Recently, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District announced that the New Source Review Rule (Rule 2201) has been changed as a result of ozone non-attainment standards in the Valley. This change results in a significant drop to the major source threshold from 25 tons of NOx and VOC emissions per year to ten tons per year. Agriculture facilities have been required to obtain Air permits with emissions of half the major source threshold. The permit threshold for ag sources is now five tons per year for nitrous oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). This change will require smaller farms to now obtain a permit from the Air District.

There are various sources of equipment that contribute towards the five tons per year of emissions such as stationary and portable irrigation pump engines, emergency engines, boilers, gasoline tanks, confined animals (cows, poultry, swine, etc.) and various other operations and equipment that emit. Mobile source emissions, such as tractors, harvesters, trucks, etc., are not counted towards the five tons per year.

Workshops in Tulare are planned for September 23, 1:00-4:00 pm; October 12, 9:30 am-12:30 pm; and November 9, 9:30-12:30 pm at the Tulare County Ag Building auditorium, 4437 S. Laspinas, Tulare. Workshops will also be held in neighboring counties on different days with Fresno County hosting two workshops on October 13 at the Riverdale Memorial Hall. All workshops are free and you only need to attend one, but please pre-register with the Farm Bureau by calling 732-8301 or email tcfb@tulcofb.org.

You should plan to attend a workshop if your operation has any of the following:
- Irrigation or emergency generator engines greater than 50 hp that are currently not permitted (or do not have a Permit Exempt Equipment Registration (PEER));
- Total combined horsepower rating of irrigation pump engines of greater than 250 hp;
- Dairies with greater than 175 milk cows
- Greater than 100 acres of contiguous cropland and have not applied for a Conservation Management Practice (CMP) Plan
- NOx or VOC emissions greater than five tons per year from stationary sources of pollution at your farm (i.e., irrigation pump engines, confined animals, etc.).

An interest in learning about grant funding to replace irrigation pump engines:
- To better understand this rule and if your business must now apply for an operating permit, please access the calculator to determine your emissions at www.valleyair.org. Experts from the Air District will be on hand at the workshops to assist you in determining whether your business will need a permit or not. It is critical that you attend and file a permit application by December 10, 2010, or face being in violation with Air District rules.

Workshops are intended to assist you in determining your farm’s permit applicability and connect with funding opportunities to help you comply with these requirements. For additional assistance call the District’s Small Business Assistance line at (559) 230-5888 or the District’s Strategy and Incentives (SI) hotline at (559) 230-5800.

Farm Bureau will host an important workshop for property owners on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 from 6:00-7:30 pm on eminent domain and will feature presentations from a land use attorney, a farm appraiser, and others who are familiar with how eminent domain proceedings work. The workshop is free to Farm Bureau members to attend. Please call to RSVP at 732-8301 or email tcfb@tulcofb.org. The workshop will be an informative evening to help property owners understand how eminent domain works. The workshop will also provide an opportunity for attendees to discuss options they may pursue for legal representation if they are involved in an eminent domain procedure.

The workshop is the next step in assisting property owners after more than a three year battle with Southern California Edison Company. After the lengthy battle, eastern Tulare County residents will have a new power line to co-exist with in the years to come, as the San Joaquin Cross Valley Loop was approved by a decision of the California Public Utilities Commission in late July. Their approval allows SCE to construct the new line along the environmentally superior route 2, which many know to be the route that cuts through the rural community of Elderwood.

Farm Bureau, PACE, and other concerned citizens have waged an aggressive front to try to persuade the CPUC that another route alternative would be less harmful to agriculture, and although a partial victory was claimed with the Highway 198 route not being selected, the route 2 alternative still presents many hurdles for family farms and property owners near Elderwood.

After the exhaustive battle this has been, there are still many issues ahead for landowners who are located along the route to be constructed, which includes those currently under the existing Rector corridor that runs east-west where the new line will be constructed.

Farm Bureau has learned that...
Well folks, my dad always used to say, “as far as the pendulum swings one way, it will always eventually swing, to the same extent, the other way.” I was pondering that saying recently when word came down from Sacramento that Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed Senate Bill 1121, the farm worker overtime bill.

After Judge Wanger’s ruling a couple of months ago, to the positive, and now this, I can sense that pendulum slowly, albeit very slowly, tracing back in the right direction.

We in the farm and ranch community are grateful the governor vetoed the bill. It would have reduced wages for individual farm workers while adding complications for family farmers and ranchers. It is important to remember that existing California law already provides overtime pay for farm employees. They qualify for overtime wages after 10 hours of work in a single day, 60 hours of work in a week and for any hours worked on a seventh consecutive day.

The existing law gives enough flexibility for both farmers and their employees to deal with the variability in farm work. On-farm jobs typically slow down during the off season, and employees often count on working extra hours during the harvest to make up the difference. If overtime pay was required after eight hours under this bill, additional harvest crews would be hired or work would be rescheduled, and individual farm workers would lose hours and pay.

We’re pleased that Governor Schwarzenegger recognized farm work is unique due to seasonal patterns and the likelihood that unexpected weather can disrupt work schedules. His veto benefits farm employees as well as family farmers and ranchers.

This is a great example of your Farm Bureau membership dollars hard at work. We know you have many demands for your time and your dollars these days, but the grassroots power of Farm Bureau and the dues you pay annually, go a long way in helping key legislation from impacting our farms and businesses. This is another great example of Farm Bureau working for you. Until next time, keep on farming!

As summer harvest gears up for many, there are some significant changes expected to the Central Valley’s irrigated lands program (known also as the agricultural lands waiver, or ‘ag waiver’ for short). These changes will impact irrigated lands throughout the San Joaquin Valley and growers need to be aware that a series of public meetings will be held regarding the changes in the coming months.

For seven years, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board has regulated discharges from irrigated agriculture to rivers and streams. This past month, the Regional Board released a proposed program and draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) that would expand regulated irrigated agricultural discharges to include both surface waters and ground waters from over 7 million acres of land.

The irrigated lands regulatory program was the result of changes in the California Water Code by the Legislature. In 2003, under new rules, the Central Valley Water Board allowed farmers to combine resources by forming water quality coalitions. Through the coalitions, monitoring of waterways was initiated and regional management plans were developed to prevent pollution and improve water quality.

Under the proposal, agricultural water quality coalitions would continue in a lead role working on local solutions with growers to protect rivers and streams and, for the first time, to protect ground water basins used for drinking water. The Regional Water Board has stated that they will issue an individual permit to a grower who is not able to comply with the new groundwater monitoring requirements as part of a coalition group. Farm Bureau is concerned that individual permits will be a much larger cost and be more onerous for growers, so we encourage you to maintain your participation in a coalition group.

The Water Board is providing a 60-day comment period on the proposed program, draft program EIR, and economic analysis. Additional information, including the documents available for review and the dates and locations of upcoming public workshops, can be found at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/.

What can you do to comment on these important changes? Participate in the public workshops that will be held at the SCE AG TAC facility, 4175 S. Laspinas in Tulare on September 8, from 5:00-8:00pm. Farm Bureau will be providing talking points and comments for growers who can attend the workshops.

It is imperative that agriculture have a strong turnout at these public meetings and voice their concerns about changes to the irrigated lands program, so that growers have a workable solution to these regulatory requirements.
In Season at Local Farmers Market

Paige Williams, market manager, Visalia Farmers Market

It’s the perfect time for relaxed late afternoons in the yard and the beginning of crisp mornings. At Visalia’s Farmers Market, produce reflects this seasonality. Although summer vegetable crops will continue their availability until the first frost of the season, fall specialties such as apples and grapes have already made their way to vendor’s tables and last weekend heralded the appearance of this year’s pomegranates.

The pomegranate, its’ juice acclaimed for its health benefits, has a very attractive appearance. The leathery skin of the pomegranate defies its internal beauty. The pomegranate, reveals hundreds of glistening ruby red gem-like seeds; each surrounded by a seed coat and packed with delicious juice. These ruby delights are known to be one of the oldest cultivated fruits. Originated some 4,000 years ago in the Middle East, they were brought to CA by Spanish Padres during the missions’ establishment. Although Pomegranates are grown in other places such as Spain, Italy, Central and South America, and the Middle East, the San Joaquin Valley of CA is home to the United States’ only concentrated commercial Pomegranate production.

If you have not yet tried a Pomegranate, I highly recommend the experience. First of all, they are good for you. The juice is loaded with disease fighting antioxidants, and when you eat the aril, seed and all, they’re low in calories, high in fiber (from the seed itself), and packed with folates. From this point on, remove all the seed arils at one by one, or if you are short on time, remove all the seed arils at once. To do this, place each section in a bowl of water. Under the water roll out the arils and discard everything else. You can then strain out the water and eat the arils by themselves or use them in recipes.

Pomegranate Syrup
1 cup pomegranate juice
1/2 cup sugar
To Prepare Juice
For 1 cup of juice, put 1-1/2 to 2 cups of seeds in a blender; blend until liquefied. Pour mixture through a cheesecloth-lined strainer or sieve.

To Prepare Pomegranate Syrup
In a 1-2 quart pan, combine pomegranate juice and sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring until sugar is completely dissolved. Boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat and cool. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.

Pomegranate Champagne
1 or 2 tablespoons pomegranate syrup
Put a tablespoon or 2 of pomegranate syrup into your favorite sparkling wine. Add a few fresh seeds into the glass and the bubbles will make them dance!

Spicy Pomegranate Baked Pears
4 firm baking pears
Put a tablespoon or 2 of pomegranate syrup into your favorite sparkling wine. Add a few fresh seeds into the glass and the bubbles will make them dance!

When it comes to health care coverage, you can rest easy. Health Net offers Farm Bureau members health care coverage options, including dental and vision, that are easy to understand, have the security of no hidden surprises — and are designed to fit your budget.

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California Farm Bureau Health Insurance plans are underwritten by Health Net Life Insurance Company. Coverage is subject to individual underwriting. Health Net Dental HMO plans are underwritten by Dental Benefit Providers of California, Inc. (DBP). Health Net Dental PPO and select dental plans are underwritten by Interior Insurance Company, a subsidiary of DBP and California Benefit Providers of California, Inc. are the administrators or administrators of Health Net Inc. as the HMO, ‘America’s Best Health Insurance Plans’ is a trademark of U.S. News & World Report, Inc. All rights reserved.

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Proper Lifting Helps Reduce Back Injuries

By Mike Klimenko
State Fund Farm Bureau Group Manager

Back injuries are high on the list of leading causes of lost time from work among agricultural workers in California. In fact they are so common that four out of every five adults in America experience back pain at one time or another.

But until a person actually suffers a back injury, he or she doesn’t really grasp how painful and debilitating these injuries are and how difficult they are to overcome. Many of these injuries could have been avoided if people were more aware of how the back functions and how to safely lift bulky or heavy loads.

Back injuries frequently occur when heavy or bulky loads are lifted improperly. While the weight of an object to be lifted does contribute to possible injury, the chance of injury increases significantly if the back is twisted or the arms are outstretched. Whenever possible avoid lifting heavy objects without assistance.

If it is necessary to lift, be sure to use proper techniques. Let your legs do the work, move straight up and down, keep your back straight and bend only at the knees. It is important to hold the load close to the body and to avoid lifting and twisting simultaneously.

Keep these lifting tips in mind and share them with others on your farm or ranch:

- Whenever possible, avoid lifting.
- Use lift-assist devices or slide items on the same level rather than lift them.
- If it is necessary to lift, be sure to use proper techniques.
- Use carts to move loads from one location to another. Keep the path clear and the cart in good working order.

Another contributor to back pain occurs more frequently among farmers and ranchers. That is bodily stress that is caused by vehicular vibrations, whether it’s while operating a harvester or being jolted around while bouncing along a farm road in a pickup truck.

Here are some ideas that might help:

- Position the seat forward so that your knees are bent. If the tilt of the seat can be adjusted, change the angle slightly every so often; place a cushion at the small of your back to ease pressure on the lower back; change your sitting position frequently or get out and walk around for a few minutes every hour or so; and grip the steering wheel at the nine and three o’clock hand positions to put your arms and shoulders in a more neutral position.

Back pain is a warning that something is wrong. It is important to recognize this warning and take steps to prevent a back problem from getting worse.

Since 1943, Farm Bureau and State Fund have been business partners. When your policy comes up for renewal, if you are not insured with State Fund, please be sure to get a quote in our Farm Bureau Group Program.

Cotton Harvest Safety Training Class

The annual safety training program is directed to cotton harvest equipment operators, crews and farm employees in conjunction with farm managers, supervisors and growers. The training will be held in English and Spanish on the morning of Wednesday, October 6.

If you have farm managers, supervisors or other employees who need a safety training refresher course, register now for the Cotton Harvest Safety Training Class at the Mid-Valley Cotton Gin. There will be plenty of general farm safety information available. Informational handouts and certificates of participation will be provided to document safety and health training.

Please contact the Tulare County Farm Bureau at 732-8301 by October 1 to register.

Invasive Pest Alert: Melon Fruit Fly

Five melon fruit flies were found in a McPhail trap south of Lamont in Kern County on August 9. CDFA is intensifying trapping to define the quarantine area and growers inside the quarantine area will be required to enter into compliance agreements specifying the pesticide treatments they will use and the methods of harvesting and shipping fruit they will employ to prevent spread of this pest. Citrus is one of its many host plants.

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Volunteering: On Saturday, July 24, the Young Farmers & Ranchers members met at FoodLink, a local non-profit. The goal was to donate time helping to repackag food that will go to local families in need. The task assigned for the day was far from glamorous but worthwhile. The group finished ahead of schedule and worked themselves out of a job. By 11 a.m., seven pallets of Capri Sun had been sorted through. The staff at FoodLink was easy to work with and made the volunteer effort very enjoyable for all those who attended the work day.

Upcoming Events: Save the Date! The Young Farmers and Ranchers are pleased to host Casino Night on Saturday, November 6th at the International Agri-Center in Tulare. Come out for a night of food, dancing and of course, your favorite card and table games. Tickets are $25, and all proceeds go to support the Young Farmers and Ranchers of Tulare County. Contact (559) 732-8301 or tularecountyyfr@yahoo.com to reserve your tickets or to make a donation.

Save the Date: The next YFR meeting will be Tuesday, September 14th at 6:30 pm, at Veaer’s Mexican Resturant in Tulare. Email tularecountyyfr@yahoo.com for details.

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Multiple crews operating throughout the San Joaquin Valley

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Art and ag come together in downtown Visalia, September 9 through 11. National artists and professors Lori Esposito of the University of North Dakota and Duane McDiarmid of Ohio University have been commissioned to build a sculpture representing the Tulare County community through a sculpture that will be showcased at the Garden Street Plaza, Thursday through Saturday. The eight-foot sculpture will incorporate more than 50 portraits of individuals in the agriculture community. Children and adults will be invited to decorate real fruit to be inserted into the sculpture. The sculpture serves as a sort of main course for a weekend with a full menu of activities and entertainment.

Kicking off the festival will be the Event’s Visalia Annual Waiters Race at 5:30 on Main Street in Visalia. At 8:00 pm, SoundNVision presents local favorite Mezcal that performs high-energy Latin music. Artist Amie T Rangel’s drawings will be on exhibit during the week at the COS Art Gallery.

On Friday, the festivities continue! Visitors can experience a free vaudeville performance at the Enchanted Playhouse and sample local restaurants signature menu items at the Marriott. An artist reception will be held at Arts Visalia gallery.

As the sculpture is completed, Garden Street Plaza will be brewing with activities including an artist faire from 3:00 to 7:00 pm and kids activities sponsored by Taste Tulare County and ImagineU Children’s Museum. The Visalia Community Players will offer another free performance at 2:00 pm of the hilarious play “Greater Tuna”. At the 210, a free opera Taste of Mozart will be performed at 6:30. For the finale, the City of Visalia’s Transit Expansion will be opened to the public and the Tulare County Symphony will perform at 8:00 pm.

A full schedule of events can be found online at www.visaliaarts.com.

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*Southern California Gas Company*
Sure Program Deadline Approaching—Applications Accepted Until September 30

The deadline to submit applications for assistance for 2008 crop year losses under the USDA Farm Service Agency 2008 Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) program payment is September 30, 2010. "Farmers and ranchers in California have to cope with all types of natural disasters," said Farm Service Agency State Executive Director Val Dolcini. "The 2008 Farm Bill created the SURE program to assist growers when these weather-related disasters cause crop losses."

SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses. The program takes into consideration crop losses on all crops grown by a producer nationwide. SURE provides assistance in an amount equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE farm guarantee and total farm revenue. The farm guarantee is based on the amount of crop insurance and Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on the farm. Total farm revenue takes into account the actual value of production on the farm as well as insurance indemnities and certain farm program payments.

To be eligible for SURE, producers must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops.

For 2008 crops, producers had the opportunity to obtain a waiver of the risk management purchase requirement through a buy-in provision. Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

Additional information about SURE is available at county FSA offices or online at www.fsa.usda.gov.
The study, published in June in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, has been embraced by the agriculture industry as proof that some of environmentalists’ complaints are off the mark.

“It’s actually something that I’ve been saying for quite some time,” said Leon Corzine, 60, an Assumption, Ill., corn farmer and past president of the National Corn Growers Association. “We really need to talk more about the environmental benefits. The new practices that we do, the new tools in the tool box, whether it’s seed or equipment — our efficiency gains are really kind of dramatic.”

But some environmentalists said the study is flawed, arguing it’s based on unrealistic scenarios of what would have happened if yields hadn’t increased during the study period. The yield is the amount of a crop grown per acre.

Bill Freese, a chemist with the Washington, D.C.-based Center For Food Safety, questioned the researchers’ motives.

“I get the sense that, just reading this, that their purpose here is to provide some kind of justification for industrial agriculture,” said Freese, whose group promotes organic agriculture.

The study, Davis said, began with conversations between the authors about whether organic agriculture could feed the world and whether traditional agriculture deserved the “black eye” it often gets from advocates of green farming.

The other authors are Jennifer Burney, a physicist who focuses on energy and food security research at Stanford’s Program on Food Security and the Environment, and David Lobell, an associate professor at Stanford’s Department of Earth System Science.

Craig Cox, of the Washington, D.C.-based Environmental Working Group, said he was disappointed the study didn’t offer more recommendations.

“Of course higher yields are a good thing,” Cox said. “The real question is, how do we get higher yields without a lot of other serious consequences that our agricultural intensification has produced?”

Corzine, the Illinois farmer, acknowledged the limits of the study’s claims but said it could be a useful tool for farmers like himself to help teach Americans a little bit about how their food is produced.

“They don’t understand or don’t really know what goes on the farm,” he said. “Rather than just me tell my story, I have to back it up by saying what’s going on at Stanford is really helpful.”

Online: Carnegie Institution at Stanford: http://www-ciwdpb.stanford.edu/
Leadership Farm Bureau Applications due October 15

If you are a current TCFB member who is looking to move into a leadership role and wish to develop your skills and become more familiar with the issues facing California agriculture, then you want to know about the Leadership Farm Bureau program. All Tulare County Farm Bureau voting members are eligible to participate in this nine-month, accelerated leadership development program. Applications are being accepted now through October 15, 2010 to enroll in the 2011 program.

The intensive program provides more than 250 hours of instruction over seven weekend sessions conducted between February and December. Although meeting times may vary according to each month’s agenda, most meetings are held in various locations throughout California from noon Friday to noon Sunday. There are three distinct segments to the program: Governmental Affairs, which includes lobbying sessions in California and Washington, D.C.; Agriculture, which focuses on issues affecting farmers and ranchers in California, the nation, and globally; and Personal Development, which will develop and enhance each participant’s leadership skills through media training, public speaking, the art of negotiation, and more. For more detailed information about the program, you can view the activities from last year’s program on CFBF’s Leadership Farm Bureau page (www.cfbf.com/lfb/).

“I’ve really enjoyed the leadership program and encourage anyone who is interested in learning about policy, leadership and working with the media to apply for this worthwhile program,” said Liza Teixeira, current Leadership Farm Bureau participant.

Eligible TCFB candidates must possess demonstrated leadership potential and agree to attend all scheduled activities. Applications must be accompanied by a recommendation form completed by TCFB President Larry Pelzner as well as recommendation forms completed by two personal references of the applicant’s choice.

Applications will be reviewed by a regional selection committee. Semifinalists will be contacted for a personal interview, and the CFBF Executive Committee will select the final program participants. While the selection committee will base its choice of participants on the information provided in the application and from the personal interview, priority will be given to applicants in production agriculture and those currently serving as officers or board members in a county Farm Bureau. The $250 program fee for selected participants is due by the first class meeting in February.

To obtain an application, visit the Leadership Farm Bureau page on the CF BF W e b s i t e (www.cfbf.com/lfb/apply.cfm), or contact the Leadership Farm Bureau Division at (916) 561-5590.

Former Youth Leadership Student Receives CFBF Scholarship

The California Farm Bureau Scholarship Foundation has awarded a $1,600 scholarship to Amanda Meneses of Tulare County. Meneses was one of 79 winners of the $165,750 distributed in this year’s annual awards program.

The scholarships are awarded to students preparing for a career in the agricultural industry. The Foundation has been awarding scholarships since 1955 since 1907.
Tulare County Farm Bureau offers a special category of membership for those interested in supporting Farm Bureau as business owners. If you have a business, or merely want to show your support for the organization, in the Business Support Category is encouraged. Here’s what you get in return for your annual dues:

- A free listing every month on this page.
- Discounts on display advertising in this newspaper.
- All the benefits and services of Farm Bureau membership.
- News of events and issues in TCFB News and E-News.

You will also receive the advertisement and support of the agricultural industry and Tulare County Farm Bureau Join us to accomplish our mission: To promote and enhance the viability of Tulare County agriculture.