

County Director's Notes

Volume 3, Issue 1

November 2006

2007 Upcoming Meetings

January

February

- Forage Seminar (TBA)
- Table Grape Seminar
- Tri-County Walnut Day
- Winter Cotton Meeting
- Tri-County Vegetable Crop Meeting

March

April

- Spring Citrus Meeting

May

- Blackberry Field Day
- Blueberry Field Day
- Garbanzo Bean Field Day
- Olive Day
- Tree Fruit Research & Variety Trial Field Day

June

- Tree Fruit Research & Variety Trial Field Day
- Summer Cotton Growers Meeting

July

- Tree Fruit Research & Variety Trial Field Day
- Summer Cotton Growers Meeting

August

- Tree Fruit Research & Variety Field Day
- Fresh Market Tomato Variety Trial Field Day
- Specialty Crops Field Day
- Dry Bean Meeting

September

- Cotton Harvest Safety Training
- Alfalfa Field Meeting

October

- Fall Citrus Meeting
- Landscape Pest Management Evening Seminars

November

- Landscape Pest Management Evening Seminars
- Pesticide Workers Safety Meeting

December

- Annual Alfalfa Symposium

The Central Valley Project's Friant Division delivers water from the San Joaquin River to one million acres of farmland along the eastern side of the southern San Joaquin Valley. The delivery of this water and the conjunctive use, recharging critical ground water supplies, has resulted in the Friant service area annually producing more than \$3.5 billion crops. This diverse production, is grown on some 15,000 mostly small family operated farms, and contributes billions of dollars to the surrounding communities. Of the 1.15 million acre feet that the Friant Unit delivers, almost 50% is delivered to Tulare County.

Water is for Fight'n and Whiskey is For Drink'n

Jim Sullins, County Director

This quote has long been attributed to Mark Twain, and as one that has seen it up close and personal, I won't argue about it being right or wrong nor about whom actually said it. What is for certain is that for the last 18 years there has been a protracted fight over the future of our water, and possibly the future of Tulare County. The settlement of the long-running Friant/San Joaquin River case may be "welcomed news", however for many that does not quite describe the feeling.

Do you remember **Aron Lee Ralston**? In May 2003, Aron became famous the hard way. You may remember, Aron was hiking in Blue John Canyon, Utah, by himself. While climbing a canyon wall an 800 lb boulder fell and pinned his right arm. He was trapped for six days, and as he became delirious with dehydration, he finally came to the realization that probably no one was going to find him, at least alive. He decided that his best chance for survival was to cut off his arm at the elbow. This he successfully did with a low-quality multi-tool (aka. dull knife); I will skip the gory details. Aron was then able to hike out to where he found other hikers and the rest of the story is still developing. He has been fitted with a prosthesis, still is an accomplished climber, and now is on the speaker tour giving motivational talks. And if I ever get a chance, I will go to one of his programs.

Well, to me this is a pretty fitting metaphor for the "Settlement Agreement". Many experts much more experienced and smarter than I am, had been fighting to keep the San Joaquin's water for over 18 years and they were losing, the writing was on the wall. They were trapped by an 800 lb legal decision and the only way out was to give up an arm. If you asked Aron today, three years later if he made the right decision, I have no doubt he would say yes. Now it is going to depend on all of us to make the "Settlement Agreement" the right decision. Did we lose an arm?...At this point, very early in the process it is difficult to know exactly what we may have lost, the estimate is a delivery reallocation on an average of 175,000 AF to the San Joaquin for restoration.

What may be the impacts of the reallocation?

There are plans to attempt to recover some of the reallocation by bringing it back up through the Delta, and this may mitigate some of the loss. However for Tulare County which receives about 50% of the Friant deliveries and particularly for eastside growers with limited groundwater and cities dependent on groundwater and agriculture, the loss of this surface water could have serious consequences.

In 1996 and 1997, when the Central Valley Project Improvement Act was being debated, there were indications that the act would result in severe reductions in Friant deliveries. This prompted two studies to be conducted: Impacts of Water Reallocations on The Eastern San Joaquin Valley, 1996, C. Brown; G. Goldman; R. Howitt; J. Siebert; J. Sullins (UC-unpublished) and Analysis of the Impacts of Surface Water Reductions on the Eastern San Joaquin Valley of California, 1997, Northwest Economic Associates, Final Report to FWUA. The results from the first study in the 1996 report (called the UC study) indicated impacts so drastic that the second study (called the NEA study) was requested by the Friant Water Users Authority to analyze the UC results and to do a comparative study. Both of these studies ran into problems using computer models to predict changes in cropping decisions, water use, and impacts on groundwater, and although there were many discussions of whose approach was most valid in the end there was agreement that there would be significant impacts on agriculture and the surrounding communities.

Both studies were based on two levels of supply reduction, annual reductions of 200,000 and 500,000 acre feet (AF). The UC study analyzed a 10 year period with both drought and wet years, the NEA study analyzed a 20 year period with drought and wet year scenarios.

Neither study looked at a reduction of 175,000 AF, however the results of the studies at the 200,000 AF reduction is close enough to be considered as we look at long term consequences. Groundwater has traditionally served to buffer the effects of reduced surface water supplies during droughts, and would *temporarily* buffer irrigators from the “drought effect” caused by regulatory reduced CVP supplies. This ongoing pressure on the groundwater coupled with a natural drought cycle would likely result in groundwater basins being inadequately recharged even in wet years, and over time, increased pumping will draw down an already over-drafted groundwater basin. The increased costs of pumping from increasingly greater depths would cause land to be removed from production.

Ultimately, water quality problems associated with lower water tables and depleted aquifers would result in the idling of increasingly more crop acreage. Over drafting of aquifers may lead to subsidence further restricting aquifers and even damaging infrastructure.

With a loss of 200 TAF both studies agree that significant reductions in crop acreage would occur, with the NEA study estimating the idling of 173,000 acres and the UC study estimating a change in personal income of \$678 million and both studies estimating the loss of between 10 and 17 thousand jobs.

A lot has changed in the ten years since these studies. When these studies were conducted, we were not aware of the upcoming urban growth we would be facing in this area, and the increasing impact on groundwater it has and will have. A study conducted by Provost and Pritchard for the City of Visalia (September 9, 2004) analyzed how the shift of agricultural lands to urban/industrial use impacts groundwater. The impact of this land change is a net deficit of 0.19 acre feet per acre per year. Therefore as agricultural lands are converted, the groundwater overdraft is further exacerbated.

What does this mean for Tulare County agriculture and communities?

First and foremost, like Aron Ralston, we are going to have to make the most of a bad situation. A decision has been made, and there will be consequences, however if we work together, the result may not be as bad as if no decision was made, or made by the “800 lb legal system”. We must agree on some goals and work toward them. For example, the return of as much of the reallocation as possible through the Delta must be a priority. New water sources, such as Temperance Flat must also be a priority. Legislative support is going to be required for the settlement to be effective and for possible mitigations. Water has become too expensive for agriculture to bear the entire burden for groundwater recharge. Counties and cities must be proactive in planning for water as they plan for growth, such as Visalia has in developing a plan for acquiring water for recharge and developing conjunctive use facilities. Making the most of this situation is going to take leadership and building a common ground between all the stakeholders, because when we look at the consequences we are all at risk to losing more than the proverbial “right arm”.

PS. If I ever meet Aron, I hope he does not take offense to me using him as an example. My hat is off to Aron for making a decision that many of us could not face. And I admire all those that make the hard decisions that look to the future. It is easy and often too tempting to second guess not really knowing what we would do if put in the same place.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

California Dairy Quality Assurance Program

Workshops to assist San Joaquin Valley dairy producers with new air quality rules

Workshop Schedule

Tulare County (two workshops)	Kings County (two workshops)
Wednesday, November 15	Tuesday, November 28
10:00 am - Noon and 2:00 pm - 4pm	10:00 am - Noon and 2:00 pm - 4 pm
UC Cooperative Extension Office	UC Cooperative Extension Office
4437 S. Laspina Street	680 N. Campus Dr.
Tulare	Hanford

- ❖ What deadlines do producers face?
- ❖ Does it apply to me?
- ❖ Do I need to attend this if I've already been to a CDQAP air workshop on air quality?
- ❖ I already have a permit. Do I need to do anything else?
- ❖ How does this workshop help me? What is the fee? Must I bring it with me? Do I need to bring anything else with me? What if I can't attend the workshop.

For more information, please contact Debora Bacon, Dairy Advisor, 559-685-3309 ext. 213

Answer to these questions available at <http://cetulare.ucdavis.edu>



Vegetable Production Meeting South San Joaquin Valley

UC West Side Research & Extension Center, Five Points
Thursday, November 30, 2006
8:00 am - 12:15 pm

3.0 hours DPR and CCA credit requested

For more information contact: Michelle Le Strange
559-685-3303

Winter Tree Fruit Meeting

Dinuba Memorial Hall

December 6, 2006



\$20 registration fee includes refreshments, lunch and syllabus

Detailed agenda and registration form available in next Orchard Notes Newsletter

Continuing Education Credits requested

For more information, please call Kevin Day at (559) 685-3309 ext 211

University of California Offers Workshop on New National Animal Identification System 2 Sessions

BEEF CATTLE PRODUCERS

UC Davis VMTRC

December 5, 2006, 10:00 am - Noon

Beef cattle producers will get the latest information at a December 5th UC Cooperative Extension workshop on the new National Animal Identification System (NAIS) that is being developed to trace disease outbreaks in animals. The purpose of the system is to manage and respond to animal disease outbreaks, which can have devastating economic, animal health, and human health impacts.

At the meeting, UC Davis extension veterinarian John Maas will provide an overview of the NAIS used in other countries, and John Evans of the California Department of Food and Agriculture will provide an update on the NAIS and an overview of electronic ID technology and marketing opportunities with animal ID. Dr. Ed Henry, DVM, Veterinary Medical Office - Tulare District, will give an update on trichomoniasis in beef cattle.

The program will be from 10:00 am - NOON at the VMTRC, 18830 Road 112 in Tulare. The program is free of charge and includes lunch (RSVP required for lunch reservation). To RSVP, call (559) 685-3303.

For more information about the workshop, contact Jim Sullins at (559) 685-3303 or cetulare@ucdavis.edu.

DAIRY PRODUCERS

UC Cooperative Extension

December 5, 2006, Noon - 3:00 pm

Dairy producers will get the latest information at a December 5th UC Cooperative Extension workshop on the new National Animal Identification System (NAIS) that is being developed to trace disease outbreaks in animals. The purpose of the system is to manage and respond to animal disease outbreaks, which can have devastating economic, animal health, and human health impacts.

At the meeting, UC Davis extension veterinarian John Maas will provide an overview of the NAIS used in other countries, and John Evans of the California Department of Food and Agriculture will provide an update on the NAIS and an overview of electronic ID technology and marketing opportunities with animal ID. Dr. John Adaska, UC Davis VMTRC will be giving an update on Johnes Disease.

The program will be from noon to 3:00 p.m. at the Ag Building Auditorium, 4437 S. Laspina Street, in Tulare. The program is free of charge and includes lunch (RSVP required for lunch reservation). To RSVP, call (559) 685-3303.

For more information about the workshop, contact Debora Bacon at (559) 685-3309 ext. 213 or dbacon@ucdavis.edu.

Western Alfalfa & Forage Conference

December 11-13-2006, John Ascuaga's Nugget, Reno, NV

Sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Services of: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming

Monday, December 11—Field Tour: (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) Visit the Top Gun facility (SS# required for security), Nevada agriculture, water systems and tourist sites. Jay Davidson (NV), Chair.

Tuesday, December 12 - 6:30 - 10:00 a.m. Registration
General Session (8:00 a.m. - Noon)

Emerging Issues and Market Trends

- Introduction—Karen Hinton, Dean & Director, Univ. of Nevada, Reno, NV
- Emerging Forage Issues in the NW States—Glenn Shewmaker, Univ. of Idaho, Twin Falls, ID
- Emerging Forage Issues in SW States—Dan Putnam, Univ. of California, Davis, CA
- Trends in the Dairy Market—Bob Naerebout, Idaho Dairyman's Association, Twin Falls, ID
- Trends in the Horse Market—Laurie Lawrence, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Water, Economics, and Profitability

- Hay Prices and Trends —Seth Hoyt, National Ag. Statistics Service, Sacramento, CA and Tim Woodward, Forage Specialist, Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA
- Water Situation and the Future—Scott Matyac, CA Dept. Water Resources, Sacramento, CA
- Keeping your Head above Water in the Hay Industry—Dick Shader, Red Rock Ranch, MacDoel, CA and Richard Larsen, Larsen Farms, Dubois, ID

LUNCH -- Roy Smith, Cowboy Poet and Rancher, Montague, CA

THREE CONCURRENT AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1. Pest Management (1:25 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. Does not repeat)

- Toxic Weeds and Their Impacts—Birgit Puschner, University of California, Davis, CA
- RR Alfalfa for Stand Establishment—Mick Canevari, University of California CE, Stockton, CA
- Avoiding Weed Resistance in RR Alfalfa—Steve Orloff, University of California CE, Yreka, CA
- Controlling Weeds in Grass Hay—Rob Wilson, University of California, Susanville, CA
- Rodent Control Update—Gary Witmer, Wildlife Biologist, USDA-APHIS, Fort Collins, CO
- Alfalfa: Weevils, Aphids and Worms—Mike Rethwisch, University of California CE, Blythe, CA
- Managing the Major Alfalfa Diseases—Don Miller, Target Seed, Nampa, ID
- Year-Round IPM in Alfalfa—Pete Goodell, University of California, Parlier, CA

2. Utilizing a Wide Range of Forage Crops (1:25 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.; repeated 3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.)

- Summer Annual Forages —Tom Griggs, Forage Specialist, Utah State University, Logan, UT
- Cool Season Perennial Grasses—Kevin Jensen, Forage Geneticist, USDA-ARS, Logan, UT

- Warm Season Crops for Biomass—Steve Fransen, Washington State Univ., Prosser, WA
- Small Grain Forages—George Fohner, Plant Breeder, Resource Seeds, Gilroy, CA

3. Irrigation and Soils (1:25 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.; repeated 3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.)

- Potassium Management in Alfalfa—Rich Koenig, Washington State University, Pullman, WA
- Specialty Fertilizers and Micronutrients—Denise McWilliams, NM State Univ., Las Cruces, NM
- Allocation Strategies in Water Short Years—Howard Neibling, Univ. of Idaho, Twin Falls, ID
- Management of Center Pivot Irrigation—Guy Fipps, Texas A & M Univ., College Station, TX

5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Exhibitors Reception

5:30 p.m. Auction for Hay Growers' Groups

Wednesday, December 13 – DAY 2

6:15 a.m. CAFA Breakfast – (no charge—need ticket)
General Session (8:00 a.m. – Noon)

Future Trends with Alfalfa & Forages

- Biotech Traits in Alfalfa—Mark McCaslin, Forage Genetics Int'l., Minneapolis, MN
- Energy Crops and Their Implications for Forages—Joe Bouton, Nobel Institute, Ardmore, OK
- Future Trends in Alfalfa Establishment—John Kugler, Washington State Univ., Ephrata, WA
- Future Trends in Forage Quality Analysis—Dan Putnam, University of California, Davis, CA and Dan Undersander, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

Harvesting Technology and Quality

- Rate of Quality Change in Alfalfa—Neal Martin, USDA-ARS Dairy Forage Center, Madison, WI
- Cutting Schedule Strategies—Steve Orloff, Univ. of California, Yreka, CA and Dan Putnam, University of California, Davis, CA
- Harvesting Impacts on Forage Quality—Dan Undersander, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
- Protecting Hay Quality During Storage—Juan Guerrero, Univ. of California, El Centro, CA

LUNCH (on your own)

Risk Management in Forage Production (1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

- Overview of Risk Management—Willie Riggs, Univ. of Nevada, Winnemucca, NV
- Purchasing Equipment vs. Custom Rates—Herb Hinman, Washington State Univ., Pullman, WA
- One Cut Forage Systems for Drought and Energy Considerations—Steve Fransen, Washington State University, Prosser, WA and Tip Hudson, Washington State University, Prosser, WA
- Estate Planning—Kynda Curtis, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Reno, NV

Discussion

Adjourn

To Register online go to <http://alfalfa.ucdavis.edu>

Inside

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California Dairy Quality Assurance Program

November 15, 2006

Tulare County

November 28th

Kings County

Vegetable Production Meeting

South San Joaquin Valley

November 30, 2006

Winter Tree Fruit Meeting

December 6, 2006

Animal Identification Meeting

December 5, 2006

Western Alfalfa & Forage Conference

December 11 - 13, 2006

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