



Los Angeles County Farm Bureau

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LACFB

*In the News.....
In the News.....*

LACFB's Garden Giveaway Contest Winners!



The Los Angeles County Farm Bureau's agricultural fair display and garden giveaway entry forms were at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds and the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds this past summer. We had invited teachers to submit their entry forms and tell us how a school garden would benefit their students.

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LACFB's Member Discounts

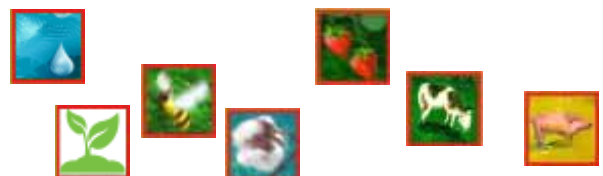
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How Does Farming and Water Affect Me?
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Online Features/FREE AG DAY LA Event



<http://agdayla.com/>



<http://agdayla.com/agday2009.html>

REGISTER NOW



Garden Give Away Winners

Garden Give Away Winners

By Victoria Gerginis, Education Coordinator
Los Angeles County Farm Bureau

I proudly walked into Ocotillo Elementary School with a huge stack of agricultural related materials, token prizes, and the ready to assemble classroom garden to present to the winning class entry. The Earthbox is a valuable teaching tool that allows students to experience the benefits of agriculture by producing their own fruits and vegetables. (Please visit <http://www.earthbox.com/> for more information).

As I peered into the classroom, the second graders anxiously returned my gaze. Ms. Katherine Butala, their teacher, came to the door to greet me. As the students finished their lesson, Katherine showed me how the garden would enhance their future studies. She stated that her "second grade science curriculum includes a unit on life cycles." Many of her students are ESL (English as a second language) learners, therefore a visual helps to reinforce key concepts. Ms. Butala also felt that "the students would really understand the concepts if they could grow a real garden."

At first the students seemed shy when I asked them questions regarding their studies. As time went by, they eagerly raised their hands to answer agricultural related trivia questions.* I left with a sense of pride and an invitation to attend an end of the year salad party.


Congratulations to Ms. Butala and her second grade class! The Los Angeles County Farm Bureau (LACFB) hopes that the school garden and agriculture's connection to our daily lives will continue to grow and flourish at Ocotillo Elementary School.



The agricultural related trivia questions were created as part of a curriculum booklet--http://agdayla.com/fact_sheets/index.php--for our **AG DAY LA** program. To learn more about LACFB's free annual agricultural educational venue for third and fourth graders please visit <http://agdayla.com/>.

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Farm Water Perspective

California Farm Water Coalition
5999 Freeport Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95822
(916) 391-5030
www.farmwater.org

Release immediate
Nov. 5, 2008

The California Farm Water Coalition is a non-profit, public education organization whose membership represents more than 6 million of the 9 million irrigated acres in California.

SAVING WATER MUST PASS ECONOMIC TEST

By Mike Wade, Executive Director
California Farm Water Coalition

Just about anyone can write a report and say anything they want...until someone issues a challenge and backs that challenge with facts. That's where the authors of a recent report that claimed as much as 3 million acre-feet of water could be conserved from farm use with a few management changes find themselves after four university researchers took the time to investigate the suggested management changes.

The report, "More with Less: Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency in California," was produced by an Oakland-based advocacy group that has long cast an eye on the use of water by California farmers. The authors suggested that improved irrigation systems and a shift in which crops are planted could result in considerable water savings.

Four researchers from the UC and CSU systems devoted their own time to apply the suggested changes from the report to today's farming industry and concluded that many of the suggestions were "old ideas." These university researchers have more than 120 years of experience in agricultural and landscape irrigation so it's a pretty good bet that they know what they are talking about.

It's always a good idea to look for ways to stretch existing water supplies but changes must stand the test of economics. The researchers agreed with the report that drip and micro irrigation practices create increased efficiencies in water use on the farm but not all farmers can adopt these practices, citing the high cost of installation and maintenance that must be offset with crop returns. Even owners of downtown businesses know that you can't spend more money than you take in.

The absence of economic support is also referenced by the university researchers in responding to the report's suggestion that shifting 1 million acres of field crops in the Central Valley to vegetables would result in a potential water savings of 1.2 million acre-feet. This action, noted the researchers, would nearly double the planted acreage of vegetables in the Central Valley. But no study or information is included in the report that supports such a radical move is economically feasible.

The report may have identified potential water savings in agriculture but the researchers' commentary questions the validity of these savings. The commentary by the researchers---Dr. Charles Burt, Dr. Lawrence Schwankl, Dr. David Zoldoske and Peter Canessa, a professional engineer---can be found on the CFWC website at www.farmwater.org.

Anyone seeking to find large amounts of water currently being used by our farmers that could be used elsewhere should read a 1982 university report by Dr. Robert Hagen and Dr. David Davenport that still provides some very valuable advice---

"Therefore, statements suggesting a 10-50% potential savings in agricultural water conservation by improving irrigation applications systems are a disservice to the people of California because water policy and action programs based on such statements will substantially underestimate the state's needs for future water supplies."

Food Grows Where Water Flows

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Announcements

What's Your Opinions on CA's food future?

Public comment is being sought for [Agricultural Vision](#), a document produced by the California State Board of Food and Agriculture and the Department of Food and Agriculture. One of the policy priorities in the proposal is keeping a healthier planet through agricultural stewardship. They hope for comment from the public as well as farmers, ranchers and others involved in the farming sector.

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