

FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL UPDATE

August 20, 2021

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEDERAL GRANT TO SUPPORT NUTRITION INCENTIVES AT CALIFORNIA FARMERS' MARKETS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute for Food and Agriculture has awarded the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program COVID Relief and Response (GusCRR) grant of \$6,325,464 to support low-income shoppers through the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP). [Click here](#) to view USDA's news release.

"CDFA is grateful to receive a COVID Relief and Response grant," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. "It will go a long way toward helping our families afford healthy food and supporting California farmers."

CDFA's CNIP provides nutrition incentives to CalFresh (formerly known as food stamps) shoppers at participating farmers' markets and retail sites, allowing shoppers to purchase more California-grown fruits and vegetables. For every CalFresh dollar spent, CNIP provides an additional dollar to spend on California-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. CNIP has been popular during the COVID-19 pandemic, as more shoppers looked for ways to stretch their food budgets, signed up for CalFresh, and visited farmers' markets to shop outdoors and support local farmers. Because of the increased demand for nutrition incentives, CNIP has been distributing them much faster than anticipated. The GusCRR grant will keep CNIP solvent while meeting the increased demand. The newly awarded GusCRR grant builds upon CDFA's current GusNIP grant. The GusCRR grant will provide additional funds for nutrition incentives at farmers' markets, farm stands and mobile markets that have seen high demand during the COVID-19 pandemic. These incentives provide crucial support to low-income Californians using their CalFresh dollars at California's Certified Farmers' Markets, and to California farmers and the local economy, bolstering the resilience of the food system in our state. CNIP is administered by CDFA's [Office of Farm to Fork](#), which leads CDFA's food access work. More information on the California Nutrition Incentive Program, grantees and participating retail outlets can be found at <https://cafarmtofork.cdfa.ca.gov/cnip.html>.

CDFA ANNOUNCED VACANCIES ON THE SEED ADVISORY BOARD

The California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Pest Exclusion Branch is announcing three vacancies on the Seed Advisory Board. The board is composed of seven members who are seed labelers, and two members who may be seed dealers. These nine members must be registered to sell seed under provisions of the California Seed Law and represent the functions of seed production, conditioning, marketing, or utilization. The board also has two public members.

The three upcoming vacant positions are for one seed seller and two seed labelers. The successful candidates will be appointed to serve a three-year term beginning on April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2025. Individuals interested in being considered for this board appointment should send a brief letter of interest and a completed Prospective Member Appointment Questionnaire with resume to the

California Department of Food and Agriculture, Pest Exclusion Branch, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, California 95814, Attention: Brenda Lanini, by Friday, September 3, 2021.

For additional information, and the Prospective Member Appointment Questionnaire, visit the Seed Services Program web page under "Seed Advisory Board" [here](#). You may also contact Brenda Lanini, Senior Environmental Scientist, Nursery, Seed, and Cotton Program (916) 654-0345 or e-mail seedservices@cdfa.ca.gov.

CDFA NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - ANIMAL CONFINEMENT (PROPOSITION 12)

On May 28, 2021 the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) jointly with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) proposed regulations regarding the implementation of Proposition 12. During the 45-day public comment period, both Departments received requests to hold a public hearing which has been set for next week. The public hearing will convene on August 27, 2021 beginning at 10:00 a.m. PDT and the hearing will continue until 2:00 p.m. PDT. The hearing will be held remotely and will not have a physical location. The CDFA and CDPH will accept oral or written statements during the hearing. Oral testimony will be limited to two minutes per speaker, and the hearing will be recorded.

This public hearing is a listening only session for the purpose of accepting comments regarding the proposed regulations, therefore CDFA and CDPH will not be responding to the public's comments or answering questions during the hearing. If you would like to participate or view this hearing, follow this [link](#). CA Farm Bureau will be testifying on this issue as we continue to express our concerns on the implementation of these regulations.

Commodities

As Friday Review readers might recall, [AB 535](#) (Aguiar-Curry, D-Winters) was amended on July 15. The amendments simply remove the reference to the term "containing" and the bill requires any bottled olive oil with the term "California" on its label, to include in equal sized font, a notation of the percent of olives used that are derived from California. This amendment addressed concerns from stakeholders including several County Farm Bureaus. CA Farm Bureau helped to facilitate a letter this week removing the counties' opposition and relaying their now neutral position on the bill. Staff: Katie Little at klittle@cfbf.com or Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.

Utilities

The Senate Energy, Utilities, and Communications Committee will hold an Oversight Hearing on August 25, 2021 at 1:30 pm. The topic is:

Keeping the Power On: A Focus on Electricity Reliability and The California Public Utilities Commission and the Public Advocates Office Annual Update to the Legislature

No agenda has been posted yet, but may be available closer to the hearing date and can be accessed at: <https://seuc.senate.ca.gov/content/2021-2022-oversight-hearings>
Staff: Karen Mills at kmills@cfbf.com and Robert Spiegel at rspiegel@cfbf.com

Waste

Last year, Farm Bureau and others supported legislation to extend the allowance for alternative management of treated waste wood, rather than be classified as a hazardous material governed by the Department of Toxic Substances. Without notice or an alternative, Governor Newsom vetoed the legislation, forcing the Department to scramble and develop an interim variance process. In response, Farm Bureau is supporting [AB 332](#) (Assembly Environmental Safety), a bill which would re-authorize the alternative management standards that have been in place in regulation since July 2008. This bill is

currently awaiting a vote on the Senate Floor, but it is on the consent calendar making its passage very likely. Staff: Katie Little at klittle@cfbf.com and Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.

CA Farm Bureau recently joined an agriculture coalition to oppose [AB 478](#) (Ting, D-San Francisco). This bill follows up on [AB 793](#) (Ting, 2020) by requiring producers of thermoform plastic containers (such as the “clamshell” containers used to hold berries, and other similar molded plastic containers) to include specified levels of plastic recycled from other thermoform containers, with the goal of encouraging users of thermoform containers to develop a separate recycling stream for that type of plastic. This bill places excessive responsibility on the purchaser of these products, requiring them to submit reports directly to Cal Recycle. Furthermore, this bill sets an unrealistic goal of 75% recycling rate in nine years – which has never been accomplished in the U.S. This bill will be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Monday, and CAFB will continue to monitor the issue. Staff: Katie Little at klittle@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.

Water

A measure that would require the Department of Conservation to establish a program named the “Multi-benefit Land Repurposing Incentive Program” to provide grants to groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), counties, or other specified entities designated by GSAs or counties, passed out of the Senate Governance and Finance Committee 8-0-1 this week. [AB 252](#) (Robert Rivas, D-Hollister) would establish the program to develop or implement local programs supporting multi-benefit land repurposing at the basin scale. Farm Bureau has not positioned on AB 252 but continues actively working with the sponsor and author to address concerns. Farm Bureau opposes permanent conversion of productive agricultural land to other uses after being idled by SGMA. Staff: Danny Merkley, dmerkley@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.

A measure that would provide funding for technical assistance to farmers in critically over drafted groundwater basins was sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File this week. [AB 350](#) (Carlos Villapudua, D-Stockton) would establish a program at the Department of Food and Agriculture to provide funding for technical assistance providers to help farmers in critically over drafted groundwater basins in the San Joaquin Valley to plan and implement water use efficiencies. Farm Bureau continues to work with the author on amendments to address concerns. Staff: Danny Merkley, dmerkley@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.

[SB 559](#), a measure that would provide grant funding for repairs on the Friant-Kern Canal, the State Water Project and the Delta Mendota Canal was scheduled to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee however it was postponed. As previously reported, Senate Bill 559 (Melissa Hurtado, D-Sanger), would establish the Canal Conveyance Capacity Restoration Fund to support subsidence repair costs, for the Friant-Kern Canal, the Delta-Mendota Canal and the California Aqueduct. Local and federal funding has also been identified, and the state funds provided in the measure are contingent upon those local and federal funds being provided. Farm Bureau supports the measure. Staff: Danny Merkley, dmerkley@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.