Farm Bureau at work

California Farm Bureau's government affairs team is at the Capitol, advocating for farmers, ranchers and agriculture's future. Here are some key issues Farm Bureau is focused on this week.

December 30, 2022

Animal Health & Welfare

CDFA has issued a reminder of the upcoming Pork Distributer Registration deadline. Pork Distributors selling covered whole pork meat to an end-user in California need to register with CDFA's Animal Care Program by **January 1, 2023**. Applications for distributor registration will continue to be accepted into 2023. Farm Bureau members may remember that Animal Care is a new program within the Animal Health and Food Safety Services division of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Animal Care was formed after the passing of Proposition 12 (2018) to implement the law and its first task has been joint promulgation of regulations with Department of Public Health in addition to outreach and education of stakeholders. At the federal level, the National Pork Producers Council and American Farm Bureau Federation have filed a case against Prop 12 that has reached the supreme court. Arguments were heard in October, but the court has not made a final ruling. Arguments against the implementation of Prop 12 have been made based on the disruption of interstate commerce and the requirements that out-of-state farmers must make in order to sell their products into California. The ruling will most likely be released next year, the deadline is June 2023. Farm Bureau continues to monitor these proceedings. *Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com*

Forestry

CalFIRE's Wood Products Team has posted updated Grant Guidelines for CalFIRE's Business and Workforce Development Grants and are accepting proposals for the 2023 Q1 review deadline. CalFIRE anticipates up to $7.5 million available for 2023 Quarter 1 Wood Products project awards. Additionally, up to $5 million in grants are available for Biomass Transportation Subsidy projects. To maintain and enhance the forest-sector workforce and businesses of California to promote healthy resilient forests throughout the state, the grants support a diverse set of business development and workforce development projects.

- Eligible business development projects include facilities, operations, and professional services that support the restoration of healthy, resilient forests by offering improvements to the wood products industry.
- Eligible workforce development projects include universities, colleges, government and community organizations, and businesses that aim to increase workforce capacity in the fields of logging, fuels treatment, transportation, manufacturing, or other support services that bolster the development of a resilient forest sector workforce.
- Research and development projects related to both business and workforce development will also be considered.

Detailed information regarding the solicitation, application process, eligible activities and projects can be found in the Grant Guidelines available here. Grant applications can be submitted via the Business and Workforce Development 2023 Q1 Solicitation by March 31, 2023 to be considered for the next round of awards - click here to apply.
Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Also, this week, CalFIRE shared that State Fire Marshal, **Michael J. Richwine**, announced his retirement from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Office of the State Fire Marshal, after a 42-year career, including 36 years with the Department. Chief Richwine was appointed State Fire Marshal by Governor Gavin Newsom on May 15, 2020, after serving as the Assistant State Fire Marshal from 2012 to 2018. As State Fire Marshal, Chief Richwine oversaw a staff of more than 220 employees. Chief Richwine's total 42-year fire service career began with the Hanford Fire Department. He has since risen through the ranks and held a variety of fire prevention and training positions within the Office of the State Fire Marshal, including, Fire Service Training Specialist, Deputy State Fire Marshal within Fire and Life Safety, Hazardous Materials and Pipeline Safety Divisions, Chief of State Fire Training, and Chief of the Fire Engineering Division. Chief Richwine also served as a member on CalFIRE's Incident Management Teams for six years and holds numerous professional certifications. The mission of the State Fire Marshal is to protect life and property through the development and application of fire prevention engineering, education, and enforcement. The Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the mission of CalFIRE by focusing on fire prevention and providing support through a wide variety of fire safety responsibilities through Code Development and Analysis, Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation, Fire and Life Safety, Fire Engineering and Investigations, Pipeline Safety and Certified Unified Program Agency, and State Fire Training. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com*

Transportation

California Air Resources Board's (CARB) long anticipated Truck and Bus Rule will go into effect on January 1, 2023. CARB approved this regulation in December 2008 and has triggered many deadlines since then – with January 1st culminating in the final definitive cutoff date. The regulation specifically applies to nearly all diesel-fueled trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 pounds that are privately or federally owned. The rule requires that trucks must be replaced with a 2010 model year or newer engines meet the final requirements. PM filter retrofits cannot be used to comply with this option; however, owners that installed a PM filter retrofit on a lighter truck by January 1, 2014, and reported by January 31, 2015, can continue to operate the vehicle until January 1, 2023.

Members might be aware of the agricultural exemption that also ends on January 1st. If you registered your agricultural vehicle into the exemption program before January 31, 2015, users were allowed to report your annual mileage as long as it was below 10,000 miles/year. With the sunset of this exemption, agricultural users will have to abide by the alternative Low-Use Exemption. This exemption allows for the continued use of any truck not meeting the 2010 model engine requirement for annual usage under 1,000 miles. Basically, current ag exemption users will drop from 10,000 miles annually to 1,000 miles annually under the new exemption.

Since this implementation of this rule, Farm Bureau has engaged CARB staff on industry concerns. Now, more than ever, they are widespread and intensified. The agricultural

industry, along with many others, has been negatively affected by the COVID 19 pandemic. Some of the issues directly facing farmers and ranchers are port congestion, lack of compliant vehicle availability, fuel prices, drought, new electric vehicle regulations, labor shortages, and inflation – to name a few. CARB released a memo earlier this year in response to these industry and stakeholder concerns. The memo cited many regulatory successes already accomplished by the program and responded to some of the more negative implications stating,

> *"CARB staff have developed and implemented aggressive efforts to alert vehicle owners they may be affected by the regulation, to provide them training and compliance assistance to help them comply with the regulation, to provide them with financial assistance in purchasing newer vehicles … Recently, stakeholders have raised concerns regarding meeting the final January 1, 2023, compliance deadline due to supply chain issues. CARB staff conducted research on the current availability of new and used diesel vehicles with 2010 model year or newer engines... For new trucks, staff contacted several dealers and confirmed that most have stopped taking orders for the 2022 model year, but several dealers are either already taking orders for the 2023 model year or will be taking orders soon. Under the regulation, truck owners that place orders for a new truck by September 1, will be able to keep using their existing trucks past the January 1, deadline until the replacement truck is delivered. Truck owners can also purchase used trucks with 2010 engines to comply with the regulation."*

Although CARB has acknowledged the limitations of the current marketplace, they have not offered many solutions. Farm Bureau continues conversations with staff as enforcement of the regulation begins.

Members may be aware of the many regulations that are coming from CARB due to the governor's Executive Order to mandate electric vehicles in the coming years. As the Administration and state agencies move toward these goals, it is unlikely that any leniency in current regulations will be granted. An example of CARB's dedication to moving forward on these goals can be seen in the closing paragraph of the memo:

> "*The [Truck and Bus] regulation has been one of CARB's biggest successes in protecting public health not only across the state but particularly in our disadvantaged communities by reducing emissions through the replacement older diesel vehicles with newer/cleaner vehicles. We are committed to continue working collaboratively with all affected vehicle owners to find the best available path forward to comply with the final January 1, 2023, deadline."*

Farm Bureau understand that hurdles this regulation will bring and the possible impacts on farms and ranches throughout the state. Staff continues to engage on all levels in order to find solutions. *Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CDFA ANNOUNCES VACANCIES WITHIN THE SHELL EGG ADVISORY BOARD

The California Department of Food and Agriculture, Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch (MPES) announces *three vacancies* within the Egg Safety and Quality Management's

(ESQM), Shell Egg Advisory Committee Board (SEAC). ESQM monitors egg quality at production, wholesale, and retail levels. The goal is to provide California consumers with eggs that are wholesome, properly labeled, refrigerated, and of established quality, while maintaining fair and equitable marketing standards in the California egg industry.

These vacancies, for four industry members and one alternate member, are being created because of upcoming term expirations. The membership terms for these vacancies will be for 36 months. Applicants for the industry and alternate members must be a registered egg handlers or representatives of registered egg handlers, in the state of California. Board members receive no compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for transportation to and from meetings and for per diem expenses for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses. Applicants interested in being considered for these three SEAC appointments, should submit resumes by January 13, 2023, to:

Mrs. Penny Arana
Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch
1220 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814
penny.arana@cdfa.ca.gov

CDFA ANNOUNCES NEW 2023 CUSP GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION PERIOD

The 2023 CUSP (California Underserved and Small Producers Program) grant program will provide critical drought relief technical assistance and direct financial assistance for small and medium scale producers or socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as assistance with business planning, marketing strategies, and other economic recovery activities. This program also supports organizations to act as "regional grant administrators" to provide direct grant assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers to aid in drought relief measures. In anticipation of the upcoming grant solicitation, the CDFA has published a summary of public comments received on the 2023 CUSP Grant Program draft RFA, during the public comment period from November 4 to November 18, 2022. These public comments were collected to help inform the program's components. A summary of the comments and draft RFA can be found on the program's website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/CUSP/

CDFA will publish a final 2023 CUSP Grant Program RFA, with an anticipated application opening date of January 16, 2023. The application period will be open until March 16, 2023. The application will be available through the Amplifund platform. For this round of funding, the CUSP Program has $2 million available under the Technical Assistance Grant Program for organizations supporting underserved farmers and ranchers, and $20 million for direct drought relief assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers through the CUSP Drought Relief Direct Farmer Grant Program.

The following entities are eligible to apply for technical assistance grants and/or administer block grant drought relief funds for farmers and ranchers: Non-profit organizations, tribal governments, county departments of agriculture, and resource conservation districts (RCDs). Technical assistance providers must have demonstrated expertise in assisting small-scale and medium-scale socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Eligible entities can apply for one or both of the 2023 CUSP Program components:

Technical Assistance to Support Underserved Farmers and Ranchers – Funding for technical assistance providers to support farmers and ranchers in applying for Federal and State drought relief grant programs and assistance with business planning, financial and marketing strategies needed to be resilient and stay in business during the on-going drought in California.

CUSP Drought Relief Direct Farmer Grant – Eligible entities are also able to apply as a "regional administrator" to distribute grant funds directly to individual farmers and ranchers to aid in addressing specific drought relief financial needs that have been experienced as a result of the on-going drought in California.