



California Farm Equipment Magazine

MARCH 2024 Volume 43 • Number 3

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USDA Develops Cold-Hardiness Kiwifruit for Immediate Release

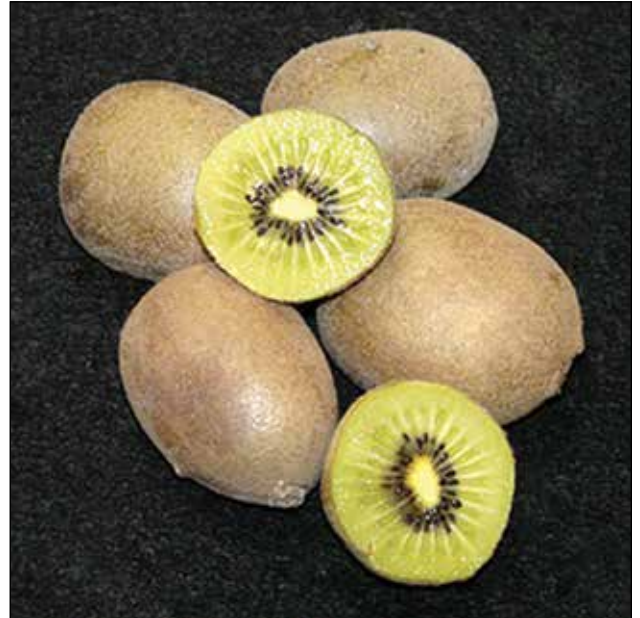
Kiwifruit and their tangy green flesh are routinely purchased and devoured throughout the year by people across the nation. This is no surprise. Kiwis are high in Vitamin C, dietary fiber, and potassium. The subtropical fruit is also a favorite of many southern U.S. producers since the delicious fruit is traditionally grown in warmer climates. California produces the vast majority of kiwis that are sold in our local grocery stores, but due to recent research advancements

from U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists, this may no longer be the case.

This was not a snap decision. The research actually began in 1995 when scientists from the Agricultural Research Service's Appalachian Fruit Research Service (AFRS) planted second-generation seedlings that originated in Rome, Italy. Only two vines survived the cold winter temperatures between 1995 and 2015, with a record low temperature during that period of -5.8 F. Of those two vines, 'Tango' (female) and 'Hombre' (male) were planted and evaluated in the AFRS' orchards before a new crop proved that these particular cultivars could grow and thrive in traditional Mid-Atlantic and North-eastern winter climates.

In a recently published study, researchers noted that both vines grew vigorously, and received little pruning before bearing fruit. There was also no need for supplemental irrigation, fertilizer, pesticides, or a warm climate for growth.

"This cultivar isn't currently found in the grocery store," said



*Kiwis grown at the Appalachian Fruit Research Station.
(Photo by Mark Demuth, ARS)*

Research Biologist Scientist Chris Dardick. "The flesh and texture are very similar to the kiwifruit that people already enjoy and so is the flavor. It's easy to grow, extremely pest and disease resistant, and readily available for use by producers and nurseries in colder climate conditions."

Tango's fruit yields high quality in terms of size and soluble solids and are comparable to the commercial A. deliciosa cultivar Hayward. It can also remain in cold storage for extended periods of time.

The male pollinizer 'Hombre' is not patented and can be publicly made available upon request. The female kiwi 'Tango' is patented by the USDA-ARS and can be distributed to nurseries or producers once they obtain a licensing agreement. Both plants ('Hombre' and 'Tango') are essential to produce the kiwifruit. Limited quantities of budwood and/or plants from 'Tango' and 'Hombre' are also available upon request for evaluation. For more information, please contact AFRS@usda.gov.

New Research: Eating Almonds Can Aid in Post-Exercise Recovery

Almonds reduced muscle soreness and improved muscle performance during intensive exercise in mildly overweight occasional exercisers

A new study found that eating almonds reduced some feelings of muscle soreness during exercise recovery which translated to improved muscle performance during a vertical jump challenge. These results expand on prior research¹ which looked at how almonds affect muscle recovery after exercise.

In the research study², published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* and funded by the Almond Board of California, 25 mildly overweight middle-aged men and women performed a 30-minute downhill treadmill run test after eight weeks of consuming 57 g (two ounces) of whole raw almonds daily. The control group ate a calorie-matched (86 g/three ounces) snack of unsalted pretzels. The treadmill test was designed to cause muscle damage to see how almonds affected muscle recovery.

Researchers measured participants' muscle function; blood markers of muscle damage and inflammation; and perceived muscle soreness using a visual scale, before, during and at three timepoints after the treadmill test. They also measured markers of cardiometabolic health, body composition, and psycho-social assessments of mood, appetite, and well-being at baseline and after eight weeks of almond snacking.

The results: Study participants who ate almonds experienced an almost 25 percent reduction in muscle soreness when performing an explosive power exercise (a vertical jump challenge) over the cumulative 72-hour exercise recovery period. The perceived reduction in soreness translated to better muscle performance during the vertical jump challenge in the almond group versus the control. No significant differences were observed in measures of cardiometabolic health, muscle damage/inflammation, mood state, or appetite for the almond group or the control group.

This study included non-smoking participants who were mildly overweight and occasionally physically active but were not trained athletes. A limitation of this study is that the results are not generalizable to populations with other demographic and health characteristics.

"Our study suggests that snacking on almonds can be recommended to occasional exercisers as a go-to food to help fitness recovery after strenuous exercise," said Dr. Oliver C. Witard, Senior Lecturer in Exercise Metabolism and Nutrition at Kings College London. "Almonds are naturally nutritious with protein, good fats and the antioxidant vitamin E. They can be considered an ideal food for fitness." One serving of almonds (28 g) has 4 g of plant protein, 13 g of good unsaturated fat and only 1 g of saturated fat.

Dr. Witard's study joins previous research which examined how regular almond snacking affected exercise

recovery for healthy adults who exercise occasionally.

"Sticking to an exercise routine is not easy, so finding dietary strategies to help people be – and stay – physically active is important for public health. Our preliminary findings are encouraging in showing that almond snacking may promote adherence to new training programs among people who are unaccustomed to exercise," said Witard.

One ounce (28 g) of almonds provides 4 g of fiber and 15 essential nutrients, including 77 mg magnesium (18.3% DV), 210 mg potassium (4% DV), and 7.27 mg vitamin E (50% DV), making them a great snack for healthy active lifestyles.

Study Findings At-a-Glance

Daily almond snacking alleviates perceived muscle soreness and improves muscle performance

25 mildly overweight middle-aged, physically active but untrained men and women performed a 30-minute downhill treadmill run test after eight-weeks of consuming either 57 g/day (two ounces) of whole raw almonds or a calorie-matched (86 g/day) carb snack of unsalted pretzels (control).

Researchers measured participants' perceived muscle soreness, muscle function (measured via a muscle contraction test and a vertical jump physical task) and blood markers of muscle damage/inflammation (creatinine kinase and c-reactive protein) before and at 3 timepoints (24, 48 and 72 hours) after the treadmill run.

Over the cumulative 72-hour period after the downhill treadmill run, muscle soreness measured during the vertical jump physical task (an explosive power exercise) was reduced by ~24% in the almond group versus the control, which translated to an improvement in vertical jump performance during exercise recovery. No significant differences were observed in measures of muscle soreness and performance during the muscle contraction tests.

Researchers also measured markers of cardiometabolic health (total cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL-cholesterol, and LDL-cholesterol), body composition and psycho-social assessments of mood, appetite and well-being at baseline and after 8 weeks of almond snacking. No significant differences were observed in measures of cardiometabolic health, muscle damage/inflammation, mood state, or appetite for the almond group or the control group.

Study Conclusion: Snacking on almonds for eight weeks reduced perceived feelings of muscle soreness during recovery from muscle-damaging exercise, resulting in better maintenance of muscle functional capacity. This study suggests that almonds are a functional food snack to improve exercise tolerance in mildly overweight, middle-aged adults.



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Reminder: Deadline to Apply for Historic Conservation Funding Fast Approaching



Home News Reminder: Deadline to Apply for Historic Conservation Funding Fast Approaching

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California reminds interested farmers and ranchers that they have until March 22, 2024, to apply for the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

"I want to encourage all producers in California to benefit from NRCS California's historic investment in CSP this Fiscal Year," said NRCS California State Conservationist Carlos Suarez. "With the addition of the Inflation Reduction Act, we will be investing a record breaking \$18 million in federal funding to help producers address their unique resources concerns and help them achieve their stewardship goals through this popular program.

CSP provides producers an opportunity to earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities integrated within their agricultural operations. CSP enhancements like cover crops, ecologically-based pest management, and buffer strips help producers improve soil health while protecting water quality. Other CSP activities help sustain and increase pollinator and beneficial insect habitat in harmony with agriculture production on their land.

Technical Assistance

NRCS offers conservation technical assistance at no cost to give produc-

ers personalized advice and information, based on the latest science and research, to help them make informed decisions. If a producer chooses to take the next step towards improving their operations, NRCS staff can work with them to develop a free, personalized conservation plan, with conservation practices that can help them reach their agricultural production and conservation goals.

The voluntary conservation plan defines and explains existing resources in a simple, easy to understand manner. Typically, the plan will include land use maps, soils information, inventory of resources, engineering notes, and other supporting information. One benefit to landowners who work with an NRCS professional conservationist to develop a plan is an increased potential for participating in financial assistance programs and is a good first step in the overall process.

Historically Underserved Producer Benefits

Special provisions are also available for historically underserved producers. NRCS sets aside CSP funds for historically underserved producers.

NRCS has provided leadership in a partnership effort to help America's private landowners and managers conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources since 1935.

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New Holland North America Embraces Yellow For Commercial Hay and Forage Equipment

It's a new day for New Holland North America's iconic hay and forage lineup. As part of a continued restyling initiative across its product line, New Holland announces the introduction of bold yellow styling for commercial hay and forage equipment, beginning with late model year 2024 equipment.

Throughout 2024, New Holland will evolve toward a unified brand image and global identity with the transition of its North America hay and forage equipment styling to a striking yellow. This update matches the styling of New Holland haytools across the globe. The Pro-Belt™ round baler was the first to debut its yellow styling during National Cattlemen's Beef Association's CattleCon 2024. New Holland announces its line of Speedrower® PLUS self-propelled windrowers and BigBaler PLUS and BigBaler High Density large square balers will make the change to yellow styling later this year.

"As New Holland looks forward to its next chapter in hay and forage excellence, we embrace this radiant new yellow that symbolizes more than just a paint color change," states Melissa Kelly, livestock and dairy segment lead for New Holland. "It embodies a bright evolution, where tradition meets modernity, and continued success for generations to come."

A New Day

Yellow styling is not unfamiliar to New Holland customers. It's a visual identity shared by legacy harvesting equipment, including FR Forage Cruisers and CRTwin Rotor® combines.

Yellow, with its sleek and bright appearance, serves as a beacon for the technological advancements and innovations to come for New Holland hay and forage equipment. The vivid palette also symbolizes a dedicated effort to illuminate a brighter future for farmers, ranchers and growers worldwide.

Model year 2024 Speedrower PLUS self-propelled windrowers and BigBalers with the new yellow are expected to arrive at New Holland dealerships across North America in summer 2024. Despite the new paint color change, North American model numbers will remain unchanged, ensuring a seamless transition for customers.

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Welcome to the quietest cab New Holland has ever built — the new Horizon™ Ultra cab on the new T7 Heavy Duty with PLM Intelligence™. At just 66 dBA, the robotically welded Horizon Ultra cab dramatically reduces noise, so you can work in exceptionally more comfort. The cab is also isolated from the T7 driveline, which when combined with the standard Terraglide™ front axle suspension and Comfort Ride™ cab suspension, creates an even quieter, low-vibration experience.

The new T7 Heavy Duty brings the power of intelligence to your operation. See one today or visit newholland.com to learn more.






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Mid-Year Meeting

Each year in March/April, American Agri-Women hosts a Mid-Year Meeting for those interested in discussing current agricultural issues and policies and voting to create AAW's Position Statements for that upcoming year, which is the basis for our AAW Legislative Fly-In in June of each year.

For More Information Visit:
www.americanagriwomen.org/events

Farmers, Ranchers Now Can Make USDA Farm Loan Payments Online

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that most farm loan borrowers will be able to make payments to their direct loans online through the Pay My Loan feature on farmers.gov that started in early February. Pay My Loan is part of a broader effort by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) to streamline its processes, especially for producers who may have limited time during the planting or harvest seasons to visit a local FSA office; modernize and improve customer service; provide additional customer self-service tools; and expand credit access to assist more producers.

"Farmers and ranchers have responded to some difficult challenges over the last few years and their time is a precious commodity," said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small. "Having the option to conduct business online is essential, and the Pay My Loan feature allows customers to take care of business seamlessly. The online payment feature is just one of many ways the Farm Service Agency is modernizing its Farm Loan Programs and enhancing the customer experience for this incredibly hardworking group."

On average, local USDA Service Centers process more than 225,000 farm loan payments each year. Pay My Loan gives most borrowers an online repayment option and relieves them from needing to call, mail, or visit a Service Center to pay their loan installment. Farm loan payments can now be made at the borrower's convenience, on their schedule and outside of FSA office hours.

Pay My Loan also provides time savings for FSA's farm loan

employees by minimizing manual payment processing activities. This new service for producers means that farm loan employees will have more time to focus on reviewing and processing new loans or servicing requests.

The Pay My Loan feature can be accessed at farmers.gov/loans. To use the payment feature, producers must establish a USDA customer account and a USDA Level 2 eAuthentication ("eAuth") account or a Login.gov account. This initial release only allows individuals with loans to make online payments. For now, borrowers with jointly payable checks will need to continue to make loan payments through their local office.

FSA has a significant initiative underway to streamline and automate the Farm Loan Program customer-facing business process. For the over 26,000 producers who submit a direct loan application annually, FSA has made various improvements including:

- The Online Loan Application, an interactive, guided application that is paperless and provides helpful features including an electronic signature option, the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns, complete a balance sheet, and build a farm operating plan.
- The Loan Assistance Tool that provides customers with an interactive online, step-by-step guide to identifying the direct loan products that may be a fit for their business needs and to understanding the application process.
- A simplified direct loan paper application, which reduced loan applications by more than half, from 29 pages to 13

Interested Agricultural Operators Are Encouraged to Apply for NRCS' Organic Assistance



The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in California is encouraging farmers and ranchers to participate in the Organic Transition Initiative (OTI), to support agricultural producers interested in transitioning to organic. Producers beginning or in the process of transitioning to organic certification are encouraged to apply at their local NRCS Service Center by February 16, 2024.

"California is the country's number one organic-growing state, and NRCS is here to assist you transition to organic if it

meets your operation's goals," said NRCS California State Conservationist Carlos Suarez. "The Organic Transition Initiative can also assist you in gaining organic knowledge through education and mentoring. Right now, it's a great time to apply for conservation assistance as we have additional funding for our popular programs from the Inflation Reduction Act."

NRCS and Organic Transition Initiative

NRCS introduced a new organic management conservation practice in fiscal year 2023 as part of the initiative. It allows flexibility for producers to get the assistance and education they need, such as attending workshops or requesting help from experts or mentors. It also supports organic conservation activities and practices required for organic certification and may provide foregone income reimbursement for dips in production during the transition period. Higher payment rates and other options are available for underserved producers including socially disadvantaged, beginning, veteran and limited resource farmers and ranchers.

In 2023, NRCS California invested \$880,000 to help participating farmers transition their operations.

For more information, visit farmers.gov/organic.

Rising Labor Costs Present Challenges for Farmers. FieldClock is Here to Help.

From an increasing minimum wage, changes to AEWR and H-2A laws, and stricter overtime regulations, the cost of labor has never been more expensive for farmers. Now, it's more important than ever for farmers to manage their labor costs efficiently and cost-effectively.

Enter FieldClock. FieldClock saves farmers time and money by reducing the administrative burden of paper time cards. Using unique employee QR badges and geofenced job sites, our apps track farm labor and production data instantly and accurately while reducing the risk of time loss in the field. FieldClock clients report reducing their time spent on payroll by 50 percent or more by adopting the farm labor management software.

FieldClock's Vice President of Revenue Andrew Stankiewicz says, "Our clients save an average of 3-5% of their total labor cost when digitizing their farm labor management. FieldClock saves administrative hours, reduces human error, and provides a comprehensive, accurate view of real-time labor so farmers can make faster, data-driven decisions."

Farmers and Farm Management professionals will have the opportunity to see FieldClock firsthand at the World Ag Expo 2024 in Tulare, CA. Representatives will be on hand to demo how the app is helping farmers save time and money throughout the U.S., including a brand-new payroll solution built specifically for small farms!

World Ag Expo visitors can check FieldClock out at Booth 1405. Visitors at the FieldClock booth could walk away with prizes, new customer incentives, important labor law updates, and an opportunity to take home a free labor law poster.

Stankiewicz adds, "We look forward to being back in Tulare this year and showing everyone at the World Ag Expo all the new and enhanced features we've been working on!"

For more information about FieldClock at the World Ag Expo or to schedule a custom demo during the show, contact Andrew Stankiewicz at 559-777-7317 or andrew@fieldclock.com.



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SURVING THE CENTRAL VALLEY AND THE CENTRAL COAST

Russell Taylor of Live Earth Products Receives the Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Conservationist of the Year Award

Russell Taylor received the 2023 Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Conservationist of the Year Award on December 5, 2023 in a ceremony in Washington, D.C., hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Conservationist of the Year Award recognizes a certified crop adviser who has demonstrated leadership in conservation within the agriculture industry.

According to Certified Crop Adviser, a program of the American Society of Agronomy, CCAs are partners with farmers on the front lines of critical decisions in agriculture- the risks are high, and the pressure has increased- with tight margins, new technology, pest concerns, and consumer pushes for sustainability in agricultural supply chains. The CCA program aims to enable agriculture as an industry to meet its environmental stewardship objective.

Russell Taylor is the Vice President of Live Earth Products, a company that mines and manufactures humic and fulvic acid-based products. Taylor's journey with the family-owned mine in Emery, Utah, began at the young age of nine, marking the start of a lifelong commitment to the humic industry. His growth has paralleled that of the business, and he has extended his influence beyond the company by serving as President of the Humic Products Trade Association for ten years, aiding the entire humic substance industry. His academic achievements include degrees in agriculture and agribusiness, complemented by an MBA. To Russell, conservation is the future of successful agriculture. He has worked tirelessly to advocate for the use of humates to reduce fertilizer loss and add organic matter to the soil to improve conservation. He also regularly advocates for changes in state and federal rules to open doors for farmers to access products beyond pesticides and fertilizers, which build soil health and aid crop production.

"I'd like to express my deepest gratitude for the honor of receiving this award," says Taylor. "The human population is anticipated to double in the next 30 years. Growing food and feeding the human population can only be done by utilizing products that help to produce more food using the same amount of resources. Our company is focused on improving soils to help make



more efficient use of applied water and fertilizer. This includes increasing access to innovative products that enhance soil health and conserve agricultural inputs. I'm excited to continue my commitment to conservation to pursue a greener and more sustainable tomorrow."

"Russell and I first met in 2007. I've witnessed him carrying an impressive leadership role in the humic products industry for more than a decade. He is equally conversant discussing humic product activity in crop production, in animal farming, and the legal restrictions surrounding both," says Dr. Dan Oik, USDA-ARS in Ames, IA. "Russell's work has elevated industry-wide interest in humic products and other biostimulants."

The award is supported by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Agricultural Retailers Association, American Society of Agronomy, CropLife America, Crop Science Society of America, National Association of Conservation Districts, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, Soil Science Society of America, and The Fertilizer Institute and administered by The American Society of Agronomy.

For media inquiries, contact Christina Madrid at Christie & Co, www.christieand.co, by phone (818) 621-1897 and/or email christina@christieand.co.



World Ag Expo highlighted purposeful solutions for West Coast markets



Case IH introduced the new tractor models for specialty crop producers that will integrate seamlessly into orchard operations of any size, delivering improved operator comfort, minimizing crop damage and enhancing productivity. Featured new products and options at World Ag Expo included:

New Farmall CL Series Tractors

The new Case IH Farmall CL series tractors provide unmatched flexibility and stability. These tractors feature a wider rear axle, guaranteeing stability on hills and enabling seamless navigation through orchards and minimizing crop damage. Farmall CL series tractors also come with versatile options for upgrading hydraulic pumps and optimizing performance with adaptable transmissions, ensuring customizable functionality that can be tailored to any operation.

“Operators spend all day in these machines. We are continuously looking for ways to make them even more comfortable, and more capable of ensuring peak productivity in any operation,” says Teri Zanella, Farmall product manager at Case IH. “We want to provide equipment that protects against loss and increases efficiencies in the operation.”

New Upgrades for Farmall Utility A Tractors

A variety of new upgrade options are now available for Farmall A utility tractors, which will enhance fuel capacity and overall productivity in almond orchards. The benefits of these upgrades include:

Robust protection: Additional factory-fitted protections, component guards and three rear hydraulic remotes with flow control ensure producers and their equipment are better protected from branches, limbs and tree nuts.

Longer runtimes: Increased fuel tank capacity provides an 8-12 hour runtime before refueling, resulting in improved productivity.

Greater stability: A new front ballast provides additional weight for greater balance and a smoother ride.

Seamless compatibility: A frame configuration designed for orchard landscapes, a variety of tire options, and seamless compatibility with the existing loader.

Cost-Effective Flexibility with Farmall 140A Pro

A high-capacity, rear 3-point hitch is now available on the Farmall 140A Pro. This new option adds flexibility, providing an efficient and cost-effective solution for handling heavy equipment in produce production.

To learn more about these new offerings and more from Case IH, visit www.caseih.com.

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2022 Census of Agriculture data released

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) announced the results of the 2022 Census of Agriculture, spanning more than 6 million data points about America's farms and ranches and the people who operate them down to the county level. The information collected directly from producers shows a continued decline in the total number of U.S. farms. However, the data also show a rise in the number of new and beginning (operating 10 or fewer years on any farm) as well as young (under the age of 35) producers. The full Census of Agriculture report as well as publication dates for additional ag census data products can be found at nass.usda.gov/AgCensus. Ag census data can also be found in NASS's searchable online database, Quick Stats.

"We are pleased to provide updated Census of Agriculture data to all those who serve U.S. agriculture, especially the producers who gave their time to complete the questionnaire. Census of Agriculture data tell a story. This comprehensive snapshot every five years helps data users to see trends and shifts in the industry over time and helps producers do business," said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. "Overall, though there are always changes across U.S. agriculture, the data remain largely consistent with the previous ag census. Data users will also notice some new data on the topics of hemp, precision agriculture, and internet access."

Ag census data provide valuable insights into demographics, economics, land use and activities on U.S. farms and ranches such as:

There were 1.9 million farms and ranches (down 7% from 2017) with an average size of 463 acres (up 5%) on 880 million acres of farmland (down 2%). That is 39% of all U.S. land.

Family-owned and operated farms accounted for

95% of all U.S. farms and operated 84% of land in farms.

U.S. farms and ranches produced \$543 billion in agricultural products, up from \$389 billion in 2017. With farm production expenses of \$424 billion, U.S. farms had net cash income of \$152 billion. Average farm income rose to \$79,790. A total of 43% of farms had positive net cash farm income in 2022.

Farms with internet access continued to rise from 75% in 2017 to 79% in 2022.

A total of 153,101 farms and ranches used renewable energy producing systems compared to 133,176 farms in 2017, a 15% increase. The majority of farms (76%) with renewable energy systems reported using solar panels.

In 2022, 116,617 farms sold directly to consumers, with sales of \$3.3 billion. Value of sales increased 16% from 2017.

The 105,384 farms with sales of \$1 million or more were 6% of U.S. farms and 31% of farmland; they sold more than three-fourths of all agricultural products. The 1.4 million farms with sales of \$50,000 or less accounted for 74% of farms, 25% of farmland, and 2% of sales.

Nearly three-fourths of farmland was used by farms specializing in two commodity categories: oilseed and grain production (32%) and beef cattle production (40%).

The average age of all producers was 58.1, up 0.6 years from 2017. This is a smaller increase than average age increases between prior censuses.

There were just over 1 million farmers with 10 or fewer years of experience, an increase in the number of beginning farmers from 2017 of 11%. Beginning farmers are younger than all farmers, with an average age of 47.1.

The number of producers under age 35 was 296,480, comprising 9% of all producers. The 221,233 farms with young producers making decisions tend to be larger than average in both acres and sales.

In 2022, 1.2 million female producers accounted for 36% of all producers. Fifty-eight percent of all farms had at least one female decision maker.

The response rate for the 2022 Census of Agriculture was 61%; more than 40% of responses were submitted online. To address questions about the 2022 Census of Agriculture data, NASS will host a live X Stat Chat @usda_nass for the public on Wednesday, Feb. 14, at 1 p.m. EST. Ag census data highlight publications are available at nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights.

First conducted in 1840 in conjunction with the decennial Census and conducted since 1997 by USDA NASS – the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture – the Census of Agriculture remains the most comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation.



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Information, Research and Discussions Highlight Wine and Winegrape Industry's Largest Gathering

From every corner of the world, wine and winegrape professionals convened at the 30th annual Unified Wine & Grape Symposium in Sacramento. The event serves as a dynamic platform to address industry challenges, share information and explore the latest technologies, equipment and services. Organized by the industry, for the industry, the Unified Symposium is the largest show of its kind in the Americas, hosting over 10,000 industry professionals with three days of program sessions and 900 exhibit booths.

"As our industry navigates through challenging times, the Unified Symposium is a rare opportunity for industry leaders and experts to gather, examine the latest data and discuss potential strategies to right the ship," said Natalie Collins, president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) and co-host of the Unified Symposium. "For thirty years, Unified has served as a space to unite the industry, discuss emerging trends and find the technology, supplies, services and partners essential for charting the year ahead."

Held at the Sacramento Convention Center, the Unified Symposium is also Sacramento's largest trade show, providing the city with over \$16 million in restaurant, hotel and related revenues. Experts from around the globe spoke at

the 23 different symposium sessions addressing everything from winemaking and winegrape growing to marketing and business operations. The massive trade show floor, which is larger than three football fields, showcased the supplies, equipment and services that drive the American wine industry.

"This was the largest trade show Unified Symposium has ever had and we're continuing to see growing interest from the wine and grape community," said Dan Howard, executive director of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture (ASEV) and the show's other co-host. "We are already seeing increased enthusiasm for next year's show. It's a great reminder of how important having a show such as Unified is to the success and progress of the American wine industry." The 2025 Unified Wine & Grape Symposium will take place on January 28-30 at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center in Sacramento. Built with the joint input of growers, vintners, and allied industry members, the Unified Symposium will celebrate 31 years of serving as a clearinghouse of information important to wine and grape industry professionals, as well as hosting the industry's largest trade show of its kind. For more information, visit www.unifiedsymposium.org.

Carbon Robotics Introduces New Product Capabilities to Meet Strong Global Demand for LaserWeeder™

AI robotics leader unveils Track LaserWeeder for muck soil, Carbon Ops Center with spatial data metrics for all crops and weeds, and multi-language support for iPad operator app



Carbon Robotics today announced the Track LaserWeeder, a new model of its proven LaserWeeder, and two software enhancements: spatial data intelligence in the Carbon Ops Center and multi-language support in the iPad operator app. By incorporating these advancements, Carbon Robotics not only addresses the diverse needs of farmers in various regions but also empowers them with actionable farm data, aligning seamlessly with the evolving demands of agriculture.

“Custom tracks extend the versatility and flexibility of the LaserWeeder and open up laserweeding to more regions and farms with varying soil types”

“We are excited to introduce the new Track LaserWeeder unit and software upgrades that will further improve the efficiency and capabilities of our industry-leading LaserWeeder for growers,” said Paul Mikesell, CEO and founder of Carbon Robotics. “Our customers laser weeded for more than 50,000 total hours last year across more than 100 different crops, capturing major savings in weed control costs and reporting substantial increases in crop yield and quality.”

The Track LaserWeeder offers a custom track system built in collaboration with Soucy and GK Machine and was designed with growers to extend the LaserWeeder’s usability across diverse soil types, including muck soil. By equally distributing the LaserWeeder’s weight, the tracks minimize compaction and allow the machine to enter fields earlier in the season despite challenging conditions. The first Track LaserWeeders are complete and staged for delivery beginning in March 2024.

“Custom tracks extend the versatility and flexibility of the LaserWeeder and open up laserweeding to more regions and farms with varying soil types,” said John Mey, vice president of product at Carbon Robotics. “By improving ground pressure to 6.5 p.s.i. and supporting row spacing of 64” to 90”, growers in muck regions now can use LaserWeeder to do the work of a 75-person hand weeding crew, have an alternative to herbi-

cides, and gain the production benefits resulting from no soil disruption.”

Carbon Robotics also introduced visualized spatial data available to all LaserWeeder customers. This innovative offering allows growers to access field, crop and weed metrics using the Carbon Ops Center, including stand count, density, type, average size and distribution. This data allows growers to identify and address areas with inconsistencies or surprising results and provides them with quantitative crop stand counts early after planting and well before harvest.

Carbon Robotics has also incorporated multi-language support into its intuitive iPad operator app, now supporting seven additional languages, including Spanish, French, German, Danish, Dutch, Polish and Romanian. This feature allows field operators to utilize the app, alerts, and Carbon support more effectively by reducing language barriers.

2023 was a record year for Carbon Robotics, with a tripling number of LaserWeeders shipped to growers and rapid expansion into Europe and Australia. To support continued growth and rapid new product development, Carbon Robotics raised \$43 million in new capital in 2023, bringing its total funding to \$80 million since its founding in 2018. To learn more, visit Carbon Robotics’ World Ag Expo exhibitor booth number F26 South Exhibits.

ABOUT CARBON ROBOTICS

Carbon Robotics, a leader in AI-powered robotics, empowers farmers to cut costs, increase production and boost profits with precision agriculture products. Its award-winning LaserWeeder combines computer vision, AI deep learning technology, robotics and lasers to identify and eliminate weeds with millimeter accuracy, cutting weed control costs by 80% and increasing crop yield and quality. In 2024, LaserWeeders will be in operation by leading growers across the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Australia. For more information, visit <https://carbonrobotics.com/>.

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New Holland CR11 Combine Debut Tour Takes Off in North America

After taking centerstage at Agritechnica 2023, the CR11 combine is now making its greatly anticipated North America debut. Beginning next week on February 14 at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, Kentucky, the CR11 combine kicks off its North America tour. The industry's new high-capacity harvesting leader is embarking on a journey that will span stops at numerous industry and customer events across the U.S. and Canada.

"Get ready, because the CR11 combine is hitting the road, making appearances from Louisville to Saskatoon and beyond," says Curtis Hillen, combine marketing manager for New Holland. "The CR11 combine is more than a machine; it's the new standard, redefining what we expect of combine capacity and production. This debut tour is an opportunity to experience the CR11 combine first-hand."

The 2024 CR11 Combine Tour

Throughout the coming months, there will be opportunities to catch a glimpse, climb in the cab or take the CR11 combine for a test drive on its barnstorming tour of the U.S. and Canada.

The CR11 combine debut tour kicks off at National Farm Machinery Show (February 14-17 in Louisville, Kentucky), followed by stops at:

Commodity Classic 2024, February 28 – March 1 in Houston, Texas

Ag in Motion, July 16-18 in Langham, Saskatchewan

Ag PhD Field Day, July 25 in Baltic, South Dakota

Farm Progress Show, August 27-29 in Boone, Iowa

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, September 10-12 in Woodstock, Ontario

Husker Harvest Days, September 10-12 in Wood River, Nebraska

Agri-Trade Equipment Expo, November 13-15 in Red Deer, Alberta

In addition, the New Holland team and local dealers will be hosting regional events at dealerships and fields to showcase and demo the CR11 combine.

Setting a New Standard for Harvest

Building on a 50-year legacy of New Holland harvesting innovation, from the creation of Twin Rotor® technology to setting a world record for harvesting, the CR11 combine is the biggest and most productive combine in any field. Designed from the ground up, the CR11 combine is built on four pillars – increased productivity, maximum grain savings, superior residue management and enhanced uptime – to help drive down the total cost of harvesting.

"With the expansion of farms and fields, the CR11 combine proves instrumental in enhancing efficiency during the limited harvest window," explains Jordan Kambeitz, CEO and president of Kambeitz Farms in Lajord, Saskatchewan. "It offers greater capacity, minimized downtime and improved straw spread and chop patterns, resulting in reduced losses. Consequently, this allows us to operate with fewer combines and maximize our utilization of labor resources."

In a class of its own, the CR11 combine is an unmatched



combination of performance, size and technology that achieves unprecedented productivity. It touts:

A 775-horsepower FPT Cursor 16 engine, a 75-horsepower increase compared to the CR10 combine.

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A 6.0 bushel per second unload rate that can empty the grain tank in 100 seconds.

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A new, larger and fully automated TwinClean™ double-cleaning shoe with automated cross-distribution control that increases cleaning capacity and helps achieve loss levels close to zero.

A new residue management system for superior chopping and spreading, maintaining high chop quality and even residue distribution. The new system also takes it a step further with remote in-cab control of the counterknife bank, offering flexibility field-by-field for customized operations.

The new IntelliSpread™ system, which uses radars for closed-loop residue spreading automation. This ensures a uniform, full-width spread performance, regardless of changes in wind or crop conditions.

A new automatic de-slug procedure that enables operators to clear blockages in seconds without leaving the cab.

The first of its kind to come standard with PLM Intelligence™ features built in. This includes the new IntelliView™ 12 display, IntelliSteer™ guidance system and other essential precision farming functions, like telematics and remote screen viewing. Owners can also exercise the option to add the NutriSense™ NIR sensor for real-time crop composition monitoring, providing valuable insights for more informed decisions during harvest, storage and sales planning.

The CR11 combine will be available for model year 2025 with order placements beginning summer 2024 at local New Holland dealerships.

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Dairy Council of CA Awards Community Grants



By: Meggan Rush

Dairy Council of California, a leader in nutrition education and advocacy, has awarded over \$45,000 in community grants to assist California schools and community-based organizations with innovative and sustainable solutions to foster healthy eating and meet local needs.

Grants advance Dairy Council of California's Let's Eat Healthy Initiative, engaging nutrition champions to support equitable access to science-based nutrition education. Funds also support food and agricultural literacy and help make healthy, wholesome foods, including milk and dairy foods, more accessible for local California communities.

Awardees include:

My Healthy Reader, Riverside County

"I have been a long-time fan of both the Dairy Council and Let's Eat Healthy, utilizing their online resources to help educate families and young children on the benefits of good nutrition. Being a grant recipient is an exciting honor that provides support and opportunity to expand program efforts. This grant will allow us to continue to impact families in the Inland Empire, by providing knowledge and resources that assist in learning how to make healthy food and dairy choices," says My Healthy Reader CEO Yvonne Roberson Choyce.

Griffiths Middle School, Downey Unified School District, Los Angeles County

"The Let's Eat Healthy Community Grant provides our students with the essential knowledge and tools for a healthier future. This grant opens doors to nutrition education and wellness initiatives that will lead our students on a path of lifelong well-being," culinary teacher Kim Silverman states.

Centennial Farm, Orange County

"The Orange County Fair and Event Center's Centennial Farm is excited to have been selected as a recipient of the Dairy Council's Let's Eat Healthy Community Grant. Funds will be used to further enhance the importance of dairy and nutrition through activities with our existing educational programs and the impact of the grant funds will benefit students for years to come," states Evy Young, director of agriculture programs at Centennial Farm.

Ladera Ranch Middle School, Capistrano Unified School District, Orange County

"The Let's Eat Healthy grant will significantly impact culinary classes. The classroom is over two decades old. With this funding, we now have the means to procure new equipment that has worn out. These enhancements will enrich our food labs, which integrate nutrition education and experimentation with different techniques and ingredi-

ents, notably emphasizing yeast dough making, homemade butter, milk cultures for cheese, and more," says culinary teacher Carrie Gray.

Community Housing Opportunities Corporation, Youth Services Program, Solano County

According to Amahirani Reyes, youth services program manager for Community Housing Opportunities Corporation, "CHOC sincerely appreciates the generous support extended by the Dairy Council of California in establishing this valuable partnership. Their support is positioned to significantly enhance youth nutrition education within our affordable housing communities, leaving a positive and lasting impact."

Dairy Council of California CEO Amy DeLisio explains the further impact of the grants: "The Let's Eat Healthy Community Grants are another powerful tool for organizations to continue to provide access and opportunities where children, families and communities can build positive connections between nutrition, agriculture and lifelong healthy eating. These grants, and the valuable work of the awardees, will make a difference in the lives of those who need it most for years to come."

About Dairy Council of California

Dairy Council of California is a nutrition organization working together with champions to elevate the health of children and communities through lifelong healthy eating patterns. Focusing on education, advocacy, dairy agricultural literacy and collaboration, Dairy Council of California advances the health benefits of milk and dairy foods as part of the solution to achieving nutrition security and sustainable food systems. Learn more at DairyCouncilofCA.org.

About the Let's Eat Healthy Initiative

Launched by Dairy Council of California, Let's Eat Healthy is an initiative that brings together community leaders and stakeholders with expertise in education, school foodservice, public health, health care and agriculture, inviting these change-makers to elevate the health of children and families through the pursuit of lifelong healthy eating habits. Through coordination and collaboration, Let's Eat Healthy strives to provide sustainable solutions to champion community health and make healthy, wholesome foods accessible to all. The Let's Eat Healthy Initiative is driven to provide dynamic educational resources and tools, peer networking, amplification of best practices and the latest in nutrition information, uniting individuals and organizations through shared values. Join the initiative and make a difference at HealthyEating.org.



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'Super Carbolicious' 4-H Food Fiesta challenges young chefs

Inside a quiet classroom, Sadie, a 4-H member in Orange County, stands in front of two judges with an insulated cooler bag in hand. From it she pulls out plates, utensils and napkins and sets them down on the table. She unzips the bottom compartment and carefully reaches for a cast iron platter with golden fluffy pancakes piled on top.

"Would you like syrup with your pancakes? I highly recommend it," said Sadie, an eighth grader who is participating in the annual 4-H Food Fiesta for a second time.

4-H, a youth development program supported by the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources and administered through local UC Cooperative Extension offices, promotes hands-on experiential learning for all youth.

Rita Jakel, 4-H program coordinator for Orange County, described the Food Fiesta event – intended for ages 5 to 18 – as an opportunity to practice and showcase public speaking skills through a fun, food-related competition.

Youth present their creations before a panel of evaluators, who ask them to describe how they prepared the dish and why, and how they managed challenges throughout the process. The interaction between youth and adult leaders provides a unique opportunity for youth to practice career readiness skills such as job interviews and public speaking.

This year's theme was "Super Carbolicious" and 4-H participants were encouraged to make their favorite dishes using ingredients like pasta, potatoes and bread. Carbohydrates are often perceived as unhealthy, which is not a helpful mindset to have when teaching youth about nutrition. Carbohydrates provide the body with glucose, which is converted into energy that people need to function throughout the day.

Some of the dishes that were presented during the Food Fiesta included chocolate chip banana bread, cheesy baked potatoes, cookies and Nutella-stuffed crepes. 4-H member Kaitlin had only ever attended the Food Fiesta to cheer on a friend. This year, she decided to participate and presented pumpkin macaroni and cheese as her entry.

"Pumpkin mac and cheese is better than the regular one because there's a lot more flavor and you have to use two cheeses: cheddar and parmesan," explained Kaitlin, a seventh grader. When asked what motivated her to participate instead of being a bystander this time around, Kaitlin said that she wanted to work on her presentation skills.

"Usually, I'm a bit shy and I don't like to share that much. The Food Fiesta helped me practice speaking up more so that I can accomplish my goals," Kaitlin said.

Sadie, who loves public speaking, admits that it wasn't always a strength of hers. "There was a time when I hated public speaking. But when I joined 4-H's cake decorating, poultry and food fiesta events, I got more comfortable with public speaking," she said. "Now, I like going to events and showing off. I get to show off turkeys, my cakes and, today, I presented homemade pancakes."

Helping to keep the day's festivities running smoothly were two 4-H state ambassadors: Michaela and Laurelyn, two high school seniors. Both have been involved in 4-H for over nine



years, with Laurelyn being a third-generation 4-H member. "My grandmother grew up in a 4-H club in Orange County. She still raises breeding lambs for 4-H members to this day," said Laurelyn, whose mother was a 4-H member in San Joaquin County.

As state ambassadors, they are responsible for creating and presenting workshops during state, national and regional events. "We also engage the public via social media, specifically TikTok and Instagram (@4horangeco)," said Michaela, who is in her second year as an ambassador.

During the Food Fiesta, Michaela and Laurelyn made themselves available to answer questions from participants and their families. Both ambassadors agreed that seeing parents involved in 4-H should not come as a surprise. "Being in 4-H is a family effort. This isn't an extra-curricular where you just drop your kids off and leave," said Michaela.

Laurelyn shared that the biggest misconception others have about 4-H is that they think it's about introducing youth to agriculture or livestock. There's a civic engagement and leadership component to it, too. "If parents knew about all the ways 4-H can benefit their kids, I think more people would want to join us," she said. "And they're finding fun ways to help us learn life skills, like this Food Fiesta."

The homemade dishes weren't the only thing to look forward to, however. In another building, Sandy Jacobs, volunteer event coordinator, and her team set up a kitchen quiz for members. On several tables, there were different cooking tools and participants were challenged to name as many tools as they could.

In another classroom, while some members were presenting food, others presented their themed table setting décor. Participants had to prepare a complete table setting entry including a menu card, centerpiece and table settings for two. Judges considered creativity, use of color, table setting etiquette, knowledge in talking to the judges, and appearance in their evaluation.

Finally, to wrap up the day, members competed in a cupcake decorating competition. Participants were responsible for bringing their own supplies including tools and edible decorations for Cupcake Wars. Depending on their age group, participants had 20 minutes to decorate two to four cupcakes, each of a different theme.

To learn more about 4-H in Orange County, visit <https://oc4h.org/>.

The screenshot shows the website's layout. At the top is a navigation bar with links for Home, About, Contact, and Advertise with us. On the right, there are links for 'Create an account' and 'Sign in'. Below the navigation is a main header with 'California Farm Equipment Magazine' logo and a menu of Home, Dealer Listings, Featured Products, AG Directory, Classifieds, and Latest News. The main content area features a large advertisement for Garton Tractor, a New Holland tractor, and a list of classifieds. The classifieds section includes items like Kubota M6L-111SDS Tractors, Demries Narrow Vineyard Clod Crusher, Clemens Vine Trimmer, and Woods RCS Rotary Mower. There is also a 'Current Magazine' section with a 'View Current Issue' button and a 'View Past Issues' button. A 'Latest News' section at the bottom shows two articles: 'Farm Smart program instills' and 'DNA Research Finds Low Genetic'.

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AEF Wins AE50 Award For Agricultural Interoperability Network

New network simplifies and improves cross-brand data sharing to enhance interoperability

The Agricultural Industry Electronics Foundation (AEF), a global non-profit organization founded to improve cross-manufacturer compatibility in agricultural equipment, was recognized by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) with a prestigious AE50 award for its groundbreaking Agricultural Interoperability Network (AgIN).

The AE50 is an awards program honoring the year's top product advancements within agriculture, food and biological systems. A panel of expert engineers selected the winners, using criteria that emphasized innovation, engineering advancement, and market impact as the deciding factors. The ASABE recognized the winners yesterday during a luncheon at the Agricultural Equipment Technology Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

"We are honored to be recognized with an esteemed AE50 award for AgIN," said Norbert Schlingmann, General Manager, AEF. "Accessing information across different clouds today is a challenge. With AgIN, farmers are able to get access to data via the cloud of their choice from other systems."

The new peer-to-peer based AgIN network will be an industry-wide solution for agribusinesses to share data. The new initiative will provide a framework to foster collaboration between agricultural actors who have agreed to provide interoperability of their cloud platforms. AgIN is a foundation to establish a state-of-the-art data space for agricultural data.

AEF member companies who have committed to the



AgIN initiative include: Actia Italia, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), AGCO, AgGateway, Argo Tractors, Amazone, Bosch Rexroth, CLAAS, CNHi, dev4Agriculture, Dinamica Generale, DKE-Data, Horsch, John Deere, Krone, Kubota / Kverneland, Kuhn, SDF, NEXT Farming, OSB connaktiv, Pöttinger, Rauch, Trimble, VDMA Agricultural Machinery, Walvoil and xFarm.

For more information about AEF and the new AgIN initiative, please visit: www.aef-online.org.

Public Hearing Will Review Regulation Amendments For CDFA's Cannabis Appellations Program

CDFA's Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation (OEFI) submitted today proposed regulations to amend the Cannabis Appellations Program to the Office of Administrative Law.

Legislation directed CDFA to establish the program due to producer and consumer interest.

The proposed regulations would effectively require all cultivation activities (i.e., planting, growing, harvesting, drying, curing, grading, and trimming) to occur within the area represented by the appellation of origin, and require cultivators to notify CDFA of the use of an appellation of origin.

Regulatory documents related to the proposed regulations are available for public review on the program's webpage at www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/cap..

Any interested person may submit written comments relevant to the proposed regulatory action. A 45-day written comment period closes at midnight on March 19, 2024. Written comments may be submitted to the Department by mailing:

- Cannabis Appellations Program

California Department of Food and Agriculture
Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation
1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
or emailing: CannabisAg@cdfa.ca.gov

In addition to the comment period, CDFA will host a virtual public hearing on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to allow for oral comment on the proposed amendments. Attendees may participate via Zoom online meeting platform or telephone conferencing.

To participate via Zoom, register for the meeting online at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oSB4B7KRQ2uP4sai1MOTBg.

The link to the meeting will also be posted on the CAP website at <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/cap>.

As a reasonable accommodation, limited in-person seating may be available at the hearing in Room 133 at the CDFA Headquarters, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Please contact Eric Duran at Eric.Duran@cdfa.ca.gov or (916) 387-5887 by March 11, 2024, if an accommodation is necessary.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 2024

5-6: 2024 California Poultry Federation (CPF) Winter Board of Directors Meeting at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento, CA. Any questions please call the CPF office at (209) 576-6355 or email: info@cpif.org if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you. We hope you can join us at this special event.

19-21: Outlook 2024 Agribusiness Conference. Bakersfield, CA. Marriott at the Convention Center. The theme is Sustainable Agriculture for the Future. The conference will include the release of the 2024 Trends in Agricultural Land & Lease Values report, opportunities for networking, industry updates, continuing education and much more! A full day Ag Tour, the California Classic BBQ and continuing education classes. Visit <https://calasfmra.com/chapter-news/>

APRIL 2024

4-6: American Agri-Women Mid-Year Meeting. Each year in April, American Agri-Women hosts a Mid-Year Meeting for those interested in discussing current agricultural issues and policies. Hilton Garden Inn Manhattan, Kansas. For more information visit: www.americanagriwomen.org/events

19-21: California Antique Equipment Show. Welcome to the best show in the West for old iron! FAMILY FUN AROUND EVERY CORNER. Visit agriculture’s past by learning about tractors, engines, equipment, and more. Located right off Highway 99, the International Agri-Center® is easy to get to. For more information call 559.688.1030 or 800.999.9186 or Email; antique@farmshow.org

JUNE 2024

2-6: American Agri-Women Legislative Fly-In. Join us in D.C. and have our voices heard! We develop our policy positions each year at our Mid-Year Meeting to present at our annual Legislative Fly-In to Washington, D.C. each June. Embassy Suites by Hilton Crystal City, Arlington, VA. For more information visit: www.americanagriwomen.org/events

26-27: California Cattlemen’s Association Mid-Year Meeting. Attend and be active in setting CCA policy. Come discuss issues with fellow producers and hear updates. Your voice helps develop policy that provides direction for your organization. Nugget Casino Resort, Sparks, NV. For more information Visit: <https://calcattlemen.org/events/>

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

To list your special event in California Farm Equipment send details to CFEM, PO Box 1128, Visalia, CA. 93279. or email to: info@cfemag.com.

Chicken community 'coop-eration' needed to test UC poultry health app



People raising chickens are invited to test the new UC Community Chicken app, which promotes poultry health.

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

If you raise backyard chickens or breed game fowl, UC Cooperative Extension has an app for you. The new mobile app offers information for raising healthy chickens.

To test the usefulness of the UC Community Chicken app to people raising chickens, the Poultry Lab at the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine will pay poultry owners to participate in a two-week study with a follow-up survey three months later.

The app contains information about chicken health, nutrition, vaccination, biosecurity, bird behavior and husbandry.

"Our study focuses on the development and evaluation of a new mobile app for backyard chicken owners and game fowl breeders," said Maurice Pitesky, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine associate professor of Cooperative Extension. "The goal is to examine the app's effectiveness as a communication tool within the poultry community."

To be eligible, participants must be backyard chicken owners who are 13 years or older or game fowl breeders over 18 years of age. They will need to have Apple or Android phones or tablets to access the app.

What's in the app?

The UC Community Chicken app contains six educational modules

with short videos that cover health assessment, nutrition, vaccination, biosecurity, bird behavior and husbandry. It also features chat and feedback buttons so participants can communicate with the UC experts and other poultry owners.

"We value the thoughts and experiences of people who are raising poultry," said Myrna Cadena, Ph.D. student in Pitesky's lab. "Their input will be valuable in shaping the way we extend information about poultry health."

Study timeline

For two weeks, participants will explore the educational resources and other features and complete the surveys. Three months later, the researchers will follow up with a survey to assess the chicken owners' progress.

Participants who complete the entire study and follow-up survey will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card via email. Those who do not finish the entire study will be compensated based on their level of participation. The study will be limited to 220 participants.

To register for the study, go to <https://bit.ly/UCchickenapp>. Once the study is ready, participants will be notified via email. The UC Community Chicken app will be available to the public after the study is complete. For more information about the study, contact Maurice Pitesky at drcluck@ucdavis.edu.

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USDA Invests \$3 Million to Provide Risk Management Training to Farmers, Ranchers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced up to \$3 million is available for cooperative agreements to educate underserved, small-scale and organic producers on risk management and climate-smart practices. RMA's Risk Management Education Partnerships provide funding for organizations, such as non-profits and land grant universities, to develop training and resources for producers about risk management options like crop insurance.

"This funding is integral to our outreach efforts in communities that historically have not had access to training about risk management options. Our Risk Management Education partnerships are part of USDA's broader efforts to ensure equity and access to programs," said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. "As a farmer, I know first-hand that agriculture is a risky business. We want to work with growers and livestock producers to provide them training and resources about risk management options and how to apply them to their farming businesses."

In 2023, RMA helped provide the largest farm safety net in history, a record \$207 billion in protection for American agriculture. At the same time, the agency continued to introduce new programs to better support a broader range of producers, including specialty crop, livestock, controlled environment and shellfish producers. Risk Management Education partnerships are critical to making sure the farm safety net and new programs are effectively delivered to agricultural producers who need them.

This \$3 million Risk Management Education investment builds on the \$13 million that RMA has already provided in partnerships since 2021. Previous recipients, which include universities, county cooperative extension offices and non-profit organizations, developed education tools that assist and train producers on how to effectively manage long-term risks and challenges in agriculture production.

Interested organizations may apply for funding by submitting documentation required as part of the Notice of Funding Opportunity A broad range of risk management training activities are eligible for funding consideration, including training on crop insurance options, record keeping, financial management, non-insurance-based risk management tools, natural disaster preparedness and securing local food systems through risk management.

Interested entities should apply through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by March 4.

Assistance with Cooperative Agreement and Grant Applications

RMA offers a service that assists entities with completing applications for USDA funding opportunities.

This service provides applicants assistance with:

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Completing cooperative agreement award and grant applications.

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This service is available to underserved communities, ag-related non-profits, Tribal colleges and universities, Tribal higher education programs, 1890 Land Grant Universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities.

Interested parties should email rma.risk-ed@usda.gov for details.

More Information

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov or by contacting your RMA Regional Office.

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E.M. Tharp and World Ag Expo® “We Believe in Growing” Scholarship Winners Announced

World Ag Expo® and E.M. Tharp, Inc. have teamed up again for the 17th annual “We Believe in Growing” scholarship, supporting area high school students who will be attending four-year universities to major in an agricultural field. This year’s winners, Kendra Ward of Hanford, CA and Reed DeBoer of Porterville, CA, will each receive \$2,500 scholarships to be renewed up to four years, totaling \$10,000 per student.

“We are excited to partner with World Ag Expo once again for the scholarship program,” said Casey Tharp, Vice President of E.M. Tharp, Inc. “E.M. Tharp sees the potential growth in these students to become great leaders in the agriculture industry and we are honored to help them achieve their career goals.” The scholarship was established by E.M. Tharp in 2007 and has helped over 30 students gain an education focused in agriculture.

Kendra Ward, a student at Immanuel High School, plans to study Agriculture Science and receive her teaching credential at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo or California State University Fresno in the fall. Her long-term goal is to work as an Ag Teacher.



Agriculture is in Ward’s roots. As the 7th generation of a California farming family, Ward knew from a young age she wanted a career in Agriculture. Her love for ag, communication, and teaching led her to pursue her future career in education. She has been an active 4-H, and FFA member and was a participant in the Tulare County Farm Bureau Youth Leadership program. She is also a student council member, has served on various mission trips to Thailand and the Dominican Republic

and has been a full-time classical ballet student for 14 years.

“Through my efforts in 4-H, FFA, and working in ag in the summers, I have found I love learning about working outside with plants and animals”, stated Ward. “I hope to motivate the younger generation to want to pursue agriculture and help keep the agriculture industry strong for generations to come.”

Reed DeBoer, a student at Monache High School, plans to major in Plant Science with a minor in Agribusiness at California State University, Fresno, and work as a Pest Control Advisor.

With a strong desire to learn, DeBoer has obtained multiple jobs in the agriculture industry preparing himself to be diverse and equipped for his future goals. He has worked as a mechanic at a trucking company, a guide for backcountry fishing trips, and on a citrus farm where he learned about farm management. As an FFA member, he has been a part of his high school’s swine team for four years and is currently building a scraper and chicken coop to exhibit at this year’s fair.



“I have big goals in mind when it comes to my future in the agricultural industry,” stated DeBoer. “I believe I can have a great impact on our agriculture community.”

To be considered for the scholarship, students from across the Central Valley submitted letters of recommendation, high school transcripts, ACT or SAT scores, and must expect to graduate from high school during the 2023-2024 school year. The winners were recognized at the World Ag Expo® Opening & Awards Ceremonies on Tuesday, February 13, 2024.

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