Kanter, Ph.D. Speaking directly to dairy farmers and industry professionals, he emphasized the indispensable role of high-quality dairy protein in supporting health and well-being—both in the U.S. and globally. His message reinforced dairy's critical place in sustainable nutrition and the ongoing demand for innovative dairy products that meet evolving consumer needs.

Dairy Council of California remains committed to advocating for dairy's essential role in a healthy, sustainable diet. Dairy continues to be one of the most cost-effective sources of under-consumed nutrients, particularly in vulnerable communities. The California dairy sector remains at the forefront of environmental stewardship, economic support, and education, ensuring that dairy remains an accessible and sustainable source of nourishment.

The 2025 Summit expanded its Farm Focus programming, further highlighting sustainability efforts at the farm level. With ongoing innovation and collaboration, dairy remains a vital part of California's future—both as a nutritional cornerstone and a leader in sustainability.

To learn more about the 2025 California Dairy Sustainability Summit, visit cadairysummit.com.

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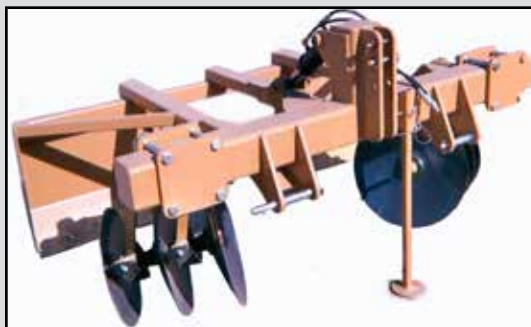
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Make a Positive Impact by Planting a Tree



Photo courtesy of Unsplash

There are countless ways you can make your environmental contributions felt. If you'd like to join millions of others in the fight for Mother Earth, consider one of the most popular gifts given back to the world each year: planting a tree.

Consider these tips to properly plant a tree in your own yard.

Choose the Right Tree and Location

Depending on where you live and your desired outcome, choosing the right tree and planting location are critical factors. Larger shade trees help cool homes in warmer climates, evergreens provide privacy and fruit trees offer a grocery store right in your backyard. Consider your available space along with conditions that will impact the tree itself, such as soil conditions, sun exposure, drainage and more.

Dig Safely

Before digging, remember that proper tree place-

ment requires factoring in underground utility lines, overhead power lines and proximity to sidewalks, driveways and homes. Dial 811, the national call-before-you-dig number, to locate underground utilities and consider contacting an arborist or tree care professional to make sure you've weighed all the important factors.

Break Ground

Dig a hole that's roughly 2-3 times wider than the root ball of your tree and equally as deep as the root ball. Be sure the trunk flare (where the trunk expands at the base of the tree) is partially visible when planted. Remove any wrapping or cover from the root ball and trunk. Lift from the root ball, not the trunk, to place in the hole then straighten vertically and firmly backfill soil around the root ball to stabilize.

Add Mulch

Mulching helps maintain moisture and improve soil conditions while controlling weed growth. Place a 2-3-inch layer in a 3-foot radius around the base of the tree without touching the trunk itself.

Keep Soil Moist

Make sure your tree has enough water to grow strong by keeping the soil moist. Typically, this means watering just once per week, barring rain, but may require more frequency during especially hot weather.

Find more tips for giving back to Mother Earth at eLivingtoday.com.

Source: Family Features

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KIOTI Introduces Flow+ System for Compact Loaders

New Flow+ models offer a more responsive, high-performance hydraulic solution



K IOTI Tractor, a division of Daedong-USA, Inc., launches Flow+ technology, an advancement in hydraulic performance for its compact construction equipment lineup. Available now, the Flow+ Compact Track Loaders (TL750) and Skid Steer Loaders (SL750) enhance hydraulic capabilities for operators, who need more power than standard flow, without the excessive cost or fuel consumption of full high-flow systems.

"At KIOTI, we're committed to developing solutions that maximize the performance of our equipment," said Justin Moe, product manager – compact construction at KIOTI. "Flow+ bridges the gap between standard and high-flow systems, providing operators with the hydraulic power needed to handle more demanding tasks, while improving engine functionality, fuel savings, and overall versatility."

Designed for light to medium-duty hydraulic attachments, Flow+ allows operators to seamlessly run attachments – like rotary cutters, trenchers, and snow blowers – while still supporting standard-flow attachments for everyday tasks, making your machine more versatile across jobs.

Flow+ optimizes performance and long-term durability by providing more power than standard flow systems, while reducing heat and wear compared to high-flow

alternatives. It enhances productivity by enabling quick attachment changes, minimizing job downtime. Additionally, its optimized hydraulic power management conserves fuel, extending operational hours without unnecessary consumption.

Built with a five-port coupler block, dedicated Flow+ tube lines and valve, and an added gear pump, this system ensures seamless hydraulic operation. With Flow+, operators can tackle a wider range of job-site applications, while keeping their compact loaders running smoothly and efficiently.

The new Flow+ models offer a significant upgrade in hydraulic performance compared to the standard models, delivering enhanced power and efficiency for demanding tasks. While the standard models operate at 3,335 psi (230 bar) with a hydraulic flow of 21.9 gpm (82.90 lpm) and 41.80 hp (31.10 kW), the Flow+ models operate at a lower pressure of 2,900 psi (200 bar) but provide a higher hydraulic flow of 34.0 gpm (128.80 lpm) and an impressive 65.70 hp (46 kW). This increased flow and horsepower in the Flow+ models translates to greater attachment versatility, improved operational efficiency, and the ability to handle more intensive applications with ease.

To learn more about Flow+ for compact construction equipment, contact an authorized KIOTI Tractor dealer or visit KIOTI.com.

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OFRF Launches Organic Research Hub to Support Farmers Nationwide

One-of-a-kind platform offers curated, science-based organic farming tools and resources to help farmers find trusted, practical solutions to on-farm challenges.

By Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF)

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) announced the launch of the Organic Research Hub, a new online platform giving organic and transitioning farmers access to trusted, science-based tools to overcome production challenges.

OFRF is a national nonprofit working to foster the widespread adoption of organic farming systems through farmer-informed research, education, and federal policy advocacy. With the Organic Research Hub, the organization has created the first platform of its kind—a centralized, searchable collection of practical resources tailored to organic producers.

Available now at organicresearchhub.org, the Hub features factsheets, research summaries, webinars, videos, and technical guides from leading agricultural institutions, land-grant universities, and organic organizations. It also includes nearly 200 final reports from OFRF-funded research projects, making decades of farmer-informed research available in one place.

"We created the Organic Research Hub to meet farmers where they are," said Dr. Heather Estrada, OFRF's research & education senior scientist and architect of the Hub. "They don't have time to dig through journals or outdated PDFs. They need practical, credible resources they can use in the field—and that's exactly what this tool provides."

Farmers can search by keyword, topic area, crop type, region, and resource type—and sign up for customized alerts when new content relevant to their interests is added. The platform also includes a national Organic Extension Directory to help farmers connect with local agricultural experts.

"I was changing our compost management and had some questions," said Jordan Settlage, an organic dairy farmer at Settlage & Settlage Farms in Ohio. "In less than a minute, I found exactly what I needed—from credible sources I trust. That's a big deal. I can use it to make real decisions for our farm."

Although organic accounts for over 6% of U.S. food sales and 15% of produce sales, organic agriculture receives less than 2% of USDA research funding. Public investment in agricultural research has

declined, leaving many organic farmers to innovate alone. The Organic Research Hub is a direct response to that gap, offering equitable access to technical knowledge for producers working to improve soil health, adopt regenerative practices, and build climate resilience.

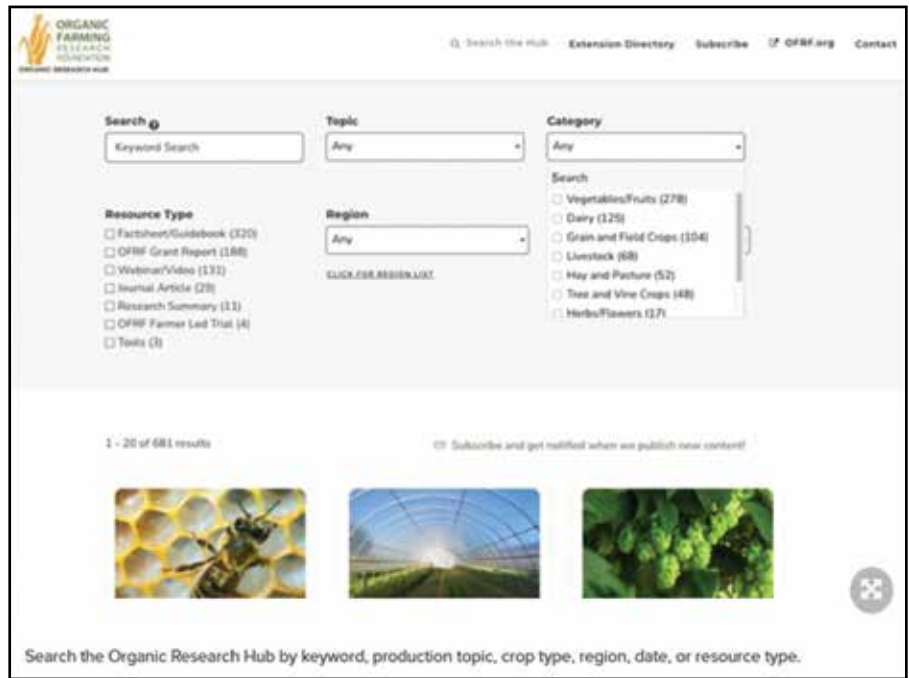
"This is about access," said Brise Tencer, OFRF's executive director. "For too long, organic farmers have had to piece together information on their own—often without institutional support or public investment. This tool puts trusted, science-backed information directly into farmers' hands. Organic producers need it, but any farmer interested in sustainable, non-chemical practices can benefit from it."

The Hub features content from organizations such as SARE, The Organic Center, ATTRA, and dozens of research institutions—and will continue to grow as new content is added.

Explore the Organic Research Hub at organicresearchhub.org.

About the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF)

The Organic Farming Research Foundation works to foster the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming systems. OFRF cultivates organic research, education, and policies that bring more farmers and acreage into organic production. Learn more at www.ofrf.org.



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New Holland celebrates a half-century of Twin Rotor combines New Holland TR70



New Holland is marking the 50th year since introducing the first combines featuring the brand's Twin Rotor threshing and separation technology, a product line which has grown from a single model in 1975 to a complete range today, led by the new CR10 and CR11.

The milestone will be celebrated globally with special displays at shows and exhibitions.

Over 70,000 TR and CR Twin Rotor combines have been produced globally to date. New Holland's Centre of Harvesting Excellence in Zedelgem, Belgium, has recently undergone significant investment and upgrading for production of the latest CR10 and CR11 models.

New Holland enters the combine market

Well-known for its expertise in grassland farming products such as balers and forage harvesting equipment, New Holland, then primarily a US-based manufacturer, entered the combine market in 1964 when it acquired Belgian company Claey's, which had introduced its first self-propelled combine in 1952. Over the decade that followed the acquisition, New Holland continued to develop the conventional straw-walker combine line it had acquired, but during the 1960s began to investigate new ways of threshing and separating grain to boost output, increase cleanliness and reduce losses.

The first Twin Rotor combine

To do this, New Holland engineers studied centrifugal force and its potential for separating grain from plant matter, an innovative concept distinctly different from the drum/concave and straw-walker traditional method of threshing and separation. The first development machine, adapted from a 985 straw-walker model from the Claey's factory in Belgium, was trialled in corn in 1968, and wheat the following year. The trials showed benefits from splitting the incoming crop flow from the elevator/feeder house into two streams, feeding it into two counter-rotating longitudinal rotors working against longitudinal concaves that consisted of threshing sections followed by separation sections. The high speed of the rotors meant centrifugal force ejected much of the grain through the concaves, minimising grain damage when compared to

conventional drum and concave threshing, and minimising losses when set against straw-walker separation.

By 1969, a totally new combine design with these internal elements was under test, and in 1975 the first production model, the TR70 with a 145hp engine and 5,550-litre/158-bushel grain tank, was launched – the first New Holland combine built in the USA. For 1979 it was replaced by the upgraded TR75, and joined by a larger companion, the TR85. Over the next two decades the range evolved, with the 25,000th TR combine produced in 1997.

European high-capacity combine development had taken a separate path with the development of the Twin-Flow combines introduced in 1983. These used a conventional drum and concave followed by a large beater and rotary separator and then a lateral Twin Flow rotor that split the crop into two streams to separate the final grains.

However, by the late 1990s New Holland engineers in Europe and North America began work on a totally new Twin Rotor design that would meet the needs of farmers around the world in all types of combinable crop. Introduced in 2002 and blending key features from the TR and TF machines with new developments and styling, the new 333hp CR960 and 428hp CR980 were initially built in the USA, before production was transferred in 2005 to the Zedelgem plant in Belgium.

The CR960 featured twin rotors of 432mm/17in diameter, with larger 560mm/22in diameter units on the CR980, which had a 12,500-litre/355-bushel grain tank. Operators benefited from a completely new cab design. The range was gradually expanded, and introduced features including IntelliSense combine automation, Dynamic Flow Control remotely-adjustable rotor vanes, Dynamic Feed Roll technology and Opti-Spread Plus residue management. Development of the Elevation models in 2007 introduced IntelliCruise feed rate control for maximum output, and Opti-Clean cleaning technology to further enhance grain cleanliness. These and other innovations have earned the TR and CR combines multiple industry awards throughout the world.

The next development was the CR7.90, CR8.90, CR9.90 and CR10.90 models, with the latter machine in 2014 taking the Guinness World Record for the most wheat harvested in eight hours, at 797.656 tonnes (29,308 bushels). The record still stands today.

The New Holland CR combine range is now topped by the recently-introduced CR11 (775hp, 20,000-litre/567-bushel tank capacity) and CR10 (634hp, 16,000-litre/454-bushel grain tank) models. Like their forebears, they continue to incorporate proven Twin Rotor technology, but have more capacity than ever, with greater power and tank volume matched by rotors with a diameter of 600mm/24in and a length of 3,600mm/142in, to maximize crop handling capacity, ensure thorough threshing and separation, and protect grain quality.

Global events and initiatives are planned during 2025 to celebrate #TwinRotor50, while owners and operators are encouraged to share their memories of working with these machines at <https://wkf.ms/41evGY8>.



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Recent and Upcoming Extension Meetings



Nicholas Clark

By: Nicholas Clark, M.S., CCA, Farm Advisor

Field days, grower meetings, and agricultural conferences are public events where farmers, crop consultants, pest control advisers, and anybody interested in learning about what's new in agriculture can come listen to presentations, view demonstrations and converse with researchers. The University of California Cooperative Extension plays the role of coordinating many of these meetings and often collaborates with other organizations to put them on. This article will cover some recent extension events and direct readers to websites where they can find presentations and writings from those events.

In September of 2024, the annual Kearney Forage and Field Crops Day took place at the UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Parlier, CA. At this field day, attendees got a chance to tour the research farm and visit with researchers at their trial sites to learn about results, view plots and the effects of various treatments like new varieties of blackeye beans and watch a sprayer calibration demonstration. Then visitors came indoors mid-morning until lunch to view a few slideshow presentations and discuss the shared information with researchers in open question and answer sessions. Registration was free

to attendees thanks to generous sponsors from the ag industry. Each year, the presentations and handouts given at this field day are posted online. You can find the materials shared at the 2024 field day at the following webpage: <https://alfalfa.ucdavis.edu/Kearney-Alfalfa-Forage-Field-Day-2024>. This year, the field day is scheduled to be held on Thursday, September 18, 2025. Keep on the lookout for an agenda.

In November of 2024, the biannual UC Golden State Dairy Management Conference was held at Harvest Hall of the Stanislaus County Ag Center in Modesto, CA. At this conference, renowned economist Corey Geiger gave the keynote speech about the economic outlook for the dairy industry. Attendees then were able to choose between breakout sessions to listen to and watch slideshow presentations ranging from herd health to manure management to forage crop management. After the breakout sessions, the attendees came back together to hear presentations from Dairy Cares and the CA Dairy Research Foundation to learn about how the dairy industry's research dollars have been put to work in specific projects. These presentations emphasized the positive impacts these projects have had or are anticipated to have for the dairy industry. Much of the same program at this conference was repeated at the 2025 Farm Show in Tulare. The next UC Golden State Dairy Management Conference is scheduled for a date to be determined in 2026. The presentations from the November conference can be found on the following webpage: https://ucanr.edu/sites/CA Dairyconference/Conference_Information/2024_Agenda/index.cfm.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 2025

6: 2025 Napa Valley Barrel Auction. The Napa Valley Barrel Auction is back, offering an extraordinary opportunity to taste and bid on small lot wines while being immersed in the heart of Napa Valley's world-class wine and culinary scene. Held at the iconic Louis M. Martini Winery. Proceeds will benefit Napa Valley Vintners' Youth Wellness Initiative with a focus on empowering youth to lead healthy, balanced lives. Two packages are available: the Napa Valley Barrel Auction or the all-access weekend experience. To secure your ticket to this must-attend occasion, visit collectivenapavalley.org.

10: 2025 Agri-Pulse Food & Ag Issues Summit. The event will offer a full day of speeches and panel discussions, with both in-person and virtual attendance options at the Sheraton Grand Sacramento. Information: <https://www.agri-pulse.com/2025-West-Summit>

9-10: California Poultry Federation Summer Board Meeting and Golf Tournament at The Cliffs Resort & Spa in Pismo Beach, CA. The Summer Meeting is one of CPF's most popular meetings. Sponsor and/or register, reserve a spot in the Golf Tournament, and book hotel accommodations online! All attendees will sign up online. Please visit cpif.org for all information and links.

JULY 2025

16: Sustainable Groundwater Panel – Center for Land Based Learning's Speaker Series. Center for Land Based Learning 40140 Best Ranch Rd, Woodland, CA. Come enjoy wood-fired pizza and beverages as we discuss the present and future of sustainable groundwater in the region, featuring panelists from CAFF. Suggested donation \$20. For more information visit: <https://caff.org/event/sustainable-groundwater-panel-center-for-land-based-learning-speaker-series/>

SEPTEMBER 2025

11-12: California Poultry Federation Annual Conference and Meeting, Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa Monterey, CA. The Board Meeting is Friday, September 12th. For questions about the conference, please contact the CPF office at (209) 576-6355.

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UC scientists ask walnut trees: When do you need to be irrigated?

Shackel team uses \$1.3-million USDA grant to support grower decisions

By Trina Kleist

You've seen them alongside country roads all over California's Central Valley: Walnut trees – entire orchards – knocked over, their dirt-covered roots up in the air, shriveling in the sun.

As the state's \$474-million walnut industry struggles to regain its footing against a host of environmental and economic challenges, University of California scientists are testing a new tool that could help farmers with one of those problems: water.

Ken Shackel and team, in the UC Davis Department of Plant Sciences, have a new tool to help farmers decide when to irrigate their walnut orchards. Their method saves precious water and keeps the trees, and their roots, healthier. It uses a device that is inserted into a tree branch to directly measure how strongly the tree needs to pull to get the water up from the soil. The innovative method measures stem water potential, or SWP. It's being tested in nine working orchards in the Central Valley, with the help of colleagues in UC Cooperative Extension.

Early indications suggest the SWP method also could be used profitably in other tree crops and woody perennials, and potentially, in other irrigated crops, Shackel said. By shifting away from the current system of estimating trees' water needs based on the weather or soil moisture, to a system of measuring the trees directly, farmers could use their increasingly scant water more efficiently and improve the long-term sustainability and profitability of their operations.

"In every case, farmers will be able to reduce their risks and maximize conservation of their irrigation water when they can make decisions based directly on the trees' level of pull on the water," said Shackel, a professor in the department.

Despite the challenges faced by California walnut growers, they still produced nearly all of the nation's walnuts in 2022, according to the California Department of Food and Agriculture. With nearly 376,000 acres of orchards still growing in 2023, and requiring about 1.1 million acre-feet of water yearly, according to the California Walnut Board/Commission, farmers need a better way of knowing how much soil moisture they can use before they start to irrigate their orchards.

The Walnut Board/Commission supported the early stages of this research.

The current project by Shackel and team is in its first year of work. It's funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, through the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The \$1.3-million grant supporting the five-year project comes through the NRCS's On-Farm Trials program to evaluate innovative water management systems. The goal is to help growers be more efficient and effective with dwindling water supplies.

A little early-season stress makes trees stronger

Farmers typically start irrigating early in the season, especially walnuts. The trees stay dormant until early- to mid-April, so when they awake, the weather already can be quite warm. The thinking is that early irrigation helps maintain soil moisture for later use and avoids stressing the trees, said Tyler Dowd, assistant project scientist.

But previous studies have shown that irrigating too early can harm tree health. Scientists think early irrigation could impact the roots, leading to symptoms of nutritional deficiencies seen in the leaves later in the season, particularly at harvest, Shackel explained.

Rather than saving water, Shackel said, "research suggests that delaying irrigation in the spring allows for better root development. Delayed trees are actually less water-stressed later in the season, when irrigation is temporarily discontinued for harvest."

To help them decide when to irrigate, some walnut farmers

already use devices called pressure chambers, or pressure bombs, to measure when trees are stressed for water. By taking the pressure bomb out to their orchard and putting a leaf into it, a farmer can measure how strongly a tree is pulling on water, which is a way of understanding water stress, Dowd explained. This pull results from the process of evapotranspiration – the combined loss of water from the soil by evaporation and from the plants themselves through the leaves (transpiration). Other methods farmers commonly use to schedule irrigation include following evapotranspiration charts that estimate water loss over time for broad geographic areas.

For their project, Shackel and team want to delay irrigation early in the season and use the pressure bombs to watch for a little bit of "good" stress before turning on the water. "This lets the trees tell us when they need water," Dowd explained.

SWP: Using precision sensors in a new way

In contrast to most commonly used ways of timing irrigation, Shackel's previous research also has shown that monitoring stem water potential – a technique that gives information in real time – can reduce irrigation by as much as half in walnuts, while maintaining or even improving tree health.

To measure SWP, the team is coupling information from the pressure bombs with readings from a little electronic device called a microtensiometer. They insert the device permanently into a tree branch, and it directly measures the tree's pull on water. Throughout the day, each microtensiometer transmits readings electronically to a receiver, which Dowd monitors from his desk.

"It's much more convenient than pressure bombs, which require farmers to head out into each orchard and take measurements," Dowd explained. "We can see what the trees are experiencing in real time, several times a day, rather than the 'snapshot' method of using a pressure bomb."

Shackel has been working with FloraPulse, a company based in Davis, to develop the microtensiometers being used in these trials. The company already has been using the sensors in crops including grapevines, almonds, apples and other fruit trees, inserting the devices into the main stem. But that doesn't work in walnuts, because the tree trunks ooze fluid that prevents measurement, FloraPulse CEO Michael Santiago explained.

"Ken came up with the idea of installing the sensor into the 'dead' pith in the center of a branch to avoid the wounding response and measure stem water potential," Santiago said. "Preliminary testing and improvements during 2024 showed that this strategy is viable, though tricky."

The scientists expect that, when farmers use this highly accurate and localized method for measuring SWP, they can base their irrigation decisions on actual plant stress rather than estimated water use, Dowd added.

Overcoming barriers to adoption

Using the microtensiometers to measure stem water potential is a more practical approach to using irrigation water more efficiently and improving the sustainability of a walnut operation. But, new practices always face some skepticism.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service plans to use the results of On-Farm Trials evaluations such as this one to refine guidance documents, technical tools, conservation practice standards and business practices for growers across the nation.

That knowledge could save growers enormous costs if they can keep their already established walnut orchards in the ground. In California, from October 2022 to August 2023, nearly 29,000 acres of walnut trees were bulldozed, according to a study by the California Walnut Board.



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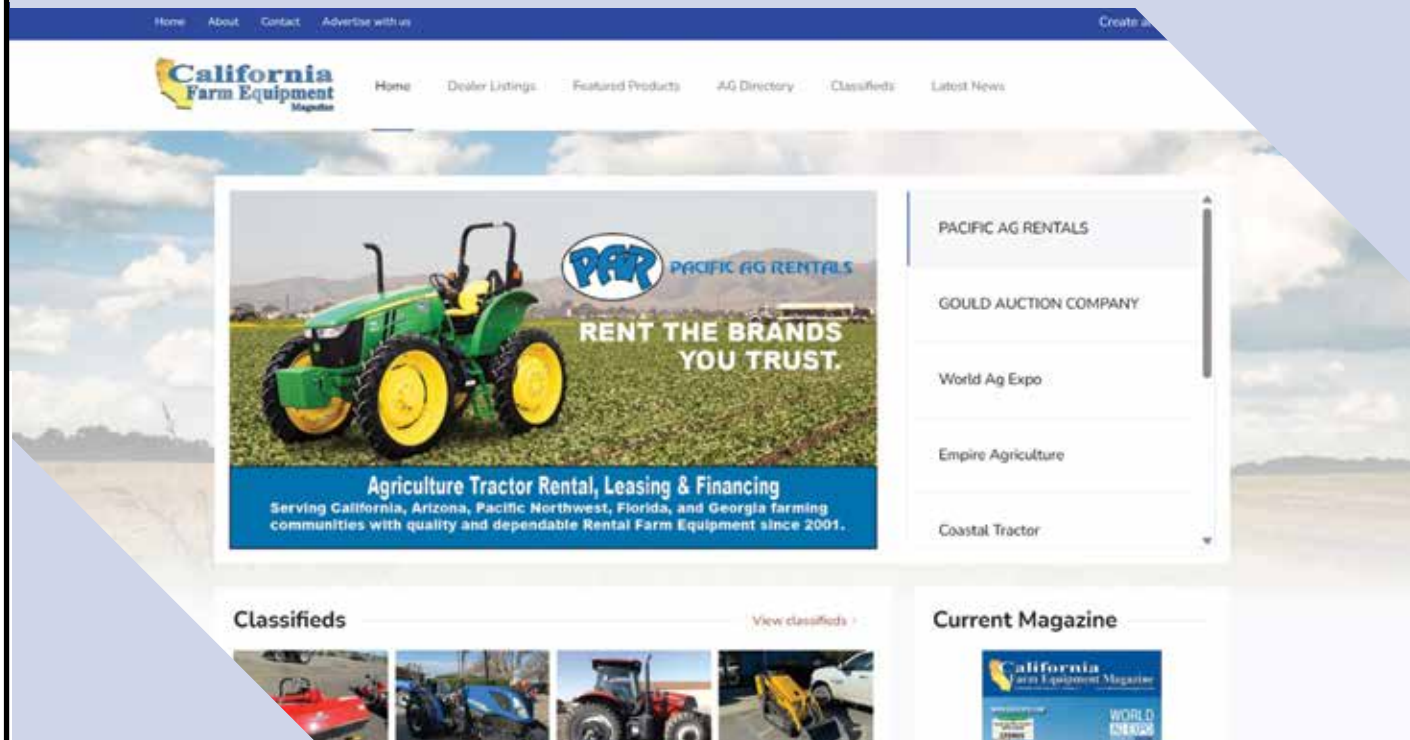
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UC Davis updates nitrogen removal coefficients for table olive



*Elizabeth Fichtner, Farm Advisor,
UCCE Tulare County*



*Daniel Geisseler, CE Specialist,
UC Davis*

UC Davis researchers have partnered with local UCCE Farm Advisors and industry to evaluate and update the amount of nitrogen (N) removed from orchards with the harvest of 'Manzanillo' table olives. Growers can utilize this information in the development of N management plans specific to individual orchards with the overall goal of improving N use efficiency, reducing N losses, and preserving groundwater quality.

The ratio of N applied to N removed is a key metric in the Central Valley Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (CV-ILRP). Growers report applied N and yield to agricultural water quality coalitions. The coalitions then convert yield to quantities of N removed using crop-specific coefficients and then report estimates of N removed from orchard systems to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The objective of this project is to develop reliable N removal coefficients for crops grown in the Central Valley, including table olive. The project is supported by a grant from the California Department of Food and Agriculture – Fertilizer Research and Education Program (CDFA- FREP). Reports containing N removal coefficients for the crops completed so far can be found at: http://geisseler.ucdavis.edu/Project_N_Removal.html

In Tulare County, thirty-two samples of 'Manzanillo' table olives were collected from the local fruit receiving station from 2021-2023. Samples were then sent to UC Davis for analysis of total N in the Nutrient Management Lab. Nitrogen removal rates in olive fruit ranged from 5.62-8.08 lbs N/ton of fresh fruit, with an average N removal rate of 7.1 lbs N/ton of 'Manzanillo' fruit. Chico State also hosts an online tool for estimating the rate of N removal from orchards comprised of dominant oil varieties including 'Koreniki', 'Arbosana', 'Arbequina'.

Incorporating foliar nutrient analyses will allow growers to monitor the tree's nutrient status and make corrections to the fertilizer program if needed. Leaf analyses are a valuable tool to detect nutrient deficiencies but are less valuable as indicators of excess nutrient availability. Olive fruit is only an important N sink during the initial phase of growth, right after flowering. Foliar N content in July/August should range from approximately 1.3%-1.7% to maintain adequate plant health.

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