



SAVE THE DATE 10/17/22

HARVEST CLASSIC
PG. 2

Southwest Kings GSA holdout creates SGMA uncertainty

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director

Near the end of July, the five Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) making up the Tulare Lake Sub-Basin voted on updates to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) deemed deficient by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) in



January of this year. As GSA managers planned for their board meetings, most believed the plan amendments were mostly uncontroversial and adoptable by their boards of directors. That theory proved true for all but one GSA.

To comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), GSAs had two options to consider while writing their GSPs: Write an individual GSP for each GSA and ensure the plan will not harm the neighboring GSA with a coordination agreement, or forego the agreement and write a single plan for the entire sub-basin. The Tulare Lake Sub-basin chose to create a single plan, requiring all five GSAs to agree on every aspect of the plan for it to be approved.

Despite working on plan updates since January, the Southwest Kings GSA voted to adopt the proposed changes with one additional component during its July 21 board meeting. The remaining GSAs adopted the previously agreed upon updates without the late addition. Without unanimous approval, the Tulare Lake Sub-Basin GSP will be deemed incomplete by DWR.

This development creates more uncertainty for the future of water in Kings County and will only increase growers'

"Groundwater" continued on page 2

Young Farmers & Ranchers hosting tri-tip dinner fundraiser

By Amy D. Fienen

Kings County Farm Bureau's newly formed Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) chapter is hosting their first fundraiser on Aug. 11. You can support their efforts by purchasing a ticket for a tri-tip dinner.

Kings County's YF&R chapter has 20 active members ranging in age from 18 to 35, all whom work in the local ag industry. YF&R provides unique opportunities for leadership growth that are developed and implemented at the county, state and national levels. Until this year, KCFB had not had an active YF&R chapter for some time, but President Kevin Robertson spearheaded efforts to bring it back. After their first informational meeting early this year, the group has been meeting monthly and making plans to move the chapter forward.

One of the first steps towards achieving their goals is to get some money in the bank. KCFB provides them with \$1,000 seed money to get started, but additional fundraising is their responsibility.

"We're basically starting from scratch, so it's up to us to generate funds," said YF&R President Nathan Hawkins.

He said they hope to use the money raised from the tri-tip dinner to send three of their members to the State YF&R Conference in December. Future goals include hosting social gatherings for members and offering scholarships to graduating seniors.



"Fundraiser" continued on page 4



Purpose

Protect, preserve and enhance agriculture in Kings County

Vision

Ensure that every farmer has the right to farm and protect their heritage

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WATER NEWS

you can use

"Groundwater" continued from page 1

frustration with SGMA. As has been true since SGMA's implementation in 2016, uncertainty is the only constant when discussing water.

DWR was present during the Southwest Kings GSA meeting and has escalated the development through its ranks. If DWR can help resolve this issue, there is hope the sub-basin can get to work quickly to achieve groundwater sustainability. Should GSAs not agree with DWR's help, the State Water Resources Control Board will take over.

The State Water Resources Control Board can choose any number of ways to get involved should they need to intervene. In the best-case scenario (if there is one),

they mediate an agreement between the five GSAs. Worst-case scenario, the State Water Resources Control Board decides the GSAs cannot achieve groundwater sustainability in the sub-basin and take over the effort. The State Board has been very vocal, stating they do not want to manage individual sub-basins' groundwater sustainability efforts. However, it is conceivable under SGMA.

KCFB understands that water is the most critical resource for its members. We have our ears to the ground, monitoring SGMA's progress and looking for ways to help. We'll keep our membership up-to-date as the situation unfolds. 🙌

2022 Salute to Ag honorees announced

The Greater Kings County Chamber of Commerce is recognizing the accomplishments and support provided by Kings County's ag industry leaders.

As is tradition, the selection committee made up of past honorees met to discuss and select the 2022 honorees. Tony Azevedo has been named Agriculturalist of the Year and GAR Bennett has been named Agricultural Supporter of the Year.

The Greater Kings County Chamber of Commerce will host the event on Saturday, Oct. 15, location TBA. In addition to recognizing this year's honorees, the evening will include a social, hors d'oeuvres and dinner. Socializing begins at 5:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 6, followed by the awards program at 7:30.

Sponsorship opportunities and reservations to decorate tables are currently being accepted. Inquiries about the event may be made by calling the Chamber office at (559) 216-0505. Tickets are now on sale. Paid reservations received by Sept. 23 are \$75 each or a table for eight is \$530. Reservations made after Sept. 23 will be \$85 per person. Tickets will not be available at the door.

For more information about the event, please contact Caetlyn Matthews at (559) 216-0505, or via email at info@gkcchamber.org. 🙌

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Pesticide disposal event scheduled for Sept. 19

The Kings County Department of Agricultural and Measurement Standards is partnering with the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner in hosting a Pesticide Disposal Event scheduled for Monday, Sept. 19 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. This event will be held at the Tulare Agricultural Commissioners main office (4437 South Laspina St., Tulare).

Before containers, jugs and drums can be accepted for recycling, they must be residue-free, rinsed and dry, and should not contain a cap. Non-HDPE parts like caps, metal handles and rubber linings should be removed, along with booklets, sleeves and any removable paper. Fifty-five gallon drums must be cut into quarters lengthwise.

Allowed containers are HDPE 55-gallon and smaller containers that previously held product used for EPA-registered ag use crop protection, pest control, animal health, turf and ornamental, vegetation management, nursery and greenhouse, forestry, aquatics, and public health.

Prohibited containers include those constructed of anything other than HDPE, rotationally molded containers, mini-bulk or intermediate bulk containers, and all containers that held products used for consumer garden and pest control, swimming pool maintenance and veterinary products.

This event is for Kings and Tulare permittees only, and no appointment is necessary.

For more information, please call the Kings County Ag Commissioner at (559) 852-2830. 📞



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Kings County Farm Bureau 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director

Overview

In early 2022, the KCFB Board of Directors thoughtfully decided to create a strategic plan. Understanding the need for a framework to set achievable goals and action steps, the Board carefully selected a strategic advisor and went to work. After soliciting feedback from members, partners, and other stakeholders, the board developed a robust, diverse plan.

The Process

The planning process began with a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The results were summarized, reviewed and used to set and prioritize short and mid-term goals. Short-term goals were further expanded to include action items, determinants of success and deadlines, then assigned to responsible parties to manage work accordingly.

The Plan

The plan identified seven strategic priorities to address by the end of 2025. Of

those seven, the Board determined that individual goals within five of the overarching priorities should be the focus of the second half of 2022.

- Advocacy
 - Develop a strategy outlining KCFB involvement in local, state, and federal advocacy.
- Board of Directors
 - Review and update the governance structure and accompanying documents of the Board of Directors.
- Communications and Outreach
 - Create a targeted communications strategy, one for members and prospective members and another for consumers, each with messaging aligned to their needs and priorities.
- Financial Resources
 - Evaluate existing fundraising efforts and update as needed.
- Staffing
 - Identify the staffing needed to successfully implement the strategic plan.

Conclusion

Kings County Farm Bureau understands the need to adapt to continue protecting, preserving, and enhancing agriculture in Kings County. Equipped with measurable goals and a vision for the future, KCFB plans to increase its effectiveness ensuring that every farmer has the right to farm and protect their heritage for the next 100 years. 🌾

"Fundraiser" continued from page 1

Tickets for the Aug. 11 tri-tip fundraiser are \$60. Each dinner, which feeds four to five people, includes a tri-tip, six rolls, salad and beans. Cotton Growers Catering is providing the food, which will be conveniently packaged in a box that can be picked up at the drive-thru at the KCFB office between 5 and 7 p.m. (870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford).

Sponsorship opportunities are available for \$250, \$500 and \$1,000. Based on the level, sponsors receive free dinners, company logo in the sponsor program, Instagram exposure and YF&R swag.

When picking up dinner, there will be an opportunity to purchase \$20 tickets for the gun raffle YF&R is holding in September.

Please help ensure our YF&R chapter's success by supporting this fundraiser.

Purchase dinner tickets or secure your sponsorship opportunity by calling (559) 381-8325. Tickets are also available at the KCFB office.

Anyone interested in getting involved in Kings County YF&R is invited to attend their next meeting, which will be held at 6 p.m. on Aug. 10 at the KCFB office. 🌾

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AUGUST MEETING

AUGUST 10TH @6PM
LOCATION: KCFB OFFICE

Licensing changes will affect pesticide applicators

Contributed by Janet Eckles, Deputy Ag Commissioner/Sealer

More changes are headed down the pipeline for pesticide applicator license holders. In 2017, U.S. EPA published the revisions to Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations Part 171 (40 CFR Part 171), which sets a stronger standard for people who apply restricted use pesticides (RUPs). It details the minimum requirements state agencies, who certify applicators of RUPs must meet. In California, Restricted Materials (RMs) include RUPs. These new changes impact users of both RMs and general use pesticides, requiring California to meet those revised standards.

In order to meet the new standards, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is making changes to the applicator certification program and regulations. These changes will affect commercial applicator fumigant categories, private applicator certificate holder requirements, adds a new private applicator burrowing vertebrate pest certificate option, continuing education (CE) standards, and changes to minimum age and handler training.

The current field fumigation subcategory "O" for field fumigation does not align with the requirements detailed in the federal Soil Fumigation category. As a result, DPR is adopting a new soil fumigation category "L" and eliminating the existing "O" subcategory. Category "L" allows an applicator to perform pest control using a pesticide labeled as a fumigant to control soil pests in sites including, fields, forests, golf courses, greenhouses, and individual tree or vine hole sites. This category does not include the use of non-soil fumigate products. By making this change, all commercial applicators conducting soil fumigation activities under the Field Fumigation subcategory and/or an existing DPR category or subcategory (e.g., category D) must take the new Soil Fumigation – Category "L" examination to remain in compliance with the new standards. This examination must be taken, if applicable, by Jan. 1, 2024, which is also when the subcategory "O" will be inactive and ineligible for renewal.

The revision to 40 CFR Part 171 includes a Non-Soil Fumigation category for commercial applicators, including a category description and competency standards. DPR will be adopting Non-Soil Fumigation Category "M" since they do not currently have one. All commercial applicators that are currently or intending to conduct any non-soil fumigation activities must obtain this category. The "M" category allows for the performance of pest control activities using a pesticide labeled as a fumigant to all of the following: fumigate enclosed areas including tarpaulin-covered structures and commodities, vaults, chambers, greenhouses, vans, boxcars, ships, planes, and vehicles containing agricultural commodities for post-harvest fumigation or nonfood/nonfeed materials including, but not limited to, pallets, dunnage, furniture, burlap bags and planting mediums, including potting soil and potting mix, and wine barrels and corks. This category also allows for fumigating pest burrows in sites such as fields, rights-of-ways, ditches, landscaping, and equipment yards. Category "M" is also required if applicators fumigate sewer lines, in-service utility poles, or other fumigations not covered by the new Category "L" – Soil Fumigations. To be compliant with the new regulations, all commercial applicators conducting non-soil fumigation activities will be required to obtain the new Non-Soil Fumigation category "M."

U.S. EPA's revision to 40 CFR Part 171 does not include a description of, or competency for, the following subcategories: Sewer Line Root Control (subcategory 'N'), Wood Preservation (subcategory 'L'), Anti-Fouling Tributyltin (subcategory 'M'), Field Fumigation (subcategory 'O'), or Microbial Pest Control (subcategory 'P'). To align with this, DPR is eliminating these existing subcategories. If you hold one or more of these subcategories, you will need to obtain the appropriate commercial applicator fumigant category and/or appropriate categories consistent with the revised regulations. Upon implementation of the regulations, all existing subcategories will be invalid and ineligible for initial certification or renewal.

State licensees are not the only ones affected by the revisions in 40 CFR Part 171, it will also affect the Private Applicator Certificate (PAC) holders. The current initial PAC examination previously administered by the Kings

County Agricultural Commissioner's office, along with other county Agricultural Commissioner's Offices, does not meet the requirements detailed in 40 CFR Part 171. As a result, all existing PAC holders must take and pass a revised PAC examination. Taking this exam is not optional, renewing by continuing education (CE) hours will not be an option. This will be a phased-in approach over three years. PAC holders whose last names start with 'R-Z' will be required to have the exam passed by Jan. 1, 2024; 'A-H' will be Jan. 1, 2025; and 'I-Q' will be Jan. 1, 2026.

The new PAC exam will no longer cover the use of burrowing vertebrate pest fumigation. The regulation requires private applicators using fumigants to be certified in fumigant use. DPR is adopting a new certificate option for private applicators, the Burrowing Vertebrate Pest Fumigation Certificate Option. This option will allow PAC holders to use fumigants labeled for the control of burrowing vertebrate pests. Private applicators who intend to do all other fumigant activities will require a commercial applicator certificate in the appropriate category(ies) (i.e. non-soil or soil fumigant) by Jan. 1, 2024. This will ensure that the individuals using fumigant products are knowledgeable in the safe and effective use of these hazardous materials. For a private applicator wanting to obtain the Burrowing Vertebrate Pest Fumigation Certificate, they must first pass the new PAC examination and then pass the Burrowing Vertebrate Pest Certificate examination.

There are also changes being made to the Continuing Education courses. CE courses cannot exceed eight hours per day (including online courses). DPR will not approve courses for CE hours during poster or vendor displays, question and answer sessions, panel discussions, formal examinations/testing (excluding review questions included as part of a presentation) or break periods. Correspondence (text-based) courses will no longer be approved for CE credit.

CE course sponsors are now required to verify the identity of the license or certificate holder. Sponsors will now be required to submit their attendance records to DPR within 14 days of completion of the course. This information will be submitted over the internet using the Department's online website (www.cdpr.ca.gov), or by an electronic file transfer process.

The new regulations require the minimum age for applicants for commercial or private license or certificate to be 18 years old. Anyone under 18 years old cannot be allowed to handle a pesticide identified as a restricted material. Additional Handler Training Topics are also being added, such as identifying required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and precautionary statements about human health hazards, and how to identify if a product is a Restricted Material.

The Kings County Agricultural Commissioner's Office will be administering the exam as soon as it becomes available to us, which should be sometime in the fall. We will also be setting up exam review sessions and training sessions. We are available to answer any questions you may have. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (559)852-2830. 🍌

Ag Commissioner's Compliance Report



Jimmy Hook,
Agricultural
Commissioner/Sealer



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USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

This work is supported by Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network (FRSAN) [grant no. 2021-70035-35573] from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Farmers and ranchers are eligible for these grants.

County of Kings American Rescue Plan Act Funding for Small Business



TO QUALIFY A BUSINESS MUST

- Maintain a current and valid businesses license (if applicable);
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- Have 100 or fewer full time employees; and,
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Businesses in the following categories will not be eligible for funding from this program:

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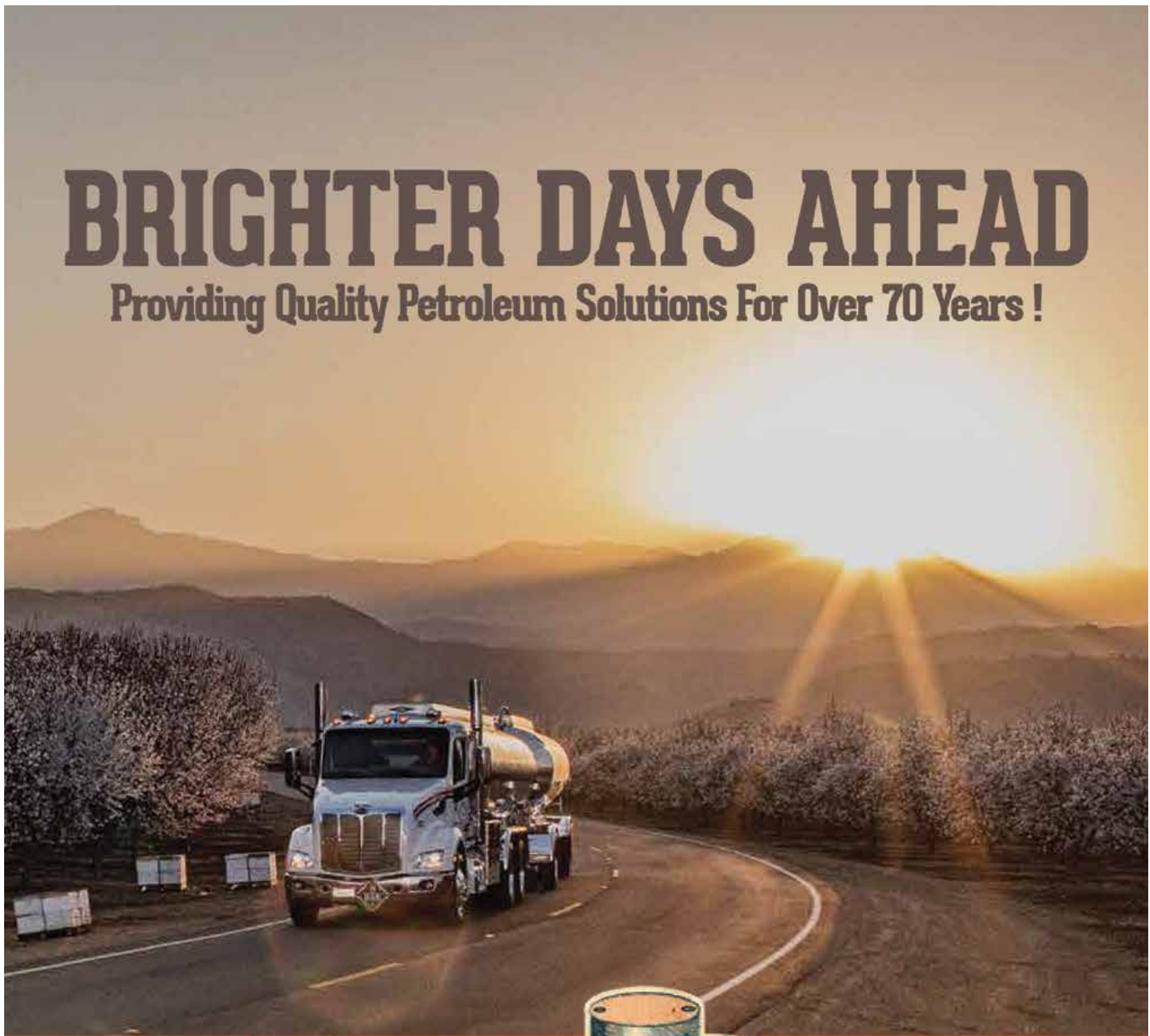
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Kings County Rural Crime Report

Rural Crime Unit is busy eradicating marijuana grows

Contributed by Detective Dakotah Fausnett

Throughout the month of July, the Kings County Rural Crimes Task Force has been busy in the northeast end of the county investigating copper, hay and diesel fuel thefts. We have also served multiple search warrants relating to illegal marijuana grows, removing over 750 plants. With marijuana grows comes thefts. The growers usually build the hoop houses and run their operation with all stolen items, ranging from generators, chemicals, drip systems and diesel fuel. Taking down these illegal marijuana grows is a big part of the Rural Crimes Task Force's duties during the peak grow and harvest season. Hopefully by shutting down these illegal operations, we can slow down some of the thefts in the area.

We've also continued to track down leads in other thefts, and have placed several trail cameras out in an attempt to locate or ID suspects. More often than not, these thefts are committed by career criminals who are typically part of a crew that do nothing but steal ag equipment and sell it to subsidize their incomes and fuel their drug addictions. It is imperative that if anyone knows of or hears of anyone buying or selling obviously stolen equipment to call the sheriff's office. If we do not receive calls from our Farm Bureau members and community, we may not be aware of certain crimes occurring in your area. If you have any questions, feel free to call me or any of our unit members at any time. 🍃



Detective Dakotah Fausnett: 559-639-8704
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