



Los Angeles County Farm Bureau

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LACFB

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Upcoming Events..... Upcoming Events.....

Land as Your Legacy

Estate Planning & Membership Outreach

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Valencia, CA

Thursday, February 16, 2012 – 5pm – 8pm

Free registration is required. Please call (661) 274-9709

For more information please visit:

<http://lacfb.org/>

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Ask your friends and families to join Farm Bureau in 2012 because:

We are your number-one source for agricultural news, we are your advocacy partner and we work hard to save you money on your everyday business expenses. Join today and your voice will become more than 80,000 members strong.

There's an old saying....there is strength in numbers

Farm Bureau members get results through grass- roots involvement that begins at your county Farm Bureau. With a network of 53 county Farm Bureaus you become a part of the California Farm Bureau Federation, the largest organization representing agriculture at the county state and federal levels of government.

Let Farm Bureau help you get answers

Keep current on regulations and industry trends through *Ag Alert*, the most-read weekly agricultural newspaper, and through our website at www.cfbf.com. Be aware of local issues before they affect you through you county Farm Bureau office. Maintain compliance with ever-changing labor laws by subscribing to the Farm Employer's Labor Service.

Let Farm Bureau help you reduce your business expenses

Reduce your insurance costs with access to Farm Bureau programs offering competitive quotes for rates on you farm, auto health and worker' compensation insurance. Learn about many other member benefits and discount programs including Dodge, Grainger, Kelly-Moore, LensCrafters and more.

Help Farm Bureau promote consumer confidence

Volunteer or support the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, Farm Bureau scholarships and local Farm Bureau public relations programs such as our *California Country* television show and magazine.

- **"Freebies" for Farm Bureau Members** – click here to review the list of discounts - <http://cfbf.com/benefits/#guide>
- **New insurance savings for "Voting" members**
 - California Farm Bureau Federation in conjunction with Nationwide Insurance is now offering a new benefit for voting members. "Voting Farm Bureau members are now eligible for a 12.5% discount on their personal auto insurance with Allied and Nationwide," according to John Valentine of Nationwide Insurance. Sustaining members will continue receiving the 7.5% discount.

We know Mother Nature doesn't wait.

That's why we get your employees back to work fast through our careful processing of claims. Plus, we offer eligible Farm Bureau members a 6% discount on premiums. It's all part of our commitment to California agriculture. Because Mother Nature doesn't stop, and neither will we.

Together, we'll help keep California working.
statefundca.com



Allied Insurance

a Nationwide® company
On Your Side®



John Valentine
Director, Sponsor
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Insurance

Contact John via email at:
Valentj4@nationwide.com



Nationwide®
On Your Side

Nationwide Insurance

Nationwide Insurance Company of America offers a 7 1/2 percent discount on personal auto insurance to Farm Bureau members in California. To find an agent near you, visit www.nationwide.com or call Web site at www.nhpcalifornia.com.

Allied Insurance

Allied Insurance provides quality insurance products and On Your Side service to individuals, families, farms and businesses. Customers know the Allied name represents quality insurance and outstanding service at a fair price. **Personal Auto ~Farm Bureau members receive a 7 1/2 percent discount on Allied's personal auto insurance.** Search the Allied Agent Locator (<http://www.cfbf.com/farmagents/>) for an agent near you or call (800) 282-1446.



State Compensation Insurance Fund is not a branch of the State of California.

AGRICULTURAL TIDBITS:

Study disputes need to conserve farm water [California Watch, November 29, 2011] A new report suggests that California agriculture already uses water efficiently and disputes the notion that conservation could free up large amounts of water for other uses. Increasing water efficiency would generate only 330,000 acre-feet per year of new water, according to the study [PDF], which was conducted by the Center for Irrigation Technology at CSU Fresno. That represents about 0.5 percent of the state's water use. Switching from flood irrigation to less water-intensive methods, such as drip irrigation, usually will not make more water available in a given region because runoff may be reused by other farmers or fish and wildlife, the study says. Flows that seep into the soil but are not used by crops may replenish the groundwater supply. <http://californiawatch.org/dailyreport/study-disputes-need-conserve-farm-water-13777>

WTO panel rules against U.S. country-of-origin labels [Associated Press, November 21, 2011] The world's top trade body ruled Friday that U.S. "country-of-origin" labels on cattle and hog exports from Canada and Mexico violate international rules, a move that could lower prices on those exports. In late 2009, the Geneva-based World Trade Organization opened an investigation into U.S. labeling rules at the request of Canada and Mexico. The "country of origin" labeling regulation took effect in 2008. Canada and Mexico each claimed their livestock industries were hurt by a sharp drop in U.S. cattle and hog imports because the labeling raised the costs and discouraged imports of their produce....The U.S. trade representative's office said it was considering all options, including appealing the decision. http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-1119-wto-meat-20111119_0,1241519.story

US farm exports boom as rest of economy struggles [Associated Press, November 16, 2011] As U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack visits Vietnam and China to talk trade this week, he's hoping to build on one of the few bright spots in the struggling American economy: agricultural exports. U.S. agricultural exports are projected to reach a record \$137 billion this year and hit that same mark next year. The U.S. agricultural trade surplus is expected to top \$42 billion. And new free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama are expected to boost farm exports by another \$2.3 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The gains aren't limited to products like corn, soybeans, rice, beef and pork. U.S. exports of dairy products, including powdered milk, cheese and butter, and nuts such as pecans, pistachios and almonds also have climbed in recent years....Exports in general have been a bright spot in the struggling U.S. economy, which is why the Obama administration has set a goal of doubling them in five years. Agriculture makes up about 9 percent of U.S. exports, compared with about 80 percent for manufacturing. But Commerce Department data show farm exports grew much faster than manufacturing exports during the past decade — by 123 percent compared to 68 percent. <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jwfxqcS77Vvemkf6kXnC8Kv1mnw?docId=bd511a1d02824f4b95a0e68b7e6ef9d5>

Opinion: More precious than gold? Farmland has glowing appeal [Reuters, November 15, 2011] With 7 billion people now needing food on this planet, putting your money into soil and agriculture might be a long-term investment to consider. You'd certainly be in good company: In recent years, high-profile investors such as Jim Rogers and George Soros have made investments in farmland (see link.reuters.com/ham94s). What makes farm property attractive? It has a finite supply and may become even scarcer with global warming, desertification and development. And with a rising population, more tillable land will be needed. Moreover, it could be a way to diversify your portfolio away from financial markets wracked by global debt fears. Gold has been one alternative, but farmland could be a better long-term bet. Unlike precious metals, you can rent it out and use it to grow crops or feed livestock. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/15/us-usa-investing-farmland-idUSTRE7AE1HQ20111115>

Cool weather took toll on wine grape harvest [Bloomberg News, November 9, 2011] U.S. wine-growing regions are reaping below-average yields in this year's harvest, and output of Zinfandel,

Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes could be at a five-year low, wine broker Ciatti Co. said. The 2011 harvest nears completion, and grapes suffered from cool weather that delayed ripening of the fruit, Ciatti reported on its website Tuesday. "The cool growing season, delayed sugar maturity and two episodes of rain sent growers and vintners into a scramble to harvest all affected vineyards," said Ciatti, a San Rafael broker of bulk wines. "Depleted inventories prior to vintage are less than replenished, leaving buyers of California wines, along with future growth, stalled for the upcoming year."

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/11/09/BUPT1LRVRE.DTL>

Generation ag [Santa Maria Sun, November 4, 2011] If there were a reality television show called "America's Next Top Farmer," Brenda Farias would definitely be a contender for first place. The 29-year-old is the executive director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency. Based in Santa Maria, the office acts as a USDA liaison for farmers in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties....Farias is the perfect example of the up-and-coming farmer—a farmer who is young, highly educated, and ready to infuse the industry with new life and new energy...."Definitely ag has seen a little more of a balance [between men and women], with the young ladies pursuing degrees and careers and taking more leadership roles in agriculture," California Farm Bureau Federation spokesperson Danielle Rau Oliver said.

<http://www.santamariasun.com/cover/7347/generation-ag/>

Fixing state's water-delivery issues could add jobs [Fresno Bee, November 3, 2011] A UC Berkeley economist says one of the rewards for repairing California's broken water-delivery system could be 130,000 jobs. Thousands would be needed to build tunnels for diverting water from the Sacramento River around the troubled Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, researcher David Sunding said. Thousands more jobs would be spinoffs as a result of the economic growth. "It would be a significant stimulus," said Sunding, a member of Berkeley's agriculture and resource economics department.

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2011/11/02/2600602/fixing-califs-water-delivery-issues.html#storylink=misearch>

Growing pains: As California border patrol tightens, farmers feel the labor pinch [Morgan Hill Times, November 1, 2011] Third-generation farmer Dan Fiorio has piles of rotting peppers dotting his 550-acre farm off Thomas Road, and it's not because he has a black thumb. "With the way the economy is, you'd think we'd have all kinds of people who want the work, but U.S. citizens here don't want to do this kind of work," he said, during a winded account of the immediate and long-term side effects stemming from a major crackdown on illegal immigration....Fiorio, who described 2011 as a "perfect storm for everything that could go wrong" thanks to labor shortages and unseasonably cool temperatures, warned of a coming threshold where consumers will refuse to pay "x" amount of dollars for a hand-harvested bell pepper....It boils down to (1) finding a solution for maintaining a legal workforce, or (2) getting accustomed to buying commodities grown overseas, according to Jack King, manager of the National Affairs Office for the California Farm Bureau who said the options "become pretty straight, in that regard."

<http://www.morganhilltimes.com/news/280306-growing-pains-as-california-border-patrol-tightens-farmers-feel-the-labor-pinch>

Obama administration announces desert 'solar energy zones' [Los Angeles Times, October 28, 2011] The Obama administration on Thursday unveiled its road map for solar energy development, directing large-scale industrial projects to 285,000 acres of desert land in the western U.S. while opening 20 million acres of the Mojave for new development. The Bureau of Land Management's long-awaited "solar energy zones" are intended to make some of the desert's most sensitive landscapes less desirable for solar prospecting by identifying "sweet spots" that have already passed environmental requirements and therefore promise expedited permitting, U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said. "These 445 square miles of zones are ... where development will be driven," Salazar said on a conference call with reporters. <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-solar-desert-20111028,0,7889585.story>

Experts: Look to foreign markets for ag sales [Visalia Times-Delta, October 27, 2011] With the U.S. economy still on shaky ground despite signs of improvement, experts say now is a good time for farmers, ranchers and others in the agricultural industry to look to foreign markets for new customers....Experts here say exports of U.S. goods are up, including farm products. And over the next several years, those numbers could increase after President Barack Obama last week signed a free-trade agreement with South Korea and smaller free-trade agreements with Colombia and Panama....The agreements could increase sales of U.S. farm goods by \$2.5 billion a year, \$239 million of that California farm goods, the California Farm Bureau estimates....In some cases, South Korea's tariffs add between 20 percent and 50 percent to the costs of U.S. goods purchased there, making them less competitive in that market compared to goods with lower or no tariffs imposed on them, according to Jack King, manager of national affairs for the California Farm Bureau.

Supreme Court to hear 'downer cattle' meat processing case which originated in Chino [Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, October 26, 2011] The controversy over a California law that bars livestock which cannot walk from entering the country's food supply will be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court next month. The state law, amended in 2008 in the aftermath of an investigation at the Westland/Hallmark plant in Chino, has created a legal showdown between the nationwide meatpacking industry and advocates for farm animals. At issue is whether California can create its own laws to safeguard its food supply and prevent farm animal abuse, while preempting federal law which regulates slaughterhouses and prevents the slaughter and processing of cattle which cannot walk, according to court briefs. The issue is set to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court on Nov. 9, according to the court. http://www.dailybulletin.com/ci_19192654

Obama signs trade deals with S. Korea, Panama and Colombia _ biggest agreements since NAFTA [Associated Press, October 21, 2011] President Barack Obama signed off Friday on the first three — and possibly last — free trade agreements of his administration, deals with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama that could be worth billions to American exporters and create tens of thousands of jobs. The three deals were years in the making, and the difficulty of bringing them to fruition make it unlikely there will be another bilateral trade agreement during Obama's current term. Obama signed them with none of the ceremonial fanfare that normally accompanies such triumphs. Republicans, while supportive of the deals, continue to find fault with Obama's trade policies. And nearly three-fourths of House Democrats voted against the trade measures. http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/worldbusiness/obama-signs-trade-deals-with-s-korea-panama-and-colombia-_-biggest-agreements-since-nafta/2011/10/21/gIQA0QdQ3L_story.html

Listeria outbreak traced to cantaloupe packing shed [New York Times, October 20, 2011] A nationwide listeria outbreak that has killed 25 people who ate tainted cantaloupe was probably caused by unsanitary conditions in the packing shed of the Colorado farm where the melons were grown, federal officials said Wednesday. Government investigators said that workers had tramped through pools of water where listeria was likely to grow, tracking the deadly bacteria around the shed, which was operated by Jensen Farms, in Granada, Colo. The pathogen was found on a conveyor belt for carrying cantaloupes, a melon drying area and a floor drain, among other places. "You're rolling around cantaloupe on uncleanable equipment and you're getting it wet and you're not cooling it — it provides the perfect environment for listeria growth and spread," said James Gorny, a senior food safety adviser at the Food and Drug Administration. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/20/business/listeria-outbreak-traced-to-colorado-cantaloupe-packing-shed.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=home%20of%20an%20outbreak&st=cse

Farmers raise concerns over national wireless network's impact on GPS-guided tools [FOX News, October 13, 2011] Agriculture industry representatives apparently are not convinced that a proposed fix for a controversial new wireless network will be enough to prevent it from interfering with GPS-guided equipment they depend on for everything from driving tractors to watering plants. House Small Business Committee Chairman Sam Graves, R-Mo., held a hearing Wednesday where critics of the emerging network sounded off about the potential downsides. At issue is a proposal by Virginia company LightSquared to build out a next-generation national wireless network that some fear would hinder the effectiveness of high-precision GPS systems -- used by the military, farmers and others.

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/10/12/farmers-raise-concerns-over-new-networks-impact-on-gps-guided-tools/>

Food producers plan online forum Thursday [Sacramento Bee, September 21, 2011] A national town hall-style discussion forum Thursday will allow farmers and ranchers to directly answer questions from Americans about how food is grown and raised. The forum will address the country's food supply and the impacts of the industry on people's health and the environment. Organized by the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance, the interactive event is taking place at four locations across the United States, including a panel discussion at UC Davis' Robert Mondavi Institute.
<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/09/21/3925691/food-producers-plan-online-forum.html>

Flower power revival? [Santa Barbara Independent, September 20, 2011] "This is basically the last stand for cut flower production in the United States," says Kasey Cronquist, scanning the thigh-high stretch of lilies growing in a Carpinteria greenhouse. Over the last 20 years, he explained, half of the state's cut flower farmers have gone out of business (from 500 down to 250), withered by an influx of cheap blooms imported from Colombia. Through government subsidies and overseas aid, the South American country cornered 75 percent of America's cut flower market in that time and now threatens a total takeover. Since four out of five American cut flowers are cultivated in California soil — with Carpinteria Valley as the country's top grower — the fate of the industry hinges upon this last bastion of productivity. To save it, Cronquist, CEO of the California Cut Flower Commission, worked alongside industry experts and lawmakers for three years to come up with a practical solution to inefficient shipping, which is what's knocking growers out of the game. Currently, multiple carriers run hundreds of routes, and California nurseries haven't ever been able to coordinate the volumes necessary to generate economical rates.
<http://www.independent.com/news/2011/sep/14/flower-power-revival/>

Thai rice subsidy scheme to push up world prices [Associated Press, September 9, 2011] Thailand's plan to pay its rice growers far above market rates is expected to push up prices for the staple that feeds almost half the world's people as rice importing nations look to other countries for tightened supplies. A new government in Thailand, the world's biggest rice exporter, has promised growers higher prices for rice in a scheme that will take effect Oct. 7. It's putting no limit on the amount of rice it will buy. What's good for Thai farmers, who have long complained of being shortchanged by middlemen, is proving less popular elsewhere in Asia. The effects of the rice policy are rippling through the region, where many countries are already struggling with fast rising food prices.
http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5idiOE0aYmMcMWf6uViZ_AmW728g?docId=32689c37168c47fa8dd8c68ff286648f

Global food prices stay high [Wall Street Journal, September 9, 2011] Global food prices remained near record highs last month, with concern growing that a disappointing U.S. corn harvest may trigger further increases, particularly in the developing world. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said Thursday its food-price index slipped less than a point in August to 231 points, just 3% below a record high set in February. Strong global demand for food and grain-based biofuels have lifted prices worldwide, raising the prospect of the potential for shortages. The U.N. agency warned grain inventories, in particular, are tight as poor harvests have failed to keep up with demand.
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904836104576558603231247720.html?KEYWORDS=food+prices>

**Link may require paid subscription*

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- To become a member of Farm Bureau - <http://cfbf.com/joinfb/>

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