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UCCE Colusa County Program Updates September 2026

Orchards Report (Franz Niederholzer)
UCCE Orchards Advisor, Colusa and Sutter/Yuba Counties

Save the date:

November 19: 2026 Orchard Crop IPM Review, Sutter Co Ag Building conference room

December 8-10: 2026 Almond Board Conference, Sacramento, reg is now open

Almonds:

It's early, yet, in the processing season, but damage to Independence almonds is up compared to Nonpareil, the only other variety making up any real production volume in the August 2026 Position Report from the Almond Board of California. I'm hearing that a leading cause of rejects in Independence is "brown spot". In the Sacramento Valley, the primary cause of this damage is generally believed to be leaffooted bug (LFB) feeding. [Stinkbugs are a major cause of this damage in the San Joaquin Valley, but stinkbug activity is reported to be much less in the Sacramento Valley.] Monitoring and controlling LFB will be a topic of winter talks and newsletter articles from UC Advisors.

It's great to see Nonpareil rejects in Colusa County down by half, so far, from 2025 to 2026 (August data, only). Hopefully, this trend will continue into the pollinizers quality reports as the fall progresses.

As of August 13 and, again, on September 10, the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center (cpc.ncep.noaa.gov) forecast a 90% chance of a "very strong" El Niño event for the winter of 2026-27. Orchards on flat ground with limited drainage/field exit for runoff water could be most at risk if the forecasted weather arrives in December-March as predicted. See our upcoming almond newsletter for more information, especially a GREAT article on wet winter practices in almonds by Dr. Jaime Ott, UCCE Orchards Advisor in Tehama, Glenn, and Butte Counties.

Wishing all growers safe and successful harvests.

Please call (530) 218-2359 or email (fjniederholzer@ucanr.edu) with any questions or comments. Check out sacvalleyorchards.com for latest meeting calendar, newsletter articles, and ET values.

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Protecting the almond harvest from rain.

(Table 36.1 in Almond Production Manual, UC ANR pub. 3364)

Orchard conditions	Prescribed action when 5-day forecast predicts: Dry, windy, or normal weather	High Humidity	Showers	Rain
No rain has occurred, nuts are:				
On tree	Knock	Knock	Knock	Wait
Knocked	Harvest normally	Harvest normally	Open*	Open
Opened and raked	Harvest normally	Harvest normally	When dry, windrow	When dry, windrow
Windrowed	Stockpile or pick up	Stockpile or pick up	Stockpile or pick up	Stockpile or pick up
After 0-¼ in rain, almonds are				
On tree	Knock	Knock	Wait	Wait
Knocked	Harvest normally	When dry, open	When dry, open	Wait
Opened and raked	Harvest normally	When dry, windrow	When dry, windrow	1.Wait or windrow or 2. Pick up and machine-dry
Windrowed	When dry, pick up	When dry, pick up	1. When dry, pick up or 2. Pick up and machine-dry	1. when dry, pick up or 2. Pick up and machine-dry
After ¼ - ½ in rain, almonds are				
On tree	Knock	Wait	Wait	Wait
Knocked	Harvest normally	Harvest normally, windrow	Harvest normally	Open
Open and raked	Harvest normally	Harvest normally, windrow	Harvest normally	1. Wait or windrow or 2. Pick up and machine-dry
Windrowed	Drop-Chute†	1. Drop-chute or 2. Pick up and machine-dry	1. Drop-chute or 2. Pick up and machine-dry	1. Wait and drop-chute or 2. Pick up and machine-dry
After more than ½ in rain, almonds are				
On tree	Knock	Wait	Wait	Wait
Knocked	Open	Harvest normally	Harvest normally	Open
Opened and raked	Harvest normally	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry
Windrowed	Drop-chute	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry	1. Pick up and move nuts to dry area or 2. Machine-dry

*To “open”, in this context, is to sweep almonds off berms but not gather them into windrows.

† To drop-chute is to run nuts through the pickup machine and drop them from an open cart. This process removes leaves and promotes quick drying by laying out a wide swath of almonds. This process is also known as “conditioning” nuts.

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Master Gardener and Community Outreach Coordinator (Karyna Barrera)

The **Donna Critchfield Demonstration Garden** is in the middle of our summer to fall transition. We harvested the last of our summer peppers, eggplants, tomatoes, and flowers, and we are gearing up to start planting our fall garden in October.

We have been busy with events and garden work days. On September 12 our **Grandparents Day** at the Demonstration Garden made the front page of the Pioneer Review! We had a small turn out but it was a lovely morning spent with all generations.

We are partnering with **Colusa County's Department of Health and Human Services** and County Maintenance to landscape their building and make their space more inviting. We are using it as an opportunity for a Right Plant, Right Place Workshop, that will take place in November.

We will be hosting our annual **Pumpkin Centerpiece Workshop** on October 15 at 6pm at the CIP Conference Room. You can sign up using the links on our website and social media pages or use the QR code on our flyers posted around the county.

We have several **youth educational projects** in the works, in collaboration with 4-H and CalFresh. We plan to continue programming in Arbuckle and Williams at the elementary schools. Three of our new volunteers are planning a 4-H Garden Fun project for primary 4-H members in Colusa. We are also starting a collaboration with Migrant Housing in Williams to plan a summer lesson series in the summer of 2027.

Irrigation and Water Resources Program (Curt Pierce)

UCCE Area Irrigation & Water Resources Advisor

We are working with local partners to follow up on the RCD's successful SGMA 101 and 201 events with a SGMA 301 event focusing on the fundamentals of groundwater accounting. The need for such an event was made clear by the questions posed at these events, and with the relevant RCD funding coming to a close, we are stepping in to work with them on this next chapter in SGMA education. More details to come in the following weeks.

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Agronomy Report (Sarah Light)

UCCE Agronomy Advisor, Sutter/Yuba, and Colusa Counties

- Agronomy Program August Newsletter available with articles about broomrape management, *Fusarium falciforme* (an emerging root and stem rot pathogen), nitrogen released from cover crops, and information about new cover crop resources and free soil health testing: https://ucanr.edu/sites/default/files/2026-08/Sacramento%20Valley%20Field%20Crops%20Newsletter%20-%20August%202026.pdf
- Blackeye bean variety trial completed for the 2026 season: commercial and experimental lines were evaluated in an on-farm trial.

4-H Program (Mary Zoller)

UCCE 4-H Regional Program Coordinator, Region 3 (Shasta, Trinity, Tehama, Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba) Based at UCCE Colusa Office

National 4-H Week is October 4th–10th! Our 4-H clubs will celebrate with activities that highlight what 4-H offers youth and families, while the Colusa County Board of Supervisors recognize 4-H through special proclamations. We are expanding our in-school programming in local schools by partnering with the UC Master Gardener Program to enhance our TWIGS gardening education kits with hands-on training. 4-H will be hosting a booth at the **Williams Upper Farm Day on October 14th.** This event is in partnership with UC Community Nutrition Program, UC Master Gardeners, and the Dairy Princess Program.

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Rice Report (Sarah Marsh Janish)

UCCE Rice Advisor – Colusa & Yolo Counties

Summary of the 2026 Water Discharge Program and Rice Pesticide Program Results

The California Rice Commission (CRC) undertakes the Water Discharge Program (WDP) and the Rice Pesticide Program (RPP) to manage water quality, regulatory compliance, and environmental stewardship for rice growers in the Sacramento Valley. For 2026, the monitoring for these programs was completed in August 2026.

For the Rice Pesticide Program (RPP), no detections of thiobencarb were reported above the agricultural drain performance goal, anticipating that treated acres will be similar to last year. This program is supported by Valent and the County Agricultural Commissioners in rice-growing counties. The Rice Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) surface water program monitored benzobicyclon (and its herbicidal metabolite) and propanil, with results below or near USEPA's lowest aquatic life benchmark thresholds. The pyrethroid surface water monitoring results indicated toxicity and chronic pyrethroid triggers in early and late May, and early June, at the upper Colusa Basin Drain (CBD5). Sediment samples also indicated toxicity present in both samples at Sacramento Slough (SSB). Data from UCCE and UC Davis has indicated that local pest populations can develop a high degree of resistance to pyrethroids. Given the risk for off-site movement and the regulatory burden of management plans, field-level analysis of pest pressure and non-pyrethroid alternatives must be considered. Additional testing for beneficial green algae was non-toxic in all results for the monitoring season. Craig Riddle of the CRC will be presenting more on this at the 2027 Rice Winter Grower Meetings (dates announced below).

Herbicide Resistance Testing – 2026 Entries Close Soon!

We are entering the close of harvesting weed seeds for the herbicide resistance testing program. As a reminder, this is a free service provided to the California rice industry to identify and monitor herbicide resistance in rice weeds.

What does resistance look like?

- Weeds are located in clumps, not evenly distributed across the field.
- "Streaks" of weeds may be found coming away from the clumps, as if moved by field equipment.
- Weeds are found within the field, not just edges.
- There is no pattern to the distribution that would indicate a skip or clogged nozzle.

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Collection timeline

Species	Best timing	What to look for
Watergrass	Near rice harvest	Brownish seeds
Sprangletop	Aug-Sep	Brown/dry seeds
Sedges	July-early Sep	Yellow seeds with brown hulls (dustlike, very small)
Bulrush (roughseed)	Summer-fall	Black seeds with fine hair

Collection best practices

- Sample from multiple plants (several handfuls)
- Target areas you know were treated with the herbicide of interest
- Avoid field margins
- **Dry samples in a paper bag to prevent mold – no plastic!**
- **Don't collect too early – seeds need to be mature to germinate. Seeds should be about to or currently shattering when harvested.**

How to submit

1. Complete the submission form at agronomy-rice.ucdavis.edu (make sure to include your email!).
2. Deliver your sample to a local UCCE Farm Advisor or directly to the Rice Experiment Station (RES) in Biggs.
3. Get results via email (typically in March of the following year).

Need help identifying which weeds to collect or how to sample? Reach out to Sarah Marsh Janish for more information! We also have submission forms available in the Colusa UCCE office.

Upcoming Meetings and Reminders

2027 Rice Winter Grower Meetings

Specific locations and agendas will be announced as we approach these dates; please save the date for any meeting that suits your schedule. As always, this is a series of five meetings with identical content repeated throughout the northern Sacramento Valley rice-growing counties.

- Feb 16
  - Yolo County Farm Bureau, 8 am
- Feb 17
  - Richvale, 8 am
  - Glenn Co, 1 pm
- Feb 18
  - Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room, 8 am
  - Yuba-Sutter, 1 pm

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Dairy Report (Betsy Karle)
UCCE Dairy Advisor, based in Glenn County

Nothing to report

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PUMPKIN CENTERPIECE

Workshop

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

6:00-7:00pm

CIP Conference Room
100 Sunrise Blvd in Colusa

$40 per person

Use QR Code to Register

Questions?
530-458-0570

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