



# California Farm Equipment Magazine

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# Farmers' Almanac Releases Wet Winter Whirlwind Forecast



Brace yourself! The 2025 Farmers' Almanac predicts a wet whirlwind winter with lots of snow, rain, and storms.

Get ready for a wild ride! The Farmers' Almanac warns that winter 2024/25 is shaping up to be a "wet whirlwind," meaning there will be a lot of precipitation and storms. Depending on where you live, you may see lots of snow or rain.

Brace yourself! The 2025 Farmers' Almanac predicts a wet whirlwind winter with lots of snow, rain, and storms.

The Almanac is predicting a deep chill to settle over the Northern Plains and Great Lakes regions for much of the season. But don't think the South is off the hook. Southern areas should expect some frigid blasts from Old Man Winter, even if the temperatures are slightly more moderate overall. Cold snaps are forecast to hit during the final week of January into early February, with the Northern Plains potentially seeing the most extreme cold.

#### Snow?

The Northeast is in the bullseye for a barrage of storms this winter, with the Farmers' Almanac calling for above-normal amounts of winter precipitation. Ski-lovers will enjoy nice powder days. Snow will likely be more plentiful in the interior and mountainous regions of New England and the Northeast, while those near the coast can expect more

rain. The Pacific Northwest, Great Lakes, and Southeast should get ready for a wet, white, and slushy season.

On the flip side, the Southwest and South Central States are looking at a drier winter with below-normal precipitation.

#### Winter Warnings

The 2025 Farmers' Almanac suggests keeping a close watch on the final week of January for an active storm track that could bring heavy precipitation and strong winds to the eastern half of the country. Texas and the Northwest may also want to prepare for a potential snowstorm that could winter bring up to 6 inches to Texas, and a foot or more to the Bitterroot Mountains of Idaho during the first week of February.

#### Farmers' Almanac Weather Formula

The Farmers' Almanac's proprietary weather prediction formula adapts to the mysteries of nature as well as the effects of La Niña, which is predicted to develop and hang on through the winter.

#### About the Farmers' Almanac

For over 200 years, the Farmers' Almanac has provided 16 months of weather forecasts, planting and gardening charts, and advice on everything from fishing to potty training. Its exclusive calendars tell you the best days to plant, brew, stargaze, and more.

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# Fresno State Expands Farm Credit Multicultural Scholars Program

Student Ambassadors reach out to high school students, encourage careers in agriculture



A high school student goes face-to-face with a dairy cow during a Multicultural Scholars Program farm tour at California State University, Fresno, as outreach leader Amy Suarez (in red) looks on. (Photo courtesy of CSU Fresno.)

After some 40 years, the Farm Credit Multicultural Scholars Program at California State University, Fresno, is continuing to grow and expand its mission. In fact, the program is now reaching even more students and urging them to consider earning a college degree and pursuing a career in agriculture.

During the recently concluded school year, Fresno State completed the first year of an ambitious outreach program to visit Central Valley high schools to educate traditionally underrepresented students about the benefits of attending the university and pursuing a career in an agriculture-related field.

"We made 33 presentations and 14 farm tours during the school year," said Amy Suarez, a graduate student leading the outreach effort. "The 60 ambassadors gave presentations about Fresno State as well as our ag programs. And they answered questions from the students about campus life, what it's like to live in the dorms and about our majors. It was also important to show that all students can be accepted at Fresno State and that we thrive on diversity."

The expanded high school program adds to a long list of nearly 80 outreach efforts held each year by the Jordan College of Agricultural Science and Technology. These include career fairs, community college presentations and workshops at the FFA Leadership Conference. During the year, the ambassadors reached 10,675 high school and community college students in the Central Valley and Central Coast. That's up from around 6,000 in 2022-23 and just 620

in 2021-22, said Dr. Sharon Freeman, the program coordinator.

"For example, we had three of our ambassadors spend all day at a high school in Salinas, where they presented to eight groups of students in the ag teacher's classrooms," Freeman said. "We've found that students are receptive to learn about our six departments and the teachers are very appreciative as well."

The student ambassador program has been strongly supported by Farm Credit since 2013, said Keith Hesterberg, President and CEO with Fresno Madera Farm Credit.

"During the past 11 years, Farm Credit has contributed over \$765,000 to fund stipends each year for five ambassadors who serve as leaders of

the program," Hesterberg said. "Diversity has been part of Central Valley agriculture from the beginning as people from around the world migrated here to become farmers. That diversity is more important now than ever as we work to ensure that California agriculture reflects California's rich diversity."

Kevin Ralph, California State President for AgWest Farm Credit, said he was extremely pleased to see the expanded outreach to high school students.

"Our sponsorship has allowed the major expansion of the program to high school students while the program continues its outreach efforts to older students as well," Ralph said. "It's also a plus that this year the sponsorship is helping to reimburse the scholars for some of their travel expenses. Since the presentations take place from Modesto to Tulare, those stipends can really help these college students."

Farm Credit organizations supporting the program are AgWest Farm Credit, American AgCredit, CoBank and Fresno Madera Farm Credit. These organizations are part of the nationwide Farm Credit System – the largest provider of credit to U.S. agriculture.

Freeman meets weekly with the ambassador leaders to go through the list of what's coming up next and making sure enough people are in place for all of them, and Suarez keeps in touch throughout the week as well to orchestrate all the moving parts. Ambassadors can sign up for any activity that fits their schedules and student participation has

See Fresno State page 10

# CAWG's 50th Anniversary Celebration

A Half-Century of Advocacy and Achievement  
November 21, 2024 | 5:00-9:00 PM |  
Kimpton Sawyer Hotel, Sacramento, CA

For five decades, CAWG has stood as an unwavering advocate for California winegrape growers, making significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of our industry. This momentous milestone not only marks the journey of our organization, but also celebrates the collective achievements and resilience of each member who has been an indispensable part of both the association and the community.

We invite you to join us in commemorating this extraordinary milestone. The celebration will begin with a social reception, featuring wines from throughout the Golden State, followed by a plated dinner and program. The evening promises to be filled with camaraderie, reflection, and celebration as we honor the past, revel in the present, and collectively envision a promising future for California winegrape growers. As we gather to celebrate, we extend a special invitation for your thoughtful consideration in sponsoring this landmark event. We deeply appreciate the enduring partnerships that have shaped CAWG's journey, and your presence would undoubtedly enhance its significance.

As we gather to celebrate, we extend a special invitation for your thoughtful consideration in sponsoring this landmark event. We deeply appreciate the enduring partnerships that have shaped CAWG's journey, and your presence would undoubtedly enhance its significance.

Your sponsorship guarantees prominent recognition throughout the evening, showcasing your steadfast commitment to the industry. Please review the sponsorship opportunities below.

This celebration goes beyond a tribute to the past; it's a heartfelt acknowledgment to growers and industry members who have played and continue to play a vital role in unifying the voice of the winegrape industry.

We look forward to toasting to 50 years of growth and collaboration with you!

#### Sponsorship Opportunities

As we commemorate CAWG's remarkable 50-year journey, we invite you to be part of this historic celebration by exploring the diverse sponsorship opportunities available for our 50th-anniversary program, contributing to the continued success and growth of our association.

All sponsors receive the following benefits:

Recognition in all celebration communications

Recognition on CAWG's website

Recognition in the event program

Logo on onsite signage and in the event celebration presentation

Acknowledgment during the event celebration

\*Additional benefits are listed within each sponsorship opportunity.

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# Grasshoppers gobble crops, farm profits

*UCCE advisors share control, abatement strategies across Northern California*



*Grasshoppers, which can fly 15 miles, were flying during Tom Getts' visit to Modoc County this year. "You really see them when you dive a quad/ATV, but when you're walking the pictures are not as dramatic," said Getts.*

By Pamela S Kan-Rice

Assistant Director, News and Information Outreach

That buzzing noise in Northern California is the sound of grasshoppers chewing a path of destruction through crops and pollinator-friendly plants as they hop across an expanding area.

This is the fifth year in a row that massive numbers of grasshoppers have overrun Modoc County and "probably the worst I've seen yet," said Laura Snell, a University of California Cooperative Extension livestock and natural resource advisor in Modoc County, located in the northeastern corner of the state.

In past years, Snell has heard from farmers who have lost up to 70% of their hay crop. This year, she is hearing of grasshopper damage from farmers who grow a wider array of crops, including onions and garlic – crops that the pests eschewed in past years.

"I've had an even broader group of producers contact me about damage," Snell said. "Our local vegetable producers are being affected, decreasing farmers market and food hub products. Bee producers are not seeing good honey yields due to grasshoppers eating huge amounts of pollinator plants."

Modoc County isn't alone. Lassen, Sierra, Plumas, Siskiyou, Tehama, Butte, Placer and Nevada counties are being invaded by grasshoppers.

"The county ag commissioners are circulating a survey to get an idea of other counties that may be affected," Snell said. "Things like droughts and – I suppose, fires as well – would affect grasshopper migrations."

While scientists don't know what's causing the explosive growth of grasshopper populations, there are some contributing factors, according to Tom Getts, UC Cooperative Extension weed ecology and cropping systems advisor for Lassen, Modoc, Plumas and Sierra counties.

In the past, grasshopper outbreaks seemed to be more isolated, and the populations tended to crash after a year or two. Getts said, "For whatever reason, the population cycle does not appear to have been broken, and they continue to have high numbers."

Grasshoppers can consume 30% to 250% of their body weight per day, according to a fact sheet about grasshoppers, co-authored by Getts. While grasshopper nymphs walk, adults can fly 15 miles or more.

Getts and UC Cooperative Extension farm advisors have been giving presentations throughout the intermountain region on grasshoppers and the various control methods.

"The difficulty to controlling them is the scale and their ability to move," Getts said. "The insects need to be targeted at a small growth stage for the tactics to be most efficacious. Once they are adults, it doesn't matter what one grower does to control them if their neighbor doesn't do anything."

UCCE farm advisors in multiple counties are working on abatement options.

They recommend monitoring in April–May to control grasshoppers while they are still nymphs and susceptible to insecticides. Birds, spiders, rodents and fungi also can help keep the insects in check, but years of drought have reduced the fungi.

"The population of grasshoppers in the region have increased in size, scope and density in recent years," said Rob Wilson, a UC Cooperative Extension agronomy and pest management advisor and director of the Intermountain Research and Extension Center in Tulelake.

The massive growth and spread of the pests is a problem because 30 pounds of grasshoppers can eat as much forage as a 600-pound cow can eat per day, he explained.

Part of the challenge of controlling grasshoppers is their changing behavior. In the past, grasshoppers would go away after a couple of years, now they persist. They used to thrive in dry fields, but last year, grasshoppers migrated 10 to 20 miles into irrigated fields, Wilson said.

Wilson, who has been monitoring grasshoppers near Tule  
*See Grasshoppers next page*

# California Farm Equipment

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## Grasshoppers

*continued from previous page*

Lake since early April, said that in some fields, there were 20 to 30 nymphs per square yard. More than eight nymphs per square yard can cause economic damage.

As if the grasshoppers themselves weren't enough of a nuisance, they attract other pests, including blister beetles.

"As the grasshopper population increases, you are bound to see an increase in all of the species that eat them over time," Getts said. "Blister beetles cause terrible blisters when they get on your skin, hence the name, but they can also be problematic for livestock if they contaminate bales of hay."

Getts recommends that growers take steps to prevent grasshopper populations from building over successive years. Growers should coordinate with neighboring growers to treat their fields due to the limited longevity and efficacy of treatments on individual fields.



# Scientists Developed a Unique Approach to Conserve the Monarch Butterfly

The technique will allow repopulation of the species in the event of a rapid extinction



The monarch butterfly. USDA scientists are collaborating with stakeholders to preserve this iconic butterfly species in North America. (Photo courtesy of Getty Images)

The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus* L.) is one of the most widely popular butterfly species in North America. We are accustomed to seeing its beautiful orange wings with black-veined outlines flying in gardens and wildflower fields during the summer season.

Can you envision the summers without the monarch butterfly? Imagine the impact on the flora and ecosystem diversity of North America if this iconic species became extinct.

To ensure this imaginative but plausible scenario can be preventable, USDA scientists at the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Weed and Insect Biology Research Unit, in Fargo, North Dakota, developed the first known cryopreservation protocol for the successful long-term storage of monarch butterfly germplasm, specifically for preserving germ cells (spermatozoa or sperm cells). More importantly, the technique used in this protocol allows for the preserved samples to remain viable and highly intact post-cryopreservation.

"An important aspect of insect conservation is habitat conservation. Our research is a new approach to conservation through germplasm cryopreservation," explained Courtney Gula, a scientist at the Weed and Insect Biology Research Unit. "This study is the first to implement a technique to extract semen from the male reproductive tract in insects, a common technique used in mammals."

The viable sperm cells can one day be used with artificial insemination to bring back this species of butterflies in the event of a population loss. Although more studies are needed to develop an artificial insemination protocol using cryopreserved sperm cells from male butterflies, the study shows that this protocol is a viable method for germplasm conservation

in this and similar species. Furthermore, ARS researchers in Fargo are assessing artificial insemination techniques for female butterflies using cryopreserved sperm cells from male butterflies.

A monarch butterfly on a purple flower. The monarch butterfly. USDA scientists are collaborating with stakeholders to preserve this iconic butterfly species in North America. (Photo courtesy of Getty Images)

The monarch butterfly population was classified as an endangered species in North America by The International Union for Conservation of Nature. This was due to a rapid population decline that was observed from 1996 to

2014, followed by its stabilization over the past decade. Even though the current numbers are at a level of lesser concern, the decreasing trend has not stopped. Estimating the exact numbers is challenging due to their breeding and migratory behavior, as the monarch butterfly migrates every year long distances in a multi-generational migration that extends from Mexico to Canada.

Like other pollinator species, the monarch butterfly's survival is threatened by climate change, the loss of native plants – milkweeds – and the rapid disappearance of their habitats.

Scientists are collaborating with stakeholders to protect this species, including teaching the cryopreservation technique to researchers and breeders at the San Diego Zoo. In addition, they are working on extending the cryopreservation technique to cryopreserve spermatozoa from other endangered species, such as the Sacramento checkerspot butterfly, which is endemic to New Mexico.

Gula, Research Biologist Arun Rajamohan, and Research Leader Joseph (Joe) P. Rinehart describe the technique in a study recently published in *Scientific Reports*.

"For people who are interested in helping monarch populations, they can plant common milkweed [*Asclepias syriaca*] in their yard, as this is utilized by monarchs for egg laying and larval diet," added Gula.

Learn about USDA's efforts to conserve monarch butterflies' habitats:

[Monarch Butterflies | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

[Monarch Butterfly in North America \(usda.gov\)](#)

[Monarch Butterfly Conservation in North America \(usda.gov\)](#)



# Deion “Coach Prime” Sanders Turns to Research to Help With Exercise Recovery

The ultimate motivator adds almonds to his playbook again this season

Deion “Coach Prime” Sanders is using all his coaching tools to prepare for the college football season ahead. Those include his Prime Time swagger, electric motivational style, and his unique partnership with California Almonds, which opened his eyes to research showing almonds can help with recovery from workouts.

One of the most singular motivators in college sports, Coach Prime works to prepare his players mentally and physically, both before and after practice and games. Sanders says recovering from workouts doesn’t have to be complicated — it can be as simple as fueling up on two servings (about 46) daily.

“You gotta WANT it, then you gotta WORK it, which then places you in a position to WIN IT. And to WIN IT, you gotta take care of YOU and make sure your recovery is right,” says Coach Prime. “We are working day in and day out to DOMINATE both on the field and off, which is why I make sure almonds are a part of my life each day. You already know we WANT it, and almonds help us WORK IT, and then WIN IT. IT DON'T STOP, BABY!”

Groundbreaking research shows that most study participants who ate two servings of almonds, (vs. a calorie matched cereal bar,) four weeks prior, reported reduced fatigue and tension, increased leg and lower back strength during recovery after completing 90-minutes of exercise, and decreased muscle damage during the first day of recovery after completing the exercise.<sup>1</sup> This research, funded by the Almond Board of California, was conducted over four weeks among 64 U.S. adults ages 30 – 65 who are occasional exercisers.

Coach Prime’s partnership with California Almonds became one of the most high-profile sponsorships in college sports in 2023 and is kicking off a second year. He says often that he learned how snacking on almonds can help with exercise and exercise recovery.

Fans can catch Coach Prime and California Almonds at the start of the college football season with ads airing on national and cable TV networks like ABC, NBC, Fox, ESPN, and on social media. For more tips on how to own your prime from Coach Prime himself, visit [almonds.com](https://almonds.com) and follow California Almonds on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The Almond Board of California promotes natural, wholesome and quality almonds through leadership in strategic market development, innovative research, and accelerated adoption of industry best practices on behalf of the more than 7,600 almond farmers and processors in California, most of whom are multi-generational family operations. Established in 1950 and based in Modesto, California, the Almond Board of California is a non-profit organization that administers a grower-enacted Federal Marketing Order under the supervision of the United States Department of Agriculture.

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## UCCE offers water measurement training Sept. 13 in Salinas

By Pamela S Kan-Rice *Assistant Director, News and Information Outreach*



Water is diverted onto a crop field.  
Photo by Khaled Bali

California water rights holders are required by state law to measure and report the water they divert from surface streams. For people who wish to take the water measurements themselves, the University of California Cooperative Extension is offering in-person training to receive certification on Sept. 13 in Salinas.

At the workshop, participants can expect to

- clarify reporting requirements for ranches.
- understand what meters are appropriate for different situations.
- learn how to determine measurement equipment accuracy.
- develop an understanding of measurement weirs.
- learn how to calculate and report volume from flow data.

The training is scheduled for 1 to 5 p.m. on Sept. 13 in the UC Cooperative Extension Conference Room at 1432 Abbot Street in Salinas.

“We are limiting the number participants for the water measurement training to 30 people per session,” said Larry Forero, emeritus UC Cooperative Extension livestock and natural resources advisor. “If you need this training, please register soon.”

Pre-registration is required and the fee is \$30. To register, visit <https://surveys.ucanr.edu/survey.cfm?surveynumber=43495>. If you have questions, email Forero at [lforero@ucanr.edu](mailto:lforero@ucanr.edu) or Sara Jaimés at [sbjaimés@ucanr.edu](mailto:sbjaimés@ucanr.edu), or call (530) 224-4900.

# \$1.9 Million in Grants Available to Support Safe, Effective, Sustainable Pest Management in California

Application window now open for projects seeking funding through California Department of Pesticide Regulation's Research and Alliance Grants programs, which have awarded over \$27 million over last 20 years

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) announced that it is accepting grant applications for \$1.9 million in available funding for integrated pest management (IPM) projects that support a statewide transition to sustainable pest management. The funding is available through DPR's 2025 Research and Alliance Grants programs.

IPM is an approach to pest management that uses the least-toxic, most-effective method to solve pest problems. Sustainable pest management (SPM) builds on the existing practices of IPM to incorporate broadened considerations of human health and social equity, environmental protections, and economic viability in pest management decisions and practices through the state's urban, agricultural and wildland settings.

"Pest management is essential to protecting public health, supporting stable, healthy food production, and maintaining our infrastructure," DPR Director Julie Henderson said. "Our grants fund innovative research into a broad range of safe, sustainable pest management alternatives and the outreach, practical training and support needed for their adoption."

The 2025 Research and Alliance Grants programs are seeking projects that address one or more of the following priority topic areas:

IPM resources for underserved or disadvantaged communities or for small growing operations.

Decreasing the use of pesticides of high regulatory interest (including carcinogens, cholinesterase inhibitors, fumigants, groundwater contaminants, reproductive toxins and toxic air contaminants).

Tools, strategies and resources for IPM and sustainable pest management use in agricultural areas near school sites and urban settings.

Incorporating the sustainability pillars of broadened considerations of human health and social equity, environmental protections, and economic vitality as outlined in the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap.

In the past 20 years, DPR grant programs have awarded more than \$27 million to over 105 projects that advance the use of IPM and expand adoption of more sustainable methods for managing pests to protect people and the environment. Previous Research and Alliance Grant projects include:

Developing an IPM apprenticeship program for urban pest management professionals.

Evaluating the use of stable antimicrobial peptides for control of Pierce's disease and citrus greening disease.

Refining and promoting the use of a model IPM approach for affordable housing providers to control rodents and cockroaches.

The 2025 Research Grants Program will award projects up to three years in length that develop more sustainable pest management tools and practices to reduce the use of pesticides of high regulatory interest or otherwise decrease the impacts of pesticide use on human health and the environment. Project budgets may range from \$50,000 to \$500,000. Research Grant applications will be accepted through Sept. 19, 2024.

The 2025 Alliance Grants Program will award projects up to three years in length that promote or increase sustainable

pest management through the implementation, expansion and/or adoption of effective, proven and affordable IPM systems or practices. Project budgets may range from \$50,000 to \$400,000. Alliance Grant applications will be accepted through Nov. 21, 2024.

For more information on the Alliance Grants and Research Grants Programs, including how to apply, please visit DPR's Grants website.

For more information about the state's transition to sustainable pest management, visit DPR's website *Accelerating Sustainable Pest Management: A Roadmap for California*.

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation's mission is to protect human health and the environment. The department achieves this mission by fostering safer, sustainable pest management and operating a robust pesticide regulatory system. DPR's work includes registering all pesticides sold or used in California, conducting pre- and post-registration scientific evaluations of pesticides to assess and mitigate potential harm to human health or the environment for pesticides in the air and water, and enforcing pesticide use laws and regulations in coordination with 55 County Agriculture Commissioners and their 500 field inspectors.

DPR also conducts outreach to ensure pesticide workers, farmworkers and local communities have access to pesticide safety information. More information about DPR can be found on our website.

## Fresno State

*continued from page 4*

been amazing.

"I couldn't be more proud of the effort and energy going into this outreach effort," she said.

Besides promoting careers in agriculture, the ambassadors also get a lot out of the program, Freeman said. They improve their communication, teamwork and time management skills, which improves their prospects for future employability.

Suarez is a good example of that.

"Being a part of the ambassadors has really helped me grow professionally," Suarez said. "Managing the program has helped build my time management and management skills and I can see how it will help me pursue a career in the future. And just being able to develop relationships with other ambassadors has been a tremendous opportunity."

Suarez has an ag background and participated in 4H and FFA growing up. In high school, she raised and sold Boer goats to students to show at county fairs. She joined the ambassador program as a sophomore and became one of the agricultural scholars after entering grad school. She expects to begin student teaching this fall and to become a full-fledged ag teacher by May 2025 – and looks forward to continuing her outreach to students.

"It's very important to have ag teachers," Suarez said. "They can spark students' passion to be part of the industry, help them become more aware of what is going on in ag and how food ends up on their tables."



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AGCO's 2024

# Operator of the Year

To recognize standout application specialists, AGCO is searching for men and women across the country to take home the title of Operator of the Year. After all, we depend on them to protect countless acres of land, ensuring that food reaches every table across the nation. Each of your nominations gets us closer to recognizing the cream of the crop in this trade.

Have someone in mind who fits the bill? Pay it forward by filling out a nomination at [www.agcoaward.com](http://www.agcoaward.com)



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# KIOTI Expands Tractor Line with New RX40 Utility Tractor

The RX40 Series delivers the ultimate blend of power, comfort, and value to tackle demanding work with ease



implements, along with power steering, a tilt steering wheel, and an LED instrument panel with ergonomically placed controls for intuitive operation. The hydraulic independent PTO delivers smooth operation, while projection headlamps and work lamps provide increased visibility and safety for nighttime work. An updated streamlined hood design improves forward sightlines for better ground visibility and easier maintenance access.

## **Peak Power and Performance**

The RX40 Series redefines power and performance for tasks like hauling hay, tending to livestock, material handling, and landscaping. Equipped with KIOTI's fuel efficient, inline, water-cooled four-cylinder turbocharged

KIOTI Tractor, a division of Daedong-USA, Inc. announces the addition of the next-generation RX40 Series utility tractor. Building upon the trusted legacy of the RX20 line, this new addition offers a superior blend of power, comfort, value, and performance all in one versatile package. The RX40 Series boasts significant upgrades from its predecessor, providing operators an enhanced experience both in the field and during long work hours.

"With the RX Series, we've reimagined what a utility tractor can offer by combining advanced features with the rugged reliability KIOTI is known for. These mighty machines are built with operator needs top of mind," said Joel Hicks, KIOTI associate tractor product line manager for tractors. "The RX40 is more than an upgrade; it's an investment in not only your productivity and comfort, but also contributes to the success and sustainability of your farm."

## **Comfort and Convenience**

A standout feature of the RX40 Series is its spacious five-pillar cab, designed to prioritize operator comfort and convenience. Inside the cab, operators will enjoy incredible visibility, ample head- and legroom, and a deluxe air-ride suspension seat to minimize fatigue during extended use. The cab is also outfitted with climate control for year-round comfort and productivity, and an optional instructor seat making training a breeze.

To further enhance usability, the RX40 Series is equipped with an electronic 3-point hitch for effortless control of

CRDI diesel engine, it boasts power and torque with a large 26-gallon fuel capacity. The RX40 is available in two transmission options: power shuttle or power shuttle with creeper for seamless maneuvering. With five models ranging from 66-73 horsepower in ROPS or cab configurations, the RX40 Series reaches new heights with its top-of-class, three-point lift capacity of up to 4,327 pounds.

Effortlessly engage 4WD and lock the differential for superior traction. Change direction with the flick of a wrist using the power shuttle lever, and travel faster with speeds up to 24 mph. Additionally, manage any task with a 540/540E PTO and a factory-installed joystick for easy control.

## **Value and Versatility**

KIOTI prioritizes quality by manufacturing nearly every major component for its expansive tractor lineup in-house. This vertical integration ensures complete control over the manufacturing process from start to finish. As a result, KIOTI tractors, including those in the RX40 Series, deliver unparalleled consistency in performance and reliability.

The RX40 Series represents a new standard in utility tractors, providing ultimate comfort and reliability, and delivering unmatched performance and value to tackle the most demanding jobs with ease.

The RX40 models are available now at KIOTI dealerships across the United States and Canada. To learn more about the new RX40 Series, contact an authorized KIOTI Tractor dealer or visit [KIOTI.com](http://KIOTI.com).





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# California Agriculture Leads The Nation In Funding For Specialty Crops

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The USDA has announced funding for the 2024 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. California has received \$23.3 million out of approximately \$72.9 million awarded nationwide.

The Block Grant program provides funding to state departments of agriculture to fund projects that enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops — defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)

“We are very pleased that the USDA continues to prioritize this critical program,” said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. “Block grant funds have provided tens of millions of dollars in support for California food production over the years, and the investments help our farmers and ranchers continue to produce high-quality, nutritious fruits, nuts and vegetables.”

CDFA will fund 44 projects with the block grants. The Buy California Marketing Agreement was awarded \$2.2 million to design and implement promotions to increase awareness and consumption of California-grown specialty crops. This will be accomplished through a multi-platform digital campaign as well as retail foodservice promotions, retail trade outreach, and in-store digital promotions.

Among conservation projects funded, Sustainable Conservation, a non-profit organization, was awarded \$498,423 to conduct research on a strategy for improving on-farm recharge outcomes in the San Joaquin Valley.

Another element of this program is the Specialty Crop Block Grant Ad-

ditional Assistance Program for Historically Underrepresented Organizations, which helps to provide a process for participation for organizations that have been historically underrepresented in the overall Block Grant program. Among the five projects awarded this year, Three Sisters Gardens will receive \$244,079 to educate the next generation of farmers on the importance of specialty crops to maintain the sustainability of California’s food system. Also, Esperanza Community Farms received \$247,457 to provide technical assistance and training among small Latinx, Mexican, and Mexican-Indigenous farmers to foster economic empowerment and increase production, distribution, and consumption of healthy fruits and vegetables.

Other projects focus on increasing sales of specialty crops by promoting the unique qualities of specialty crops grown in California; increasing consumption by expanding the specialty crop consumer market; providing nutritional education for consumers; investing in training for growers, producers, and operators to address current and future challenges; and conducting research pest control and disease, and organic and sustainable production practices.

In addition, CDFA continued its partnership with the Center for Produce Safety in the evaluation and recommendation of food safety related projects. These projects represent an ongoing effort to address food safety practices and minimize outbreaks of foodborne illness with proactive research.

## 2024 California Poultry Federation Annual Conference and Meeting set for September

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The 2024 California Poultry Federation (CPF) Annual Conference and Meeting is September 12 – 13 at the Monterey Plaza Hotel in Monterey. The early registration rate has ended but there still is time to register and sponsor. Click [www.cpf.org](http://www.cpf.org) for the online Registration/Sponsorship Form. Registrants will book their hotel reservations directly with the Monterey Plaza Hotel. A link to the hotel is provided on the last page of the registration/sponsorship form or at [www.cpf.org](http://www.cpf.org).

CPF is thrilled to present exclusive sponsorship opportunities designed to elevate your visibility before, during, and after the event. Options include Diamond Club, \$3500 donation; Gold Club, \$2000 donation; and Silver Club, \$1500 donation. All Sponsors will be honored at the September 12th banquet and the September 13th breakfast.

The upcoming Conference offers an excellent opportunity for our industry, its allied members, and friends to come together and strategize for the 2025 year. It is a unique event dedicated to the California broiler, turkey, squab, duck, gamebird, and other related poultry industries. Once again, we are excited to announce a golf tournament on Wednesday, September 11th at the Pacific Grove Golf Links golf course. All tournament proceeds go to the Western Poultry and Egg Scholarship Foundation.

Every year we aim to bring in experts who can educate our members about the state of the poultry industry, as well as the regulations and

laws that could either challenge or benefit us. This year, we once again feature political media expert and writer Dan Walters, retired from the Sacramento Bee, but now a featured writer with Cal Matters. Dan will present his views on the political issues facing California and what to expect in the coming year. He will also touch on the upcoming election.

Keynote this year, and just confirmed this week, will be Jenny Lester Moffitt, USDA Undersecretary of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. Undersecretary Moffitt had served as Deputy Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Moffitt is a friend of agriculture and we are looking forward to hearing from her.

Leslee Oden, the new President of the National Turkey Federation, will discuss the NTF’s efforts to make turkey more popular and their work on finding assistance with HPAI.

National Chicken Council Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Harrison Kircher, leads an effort in Washington, DC to help the chicken industry beat back overwhelming regulations. He will review those most important to industry.

In addition to the enriching sessions, we are excited to announce that The Killing Dueling Pianos again this year will entertain us after the banquet, promising an engaging experience for all attendees.

We look forward to seeing you in Monterey!





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## John Deere Expands Its Tillage Lineup Launching Its New Coulter Chisel Series and a New and Improved Minimum Tillage In-Line Ripper

A complete primary tillage portfolio designed to help farmers improve productivity John Deere (NYSE: DE) announced the launch of a new and improved Minimum Tillage (MT) Series In-Line Ripper and Coulter Chisel (CC) Series, a first for the company, completing its tillage offerings. The new MT Series offers increased wear component longevity, enhancing dependability, while the CC Series achieves a working speed of 7 mph, providing farmers with improved productivity.

“The new CC Series has been developed to give farmers the ability to tackle primary tillage needs faster than before,” said Michael Porter, John Deere go-to-market manager for tillage equipment. “With working speeds of 7 mph, this is a highly productive primary tillage tool.”

### Innovative Tillage Solutions

Marking John Deere’s entry into the coulters chisel market, the CC Series combines robust residue management with deep soil penetration, making it an ideal tool for primary tillage. Available in five models, with 11, 13, 19, 21 or 25 standards at 15” spacing, the CC Series is a high productivity tillage tool that reduces compaction, sizes and anchors residue, while offering a broad range of field finish options to suit a variety of crop residue and soil conditions.

Available in configurations with 5, 7, 9 or 11 standards, the MT Series is designed to manage soil compactions while minimizing soil disturbance. For operators who prefer to use large row-crop tractors or four-wheel drive tractors without a 3-point hitch, the 7, 9 and 11 standard implements are available with a drawn or integral hitch option. The 5 standard is only available with an integral hitch, which is integrated into the mainframe of the implement, providing a strong and durable connection point for towing. Positioned for deep tillage operations, reaching depths of 12” to 16”, the MT Series is an advanced tillage implement that offers effective soil conditioning to support healthy plant growth and crop yields. For farmers committed to sustainable agriculture practices, the MT Series offers comprehensive features that promote reduced soil disturbance, conservation tillage methods and responsible land management.

### Increased Productivity and Efficiency

Both the CC Series and MT Series are equipped with advanced features aimed at enhancing durability and operational efficiency. The CC Series utilizes 7.5” spaced 22” straight coulters using TruSet™ down pressure standard that reaches a 1600-pound trip force to cut and size residue. The new standard allows the operator to achieve a working speed of 7 mph at a depth of 7”, increasing productivity and efficiency by allowing them to cover more acres per day. Additionally, the ProFinish™ Leveling System provides various configurations for optimal field finish, tailored to different geographical preferences and crop residues. Compared with the 2720 or 2730 Combination Ripper, the CC Series offering is more productive due to faster ground speeds and less operational input cost with less horsepower required to work the same acreage.

“We know farmers are consistently looking to lower input cost and increase their productivity and efficiency,” Porter said. “The CC Series gives them the ability to work wider and faster, which in turn allows them to tackle whatever challenge is next, sooner.”

Designed with CADEN Edge wear coating, the MT Series has an increased wear component longevity, with the life expectancy of critical parts being extended by 50%. The simplicity and uptime of the MT Series gives farmers peace of mind knowing that no matter the condition or operator, the MT Series will always perform with little need to adjust as conditions change.

“The last thing an operator wants to worry about is replacing wear parts in the middle of a season, slowing down productivity,” Porter said. “With the extended wear coating on the MT Series, it increases wear part life expectancy and reduces replacement intervals. The MT Series

delivers a highly productive and easy-to-set, minimal maintenance solution to breaking up soil compaction.”

### Precision Ag and Autonomy Ready

Both the CC Series and MT Series come designed to integrate seamlessly with precision agriculture technologies. All CC Series models and MT Series drawn models come base with TruSet Active™, allowing for in-cab setting adjustments for depth control on the go. Farmers can document their tillage work and it will be sent wirelessly to their John Deere Operations Center™ account via a JDLink® connection. Once in the John Deere Operations Center, farmers can see a TruSet Active tillage documentation map showing exactly how deep they were tilling.

For producers preparing to bring autonomy to their operation, the CC Series and 2430 chisel plow will come autonomy ready in-base from the factory. All CC Series will come equipped from the factory with a receiver mast, implement receiver harnessing and lighting package, making the simplicity of the tool a great option for early adopters of autonomy. A customer will just have to add a universal StarFire® 7500 receiver.

“By equipping the new CC Series with autonomy-ready features, John Deere is paving the way for the future of farming,” Porter said. “The CC Series, along with the 2430 chisel plow, come from the factory autonomy ready. This technology ensures that farmers can seamlessly integrate advanced autonomous solutions into their operations, increasing efficiency and productivity while reducing the need for manual adjustments and monitoring,” Porter said.

To learn more about the John Deere CC Series and MT Series, visit [JohnDeere.com](http://JohnDeere.com) or contact your local John Deere dealer.



## New Holland introduces digital technology enhancements for customers worldwide, including FieldOps™, Connectivity Included, Technology Packages and New Holland Active Implement Guidance

- New Holland FieldOps™ mobile and web platform is now available for download; allows farmers to monitor all machine and agronomic data in one place.
- Technology Packages with Connectivity Included are being introduced for new connected machines, making it easier to access high-quality precision solutions with no recurring subscription fees.

New Holland is introducing new advancements in its precision technology stack to make farming easier, more sustainable and more efficient for its customers.

FieldOps, Technology Packages, Connectivity Included and New Holland Active Implement Guidance become part of New Holland’s technology offering, all designed to help customers have a seamless experience across New Holland’s digital and connected platforms.

### FieldOps Goes Live

The new FieldOps web and mobile farm management platform, first previewed in April 2024, is now live and available for download on the iOS App Store and Android Play Store. FieldOps is a versatile farm management tool that helps farmers expand their productivity from anywhere, anytime by taking their farm operations data and details and simplifying them into one platform that’s easy to use, understand and connect.

Built to enable farmers to view and monitor all their CNH machines in one place, FieldOps provides one streamlined platform for everyone — at every skill level, crop specialty, region and size of operation. Farmers will be able to monitor every machine in real-time, remotely view in-cab displays to deliver better feedback to their operators and see layers of agronomic data — all in one platform. FieldOps is built to work the way customers want to, allowing them to do more with fewer clicks. Its new, more intuitive interface empowers users to make



more informed and quicker data-driven decisions that improve their operations every day.

Customers can download the new mobile app to view their connected machines. Existing MyPLM Connect users can easily transition to FieldOps: their data will already be there when they log in.

To make data management even easier for farmers, FieldOps has over 40 API (application programming interface) connections available globally, creating seamless integrations with third-party digital platforms. Customers get to choose how they own their data, whether they decide to import it all into FieldOps to manage or export their FieldOps data to use it on another platform. This eliminates the need for unnecessary data re-entry, making the overall digital experience easier across a farmer's entire operation.

#### New Connectivity Included and Technology Packages

"Connectivity Included" is a new feature that grants customers limitless connectivity with no recurring subscription fees on qualifying machines<sup>2</sup>. This offering provides real-time data and remote support to farmers without the hassle of managing or renewing a subscription.

This is a completely new approach to connectivity that makes data accessible by simply making it part of the machine. As a baseline feature, it expands the reach and utility of connected features, helping farmers improve their productivity and use of agronomic data as they benefit from free, easy-to-use data monitoring from their machines, fleets and fields.

Interested customers with existing machines and capable telematics modems can purchase Connectivity Included functionality for a one-time fee to benefit from simplified subscription management as well. New Holland encourages customers to contact their local New Holland dealer for more information.

Connectivity Included is a key piece of the new Technology Packages, which make access to precision technology easier. These Technology Packages, now available in select markets, are the quickest way for farmers to add precision technology features to their machines to fit their unique and individualized needs. To address the variety of customers' requirements, packages come in three different options on qualifying machines<sup>3</sup>: Value, Core and Advanced.

The Value Package is suited for customers starting to adopt precision technology and require base-level connectivity. The Core Package is the recommended option for customers seeking to gain elevated productivity, including auto guidance and in-cab single or dual displays. The Advanced Package bundles the most sophisticated precision technologies available into one package for those looking to maximize their capabilities.

Carlo Lambro, New Holland Brand President, commented: "With these advancements in our open digital ecosystem, we add new milestones in our ongoing global innovation journey to make everyday operations more efficient and productive for farmers. These projects are designed 100% around our customers and dealers, to provide data and help them increase productivity and reduce costs. We are committed to continuously improving all of our services to make New Holland's digital experience even more open and accessible."

#### New Holland Active Implement Guidance

Following the same principles of providing customers with open solutions that simplify their work, New Holland is releasing its Active Implement Guidance solution. A plug-and-play aftermarket solution, it has high implement accuracy, ideal for planting, strip-till, side-dress and windrow applications.

This technology is fully built and supported with kits for all implements and applications, regardless of implement type. It is designed to be easily installed and shares the guidance line between the tractor and the implement, giving the system a more accurate target. Use of this solution greatly reduces or stops implement drift, resulting in more reliable product placement and helping increase farmers' yield potential, while reducing crop damage and operator stress.

The aftermarket kits feature a simple single-display control setup. Customers can acquire their kit at their local New Holland dealership, plug the solution into any ISOBUS system and easily control Implement Guidance with IntelliView's intuitive user experience.

To learn more about New Holland's new digital technology solutions visit [www.newholland.com](http://www.newholland.com) or contact your local New Holland dealer.



#### Case IH Expands Product, Tech Offerings to Enhance Operator Experience and Accuracy

The addition of Soil Command factory-fit on select VT-Flex 435 and Speed-Tiller 475 and release of Case IH Active Implement Guidance kits provide farmers with more data and automation to boost productivity.

Case IH is announcing new precision tech offerings that not only help limit the physical wear and tear of manual, in-field corrections but also offer greater accuracy, consistency, and data insights to streamline operations.

For Model Year 2025, Soil Command™ will be factory-fitted on select sizes of Case IH Speed-Tiller™ 475 and VT-Flex™ 435 tillage equipment and work on any ISO-compatible tractor that is equipped to handle hydraulic needs. Additionally, with the launch of Case IH Active Implement Guidance, farmers now have access to an easy-to-use, plug-and-play system to correct implement drift while navigating planting, tillage and side-dressing.

These latest offerings — on display at Farm Progress Show 2024 from August 27-29 — are tailored to not only meet the precise demands of an operation, but the preference of the farmer.

"Technology is about more than data; it should also make farmers' lives easier," said Kendal Quandahl, precision technology segment lead at Case IH. "Whether it's fewer in-and-out cab trips to adjust tillage machinery or taking soil management to the next level with prescription tillage, we are providing flexible technology solutions to meet the individual needs of farmers and their agronomic goals."

#### Soil Command Simplifies In-Field Adjustments, Addresses Soil Concerns

Soil Command delivers flexible tillage solutions with on-the-go, in-cab, single-button controls to manage depth, track corrections and lift to full transportation height, reducing physical stress and time lost making manual tillage adjustments. Additionally, Soil Command offers customizable presets to deliver consistency within a tillage program, helping farmers achieve their preferred soil health goals.

"Soil Command is purposefully designed to simplify adjustments and increase peak performance, which is why it's a great addition to the Speed-Tiller 475 and VT-Flex 435," said Ken Lehmann, crop production segment lead at Case IH. "Regardless of operator skill level, farmers can have confidence that their tillage program will run accurately and efficiently to address any soil concerns, such as compaction, large clod sizing or erosion."

Soil Command adoption is interoperable as well as scalable, from basic functionality and compatibility with an existing fleet to upgrading one's tillage program to user-defined prescription tillage.

#### Case IH Active Implement Guidance Improves Accuracy, Yield Potential

As part of its expanded offering of accessible, easy-to-use technology solutions — both built-in and aftermarket — Case IH now offers Active Implement Guidance.

Case IH Active Implement Guidance is a plug-and-play solution that significantly reduces or eliminates implement drift, enhancing yield potential while protecting against crop damage and operator stress. The system ensures implement accuracy in a wide variety of field conditions and operating environments.

The implement guidance system shares guidance line data between the implement and the tractor, ensuring planting, strip-till, side-dress and specialty windrow applications, such as potato production, are executed with precision. The system was purposefully designed to be plug-and-play, with a simple single-display set up that is compatible with select Case IH Early Riser Planters and select 3rd party applications.

To learn more about Case IH's technology solutions, visit [caseih.com](http://caseih.com) or talk with your local Case IH dealer.

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# New Study Bolsters Existing Evidence that Walnuts Support Well-Being for Gen Z

*A Collection of Research Sheds Light on the Importance of Nut Consumption in Teen and Early Adulthood*

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Food plays a big role in everyone's identity, and those born between 1997-2012, commonly known as Gen Z, have been deemed the "foodie generation." Gen Z is driven to a particular food by varied factors, but data suggests foods that support health and well-being by providing energy, managing weight, and fostering mental health are priorities. Yet when it comes to choosing foods that support these needs, Gen Z, along with millennials and beyond, often overlook a convenient and important food group – tree nuts, including walnuts.

Nuts, including walnuts, are nutrient dense and considered a key component of many recommended dietary patterns, including the Mediterranean and vegetarian diets. They are also recommended for daily consumption in the latest U.S. Dietary Guidelines. Despite the recommendations, nuts remain under-consumed by the U.S. population, perhaps due to nuts being calorie dense, leading to potential concerns that including nuts in the diet could promote weight gain. But new research suggests people, especially Gen Z and millennials, should reconsider nuts, like walnuts.

**New Research Evaluates the Impact of Nuts on Weight Management for Gen Z and Millennials**

In a recent observational study from Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington and funded by the California Walnut Commission, researchers observed that adolescents and young adults who consumed walnuts and other nuts had a lower prevalence for obesity when compared with those who consumed no nuts.

Researchers analyzed data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) which included more than 19,000 adolescents (12 – 19 years old) and young adults (20 – 39 years old) to understand the associations between consumption of walnuts and other nuts with measures of obesity including relative fat mass (RFM), a validated tool for

estimating body fat percent and regional fat composition.

In particular, young women consuming only walnuts had a significantly lower prevalence of obesity when compared to non-nut consumers. However, this association was not found among young men, adolescent boys, or adolescent girls who consumed walnuts only. Researchers also observed that adolescent girls and young women who consumed walnuts only, or other nuts, had a significantly lower RFM compared to non-nuts consumers. Only young males in the walnut and other nut groups showed an inverse association with RFM compared to no nuts group, this was not found in adolescent boys.

These results are promising suggesting that there may be an association between the consumption of nuts, especially walnuts with a lower prevalence of obesity and lower RFM within certain populations. However, cause and effect could not be determined, and additional research is needed to support these results. Additionally, the average nut consumption in this population group was low with 76% of adolescents and 69% of young adults reporting no daily nut consumption. Furthermore, when walnuts were consumed, adolescents only ate - 2g/day while young adults had - 4g/day, which is far below the recommended intake for nuts of 2 – 3 ounces (56 – 85g) per week or 1 to 1.5 ounces (30g) per day, respectively.

"While additional research is needed, these results showed that food should not be judged based on calories alone. The addition of nuts, like walnuts, as a part of a healthy eating pattern may help lower the risk of obesity," explains Dr. Carla Miller, PhD, RD, Professor of Nutrition at Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington. "Whether it is a handful as a snack or part of a meal, even in small amounts, nuts, including walnuts, can and should be a part of a nutritious diet to support well-being."

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## CDFA Accepting Applications For California Nutrition Incentive Program

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The California Department of Food and Agriculture's Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) announces that applications are being accepted until October 11 for the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) 2025 round of competitive grant funding.

The intent of this request for proposals (RFP) is to select project proposals to combine into one unified state application for CDFA-F2F submission to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Grant Program (GusNIP). CNIP is also accepting proposals that cover the gap between current GusNIP-funded programs and the anticipated next round.

CDFA's CNIP provides competitive grant funding to orga-

nizations to provide incentives to nutrition-benefit shoppers, and also to support program operations and outreach. For this request, CDFA-F2F is seeking project proposals from qualified entities to distribute incentives at Certified Farmers' Markets, Community Supported Agriculture sites, farm stands, and brick and mortar retailers throughout California. Incentives should be available to shoppers using CalFresh benefits to purchase California-grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

Applications must be submitted by email to [cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov) no later than 5 p.m. (PDT) October 11, 2024. Further information about the grant program, including the RFP, timeline and application criteria, are available at <https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/cnip.html>.





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# Could empty lots be growing food, economic opportunity?



Eric Middleton (left) and Lindsey Pedroncelli (right). Photo by Saoimanu Sope.

versity of California Cooperative Extension in San Diego County are investigating the economic feasibility of growing high-value specialty crops in urban settings like vacant lots. The project – led by Eric Middleton, UCCE integrated pest management advisor for San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles counties – is currently in progress at The Flower Fields in Carlsbad, a seasonal attraction for locals and tourists.

Tucked away in the back of the field is the Small-Scale Urban Ag Demonstration Site where Middleton and his team established a small farm on approximately 17,000 square feet, starting fall 2023. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the farm is designed to evaluate

## UCCE scientists study feasibility of specialty crops for small urban growers

By Saoimanu Sope - Digital Communications Specialist

The vacant lots around your neighborhood could be growing fruits and vegetables and making local produce more accessible – while reducing energy needed to transport and distribute the food. Could turning those empty lots into small farms also become opportunities for economic development?

To answer this question, a team of researchers from Uni-



A full view of the Small-Scale Urban Agriculture Demonstration Site at The Flower Fields in Carlsbad. Photo by Rob Padilla

containerized production both outdoors and under high tunnels.

### Growers don't necessarily need land, just space

High tunnels, also referred to as hoop houses, are semi-permanent structures that act similarly to greenhouses in providing a controlled environment. For the experiment, Middleton will compare cost, effort and durability of two types of high tunnels: one made of steel and the other out of PVC pipes.

"We want to give interested growers information on as many options as we can," said Middleton, who explained that the project is motivated by the challenges of urban settings, including limited space and lack of arable land.

In the trial, they are growing turmeric, ginger and blueberries. The high-value crops were selected because of their potential to earn a profit. Data evaluating plant variety, soil mix, fertilizer, growth performance, yield and pest and disease pressures will be collected and reported when the project concludes in 2026.

As the crops develop in containers – blueberries in pots and turmeric and ginger in grow bags – Middleton pointed out the mobility aspect of the study, noting that growers don't necessarily need land, just space.

Whether it's a backyard or a rooftop, containerized production means easier transport, especially since vacant land doesn't always remain vacant forever and urban lots may often need soil remediation. Growing in containers solves the anticipated problem of having to relocate.





Blueberries growing in containers under a hoop house.

Photo by Saoimanu Sope

### Where to set up shop in San Diego County

Jan Gonzales, project coordinator and community education supervisor for UCCE San Diego County, is leading the effort to identify available urban land in San Diego County as well as the policies and procedures for growers to access these spaces.

Gonzales is collaborating with community members who are working on similar projects to identify space for prospective growers.

"This has been done before for different objectives and for specific areas in the region, but the information was either project-specific and not publicly available, or not easy to find," Gonzales said.

Having spoken with people associated with previous or ongoing agricultural land mapping projects, Gonzales has agreed to coordinate and facilitate an advisory work group to discuss areas of potential collaboration and develop project efficiencies. She anticipates holding the first group meeting before the end of the summer.

### A production guide to help community members



Community members tour the Small-Scale Urban Ag Demonstration Site and learn about the project's goals. Photo by Saoimanu Sope

### re-create the project

The ideal audience for a study like this is anyone who wants to grow specialty crops, according to Lindsey Pedroncelli, interim director of UC South Coast Research and Extension Center in Irvine, who worked on the project alongside Middleton when she was a staff research associate with UCCE San Diego.

"If you're a new grower or a grower who wants to diversify

your crop production, what we're learning here can be applied to you," said Pedroncelli.

Pedroncelli has been instrumental in bringing the experiment to life and documenting its step-by-step workflow thus far. The production guide, which is being created as the study unfolds, will include instructions detailing how to replicate the experiment from the ground up. Currently, it contains information on how to design your farm, the materials to buy, building structures, irrigation setup and crop management.

The most intriguing open question, whether the operation is profitable, is the driving force behind the production guide and will certainly be addressed, Pedroncelli said.



While touring the site, visitors got to taste the different blueberry varieties.

Photo by Saoimanu Sope

### Book a tour and visit the farm

When visiting the farm, you'll encounter three varieties of blueberries: Star, Snowchaser and Misty. Snowchaser has been a top producer since it was planted in January, but the variety is known to be an early season producer.

Using only one variety of each, the turmeric and ginger were planted in late March-early April. With some unanticipated cold weather in San Diego County, both crops struggled when transitioning out of dormancy, leading to very slow progress, which the team is still navigating today.

Visually, Middleton and his team have noticed differences between the crops growing under the high tunnels versus those grown outdoors, although the data has not been analyzed to confirm or explain notable differences.

Attempting to demonstrate how to profitably grow high-value crops in urban settings using limited space and resources, Pedroncelli said she hopes this study will also encourage people to grow culturally significant crops for their communities.

To tour the Small-Scale Urban Ag Demonstration Site at The Flower Fields in Carlsbad, email Eric Middleton at [egmiddleton@ucanr.edu](mailto:egmiddleton@ucanr.edu) with "Urban Agriculture Demonstration Site Tour" in the subject line.

To learn more about the project and its progress, visit [https://ucanr.edu/sites/socalIPM/Small\\_Scale\\_Urban\\_Agriculture\\_Project/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/socalIPM/Small_Scale_Urban_Agriculture_Project/).

# Scientists Discover Strategically Applied Livestock Grazing Can Benefit Sagebrush Communities



Cow grazing a sagebrush community with low levels of invasive annual grass invasion during the growing season in eastern Oregon. (Photo courtesy of Kirk Davies)

While a cow grazing in a field isn't typically remarkable, United States Department of Agriculture scientists have identified potential ecological benefits of strategically applied livestock grazing in sagebrush communities across U.S. western rangelands.

As recently published in the scientific journal *Ecosphere*, the collaborative research effort among Agricultural Research Service (ARS) rangeland scientists at Burns, Oregon, and Fort Collins, Colorado, challenged the outdated dogma that livestock grazing in the sagebrush steppe always negatively impacts these ecosystems and, in fact, can convey desirable outcomes, particularly in regard to limiting both wildfire risk and invasive annual grasses.

In addressing these ecological challenges, ARS scientists discovered that strategically applying livestock grazing prior to the occurrence of climate-induced wildfires can modify sagebrush steppe characteristics in ways that decrease fire probability and severity in the communities, promote biodiversity while reducing postfire annual grass invasion, fire-induced loss of native bunchgrasses, and fire damage to soil biocrusts, the collection of bacteria, fungi and mosses on the soil surface.

A brown cow grazing sagebrush. Cow grazing a sagebrush community with low levels of invasive annual grass invasion during the growing season in eastern Oregon. (Photo courtesy of Kirk Davies)

The ARS team compared moderately grazed and ungrazed sagebrush steppe and observed the grazing induced shorter flame lengths, slower rates of fire spread, and smaller burning fronts.

Similarly, strategic grazing in annual grass-dominated rangelands reduced flame length and rate of spread — modifications that resulted in safer and more effective fire suppression. Still another benefit of modified fire characteristics, the scientists reported, is a decrease in the area burned and overall mosaic of burned and unburned patches.

Grazing by non-native livestock such as sheep, cattle and horses dates back to the mid-to-late 1800s by Europeans, these early practices were not ecologically sustainable and led to widespread overuse and degradation to include loss of perennial grasses and forbs, reduced biodiversity, erosion, overabundant unpalatable species, and non-native plant

invasions.

A fuel break in an invasive annual grass-dominated sagebrush steppe created with strategically applied grazing in an invasive annual grass-dominated sagebrush steppe in southeastern Oregon. (Photo courtesy of Kirk Davies)

"There were concerns about the negative consequences of non-native livestock grazing in sagebrush communities, especially since these communities are experiencing unprecedented threats from invasive annual grasses, altered fire regimes, and climate change," said Kirk Davies, ARS rangeland scientist. "But strategically applied grazing can spur desirable social-ecological outcomes such as reduced non-native annual grass invasion, decreased wildfire probability and spread, reduced fire suppression cost, and prevent undesirable ecological transformation post-fire."

Davies' findings also indicated that grazing can modify competitive relationships in introduced bunchgrass seeding to favor native species recruitment. This can be particularly valuable for reestablishing sagebrush, a critical shrub for many native wildlife species.

With careful attention to the timing, duration, frequency, and intensity of use needed to meet vegetation objectives, strategic grazing has the potential to reduce the detrimental impacts of invasive annual grasses, promote native species in introduced grasslands, and encourage native shrub recovery.

"Recognizing livestock grazing as a tool that can achieve desired outcomes could improve our ability to achieve meaningful rangeland management outcomes in sagebrush and likely other rangeland communities," Davies said.





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12: 2nd Annual Innovation Workshop & State of the Industry at Fresno State. Registration: [www.cdic.net](http://www.cdic.net)

## OCTOBER 2024

8-9: Hispanic, Italian and Mediterranean Cheeses. This practical course will feature international cheese varieties and will take place at the Dairy Products Technology Center, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Registration: <https://dairy.calpoly.edu/short-course-symposia>

## NOVEMBER 2024

14-17: American Agri-Women 2024 50th National Convention. Come celebrate our 50th anniversary in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin! Details coming soon, stay tuned! For information visit: [www.americanagriwomen.org/events](http://www.americanagriwomen.org/events)

21: CAWG's 50th Anniversary Celebration. A Half-Century of Advocacy and Achievement. We invite you to join us in commemorating this extraordinary milestone. The celebration will begin with a social reception, featuring wines from throughout the Golden State, followed by a plated dinner and program. The evening promises to be filled with camaraderie, reflection, and celebration as we honor the past, revel in the present, and collectively envision a promising future for California winegrape growers. As we gather to celebrate, we extend a special invitation for your thoughtful consideration in sponsoring this landmark event. We deeply appreciate the enduring partnerships that have shaped CAWG's journey, and your presence would undoubtedly enhance its significance. Kimpton Sawyer Hotel, Sacramento, CA. EVENT CONTACT: Jenny Devine | [jenny@cawg.org](mailto:jenny@cawg.org) | 916.432.0133

## DECEMBER 2024

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### Farm Shows

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.....www.antiquefarmshow.org

Colusa Farm Show  
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World Ag Expo  
.....www.worldagexpo.org

### Federal Government

Army Corps of Engineers  
.....www.wetland.usace.mil/

Bureau of Land Management  
.....www.blm.gov

Farm Service Agency  
.....www.fsa.usda.gov

National Weather Service  
.....www.nimbo.wrh.noaa.gov

### Organizations

Almond Board of California  
.....www.almonds.com

California Assn. of Winegrape Growers  
.....www.cawg.org

California Cattlemen's Association  
.....www.calcattlemen.org

California Dairy Research Foundation  
.....www.cdrf.org

California Poultry Federation  
.....www.cpfif.org

California Raisins  
.....www.calraisins.org

California Rangeland Trust  
.....www.rangelandtrust.org

California Strawberries  
.....www.californiastrawberries.com

Far West Equipment Dealers Association  
.....www.fweda.com

### Real Estate

Schuil & Associates  
.....www.schuil.com

Valley Real Estate  
.....www.valleyre.net

### State Government

Department of Agriculture  
.....www.usda.gov

Department of Conservation  
.....www.consrv.ca.gov

Department of Food and Agriculture  
.....www.cdfa.ca.gov

Department of Pesticide Regulation  
.....www.cdpr.ca.gov

Department of Water Resources  
.....www.dwr.water.ca.gov

### Universities

Berkeley Agriculture and Resource Dept.....are.berkeley.edu

Davis Agriculture Department  
.....www.agecon.ucdavis.edu

### Weather

The Weather Channel  
.....https://weather.com

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## West Coast Smoke Exposure Task Force Launches Comprehensive Website for Wine Industry

The West Coast Smoke Exposure Task Force (WCSETF) is excited to announce the launch of its new website – [www.wcsetf.org](http://www.wcsetf.org). This user-friendly website is designed to feature comprehensive smoke exposure resources to assist growers, winemakers, and others serving the wine and winegrape sector.

The website offers a centralized hub of information from WCSETF, universities, government agencies, and industry groups, including:

- Frequently asked questions
- Best practices
- Labs
- Contracts
- Crop insurance
- Wildfire preparedness
- Informational videos
- University resources
- Research
- News and events



*Photo by Jessica Griffiths*

Posted on the website are updated best practices that include grape sampling protocol for growers as well as micro-fermentation and nano-scale fermentation protocols.

“The goal with this website is to consolidate and share as much information as possible regarding smoke exposure,” said

Natalie Collins, chair of the WCSETF Steering Committee and president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers. “Instead of having to search multiple websites for information, the industry can now use the WCSETF website as a convenient, go-to resource. The site is a work in progress and will continue to be updated with additional content.”

The WCSETF originated from discussions in early 2019 between grower leaders and industry group representatives from California, Oregon and Washington. Since then, the task force has convened educational webinars – including its annual Smoke Summit – and produced reference materials to assist growers and winemakers with certain challenges associated with smoke-exposed wine grapes. WCSETF

Steering Committee members include wine grape industry organizations from California, Oregon and Washington. They work in partnership with scientists from the University of California, Davis, Oregon State University, Washington State University and the USDA’s Agricultural Research Service (ARS). Other task force committees focus on industry specific needs, such as research and communications, and include members in the West Coast wine industry.

The website is supported by a grant from USDA ARS through the Washington Wine Industry Foundation.

## CDFA Now Accepting Proposals For Grant Program To Benefit Historically Under Represented Organizations

CDFA is now accepting proposals for the 2025 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program’s (SCBGP) Additional Assistance for Historically Underrepresented Organizations (Additional Assistance) Program. This program is offered in conjunction with the conventional SCBGP.

The intent of this program is to provide a process for participation for organizations that have been historically underrepresented in the Block Grant process.

Eligibility for the Additional Assistance Program includes non-profit organizations, Tribal governments and K-12 school districts that have not previously received SCBGP funding, do not have expertise with grant writing, and that work directly in either supporting underserved and beginning farmers or providing access to specialty crops in underserved communities.

Please note that organizations that have submitted Con-

cept Proposals for the 2025 SCBGP through the Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool are not eligible to apply.

Awards will range from \$100,000 to \$250,000, and projects may last up to two years and eight months.

CDFA will conduct a webinar on the Additional Assistance Program, and more detailed information can be found in the 2025 SCBGP Additional Assistance Program Request for Concept Proposals

Applicants interested in the Additional Assistance Program should contact [grants@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:grants@cdfa.ca.gov) as soon as possible to express interest and begin receiving individual technical assistance via email, phone call, or video call.

Applications are due via email to [grants@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:grants@cdfa.ca.gov) by Friday, September 27, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. PT and can be obtained by visiting CDFA’s SCBGP website or by emailing [grants@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:grants@cdfa.ca.gov).

# UC seeks toddler volunteers for milk study

Researchers to study whether whole or low-fat milk is best for toddlers

By Pamela S Kan-Rice

Assistant Director, News and Information Outreach

San Francisco Bay Area toddlers who drink cow's milk are being sought to participate in a 12-month study by UC Nutrition Policy Institute, a part of University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. Milk will be provided for free to participants.

Milk provides children with calcium, protein and vitamin D, which are essential for health and brain development. In the U.S., the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children switch from whole milk to low-fat or nonfat milk after age 2 to reduce their intake of saturated fat and calories.

"The purpose of this UC study is to see how the type of milk toddlers drink affects their health, growth and development," said Cassandra Bacon, NPI project policy analyst.

Researchers with the Nutrition Policy Institute are recruiting children ages 23 to 30 months old. The 625 toddlers will be randomly assigned to drink either whole fat or 1% fat milk starting at age 2. The scientists will assess body fat, diet, health and developmental outcomes.

"We will follow each participant for one year, collecting baseline and follow-up data," said Ryan Williams, a NPI project policy analyst and registered dietitian who is involved in the research.

For 12 months, the scientists will measure each child's height, weight, waist and head circumference. They will ask the parents what else the toddlers eat. They also will ask parents to check their child's blood profile – lipids, cholesterol, insulin resistance and vitamin D – cognitive development and gut

microbiome diversity.

Benefits to participants

The assigned milk type will be delivered to participants free of charge via a grocery delivery service. Participating parents will receive advice from a registered dietitian to support healthy milk consumption as part of a balanced diet. The Nutrition Policy Institute also will send the parents monthly newsletters with general health tips. Participants also may earn up to \$275 in gift cards by completing the study.

Requirements to participate

• Participants for the milk study must meet these requirements:

• Child must be 23 to 30 months old and have public or private medical insurance

• Child's parent/legal guardian must be 18 years or older

• Child must live with the participating parent/legal guardian in the San Francisco Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Clara, San Francisco or San Mateo counties)

• Child's parent or guardian must speak English

Children are ineligible for the study if they are:

- a WIC participant
- lactose intolerant
- allergic to milk protein

Lorrene Ritchie, NPI director and registered dietitian, and Anisha Patel, pediatrician at Stanford Medicine Children's Health and professor in the Division of General Pediatrics at Stanford University, are the principal investigators for the study.

For more information about the research and to sign up for the study, visit <https://npi.ucanr.edu/milk>.

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