FARMLIFE

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE KINGS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

May 2023 Vol. 30 Number 5

kcfb.org

INSIDE



Record rainfall damages 50,000 acres of local farmland

Contributed by Janet Eckles, Deputy Ag Commissioner/Sealer, Kings County Department of Ag

California has been in a drought for so long that when the rain from the atmospheric rivers began, many were caught off guard. In previous years, annual rainfall has been below 10 inches. This year, however, we surpassed 10 inches only three months in. The last time we received anywhere close to this amount of rainfall was in 1998, where 8.68 inches of rain fell in the first three months of the year. Before that was in 1983, when 9.72 inches fell during the same period; this was also the last time we had substantial flooding.

With the rain comes a mix of emotions for the Central Valley's farming industry. Water allocations have gone up, so farmers who had projected allocations of zero will now have plenty to plant fields that may



This photo taken at Nevada Avenue looking south shows the scope of the floodwaters. Photo contributed by Kings County Department of Ag

have otherwise gone fallow. On the other hand, those with farms or homes close to creeks, canals, riverbeds, and the lowest elevations in the county (Tulare Lake), must worry about levee breaks and flooding.

"Record Rainfall" continued on page 3

KCFB welcomes new directors to the board

By Amy D. Fienen

Kings County Farm Bureau's board of directors has welcomed two new directors: Julie Martella and David Kahn. The unique skillsets and personal knowledge of the local ag industry each one brings to the table will benefit the organization and its members.

JULIE MARTELLA

Julie Martella never aspired to be a full-time farmer, but when her husband, Jason Martella, passed away unexpectedly in 2017, the former elementary school teacher found herself faced with the task of keeping their farm going alone. While raising the couple's two daughters, Merribeth and Allison, she learned how to drive a tractor and got her pesticide applicator license. For three seasons, she ran the farm until an injury forced her to lease it out. Without the farm to keep her busy, the grief she'd been too busy to deal with caught up with her.

Martella started working with a widowed life coach who helped her not only deal with her grief, but showed her how to use it for good.

"I've been given a very unique charge in this world; I can use my experience to help people," she said. "I have allowed my grief to transform my life."

As a speaker for Soaring Spirits International, Martella travels around the country speaking to fellow widows on the struggles of widowhood and how to cope with them. Her website,



Julie Martella

David Kahn

navigatingwidowhood.com, includes links to her weekly blogs and podcasts, as well as resources and information on her coaching and mentoring services.

During the 20 years she spent farming with her husband, farming became near and dear to her heart. Martella is excited to see how she can help connect people with their food and the farmers that grow it as a KCFB director. Additionally, she's excited to bring more diversity to an industry that's traditionally been male dominated.

"Women aren't an anomaly in agriculture "New Directors" continued on page 2





Purpose Protect, preserve and enhance agriculture in Kings County

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

Values

Our Members | Proactive Representative Reliable | Trusted Resource

Officers

President: Kevin Robertson Vice President: Shane Bickner Secretary/Treasurer: Garrett Gilcrease

Directors

Julie Martella

Brian Medeiros Michael Miya

Brian Potter

Brandon Sargent

Helen Sullivan Frank Zonneveld

John Ellis	
· ·	
Todd Fukuda	
Jon Garcia	
Dino Giacomazzi	
Keith Grabow	
Pete Hanse	
Monty Hoggard	
David Kahn	

Executive Director Dusty Ference dusty.ference@kcfb.org

Farm Life Editorial Amy Fienen afienen@kcfb.org

Farm Life Advertising Breanna Larman blarman@kcfb.org (559) 584-3557

Farm Life Designer Beth Greene

CFBF District Representative Brian Medeiros

Contact

870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford, CA 93230 Phone: (559) 584-3557 www.kcfb.org

Kings County Farm Bureau



@KingsFarmBureau



Kings County Farm Bureau's "FarmLife" does not cept responsibility for statements by advertisers or for products advertised in "FarmLife," nor does Farm Bureau accept responsibility for statements or expressions of opinion other than content showing

authorship by an officer, director, or employee of Farm Bureau or its affiliates. © Kings County Farm Bureau, 2023

KCFB's workload dominated by flooding

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director



It will come as no surprise that flooding is the main topic of conversation and consumes most of the day in the KCFB office. We've handled more media requests in the last month than in a long time, and anticipate many more throughout the summer. The interviews have gone well, and I hope they are helping shed light on the situation.

Along with the media coverage, elected officials and regulators are paying extra attention to Kings County. Last month, KCFB represented its members at one-on-one and group meetings with members of congress, the California senate and assembly, Kings County, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). At many of these meetings, state and federal agencies have presented what their respective offices can offer to assist with natural disasters.

As a result of these interactions, KCFB and the Excelsior/Kings River Resource Conserva-

Dusty Ference

tion District (EKRCD) have scheduled two grower workshops on May 10 and 17 focused on flood impacts. The intention is for growers to hear first-hand what options are available for disaster relief and to have an opportunity to ask questions of the agencies providing programs. You can expect to hear from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), CDFA, and the County of Kings. For more information, see the ad below. "New Directors" continued from page 1 summer internship turned

anymore, and we shouldn't be treated as such," she said.

DAVID KAHN

Born and raised in Hanford, David Kahn is a partner in Kahn, Soares & Conway, the law firm co-founded by his dad, Jan

Kahn. Kahn completed his undergrad studies at the University of Oregon and went on the graduate from Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego. He hadn't planned to spend his career at Kahn, Soares & Conway, but a



You are Invited To Our Upcoming

DISASTER RELIEF WORKSHOPS

We will be hosting informational meetings with industry professionals to go over available relief programs to those affected by the recent flooding.



Wednesday, May 10, 2023 West Hills College **Conference Room 253** 555 College Ave., Lemoore 6 - 8 p.m.

Wednesday, May 17, 2023 **Kings Fairgrounds** The Grape Room 801 South 10th Ave., Hanford 6 - 8 p.m.

REGISTRATION FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT KCFB IS NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND

into a permanent position. His practice focuses on agriculture law, natural resources and water law, corporate and business law, and real estate law. With the implementation of SGMA, much of his work has been with water associations, water districts, irrigation districts, mutual water companies, water advocacy groups, and groundwater sustainability agencies.

Civic organizations Kahn is involved with include the Kings Regional Health Foundation, the Hanford Education Foundation, the Kings Economic Development Corporation, the Kings County Bar Association, and Sound N Vision.

Kahn and his wife, Emily have three children: Grace, 14; Tucker, 12; and Tate, 9. All three kids are soccer players, as is Kahn, who plays on an indoor adult team.

He is looking forward to seeing how his expertise in ag and water law can serve KCFB during these times when water continues presenting a number of challenges.

"Agriculture is the backbone of our community and my practice, and I thought this was the best way to give back to agriculture and the community," he said. 🌾

🕓 559-584-3557



PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AVAILABLE FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Kings County Assessor-Clerk/Recorder Kristine Lee has announced property tax relief available through her office. Under Revenue and Taxation Code 170, the county assessor is allowed to reduce the value of properties affected by natural disasters if a claim for relief is filed within 12 months of the event. Lee will be introducing an updated county disaster ordinance in the coming weeks allowing relief to be granted without a claim. In the meantime, property owners in flood affected areas are encouraged to file a claim and submit it to the county assessor's office.

Please provide details including the percentage of property under water, estimated area that may not be under water but can't be farmed due to seepage, crops that were planted before the flood, type of crops damaged or destroyed, issues with livestock, structural damage, well damage, etc.

The claim form can be found online at countyofkings.com/departments/ general-services/assessor-clerk-recorder/assessor. Questions can be directed to the county assessor's office, (559) 852-2486.

CAN YOU HELP WITH LIVESTOCK EVACUATIONS?



In the event that further flood-related livestock evacuations are needed, can you help? If you have room for additional livestock on your property, please call Dusty at (559) 303-1885 or email kcfb@kcfb.org.

HELP KINGS COUNTY ASSESS LOCAL FLOOD DAMAGE

Kings County is seeking assistance from the public to document damage resulting from the severe weather event that occurred during the 2023 March storms. This information will be used to assist in collecting consolidated impact information and will be provided to other state and federal agencies as they assess the damage. Please visit countyofkings.com/communi-ty/2023-flood to take the brief survey.

KINGS COUNTY FLOODWATCH by the Numbers

\$300 million: anticipated monetary damage due to crop losses

64,000: damaged crop acres

51,000: additional acres currently threatened in Tulare Lakebed

13: percent of Kings County's crop value expected to be ruined

269: percent of average of the forecasted runoff for the Kings River through July

300: percent of normal of the Sierra snowpack

1 million: number of acre-feet expected to cover the Tulare Lakebed

200: square miles of farmland expected to be engulfed by the Tulare Lake

3.5: number of feet the Corcoran Levee is being raised this spring. The levee is currently 188 feet; the low point of the lake is 167 feet; the current water level is approximately 178 feet.

10.83: inches of rain received from January through March of this year

1.2: inches of rain received from January through March of 2022

*These numbers are current as of April 25, but are changing daily.

"Record Rainfall" continued from page 1

In Kings County, rains have caused almost 50,000 acres of farmland to be damaged due to flooding and threatens another estimated 135,000 acres. Homes, vehicles and farming equipment have been lost due to flooding. These numbers are changing daily, with additional losses added daily. Some dairies have had to be evacuated, and poultry farms have lost flocks and potentially the use of facilities for the year or longer. Damage and loss estimates are staggering and will have an extreme impact on the local economy.

Kings County is the number one cotton production county in the state; this year it is estimated that 50% of the land cotton is usually grown on will be underwater or unfarmable. This is only one of the many crops growing areas that are being threatened by the flooding. Affected crops county wide include alfalfa, almonds, pistachios, cotton, safflower, pomegranates, grapes, corn, wheat, triticale, olives, oats, barley, Bermuda grass, pastureland, and tomatoes. Monetary losses attributed just to crop loss could be \$300 million or more and come with much more expected in economic impacts. Unfortunately, the current flooding is not the end of it. These issues will press into the summer with snow melt as temperatures warm.

Flooding impacts are not limited to crop land or structures; this also affects the people who work those fields, the industry and entire economy of the area. Many agricultural employees may no longer have jobs, so workers that would usually be working the fields may have to look for work in other areas. The severity of the damage and its impacts will affect everyone in some way. Prices in the grocery store will most likely rise, unemployment rates will go up, creating a domino effect. Hopefully, warm weather will come in gradually this year and give us a chance to dry out and prepare for the next wave of water.

First Member Appreciation Night was a success

By Breanna Larman, Executive Assistant

Did you hear the joke about the pop fly? Forget it, it's way over your head.

Kings County Farm Bureau members and sponsors made their way to Tulare County on April 26 to enjoy a night of fellowship at Rawhide Baseball Stadium. With the help of Mike Candela, Rawhide's co-general manager, we had an amazing, first ever Member Appreciation Night. We were excited to have over 800 tickets claimed for this event.

This quarter has been quite a success for membership. Being new to this roll, it has been a joy to connect with our members and Friends of Farm Bureau during renewal calls. So far, we have been able to renew over half of our quarter one (January-March) Friends of Farm Bureau and 94 members. This month, KCFB partners with Excelsior/Kings River Conservation District (EKRCD) to hold flood disaster relief workshops. These two workshops will give growers and dairymen the opportunity to learn and ask questions about relief programs available to them. As we continue to stay informed on the latest flood information, we are working to facilitate solutions for those impacted.

IN PICTURES: KCFB's Rawhide Member Appreciation Night April 26





FIRST QUARTER NEW & RENEWED KCFB MEMBERS

NEW AND RENEWED FRIENDS OF FARM BUREAU

Diamond Zenith Agribusiness Solutions

AgWest Farm Credit

Golden State Farm Credit Leopold's Farm Service <u>GAR Bennett</u>

OFI Southern California Edison Hansen Industries

Billingsley Tire

NEW MEMBERS Kings Business Support - Ag

Setton Pistachio of Terra Bella Inc

Kings Agricultural Josephine Bernardo Kristine Lee Ellen Matsubara Hansen Feedyard, Inc.

Kings Associate

Ronald Toledo Kings Collegiate Briggs W Azevedo Stratton G Azevedo Allison K Azevedo Thomas Rosa

RENEWED MEMBERS

Gary Robinson Chuck Herrin **Green Tree Ag** County Line Gin Inc Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District Stone Land Company **Pearson Realty** Kaweah Pump Inc Westlands Water District Myers Well Drilling Inc Mackey & Mackey Insurance Jordan Bickner Mello Chipping **Central Valley Community Bank** Kahn Soares & Conway LLP Linder Equipment Company Baker Commodities Inc Innovative Ag Services **Gar Bennett**

Kings Agricultural

Hyeland Farming LLC Adao Fernandes Randy Strole David Silva Dennis Tristao Gerald Bettencourt California Bio Energy Em Ag Services Inc

Jeffrey Cook Oneta Duncan Gregory Sanchez New Dawn Farms Fukano Brothers **Delia Netto Mike Bujulian** Vincent Scialo John Hamar **Edward Dutra** John Buwalda **Kenneth Smith** Andre Alves **Gloria Soares** Monty Hoggard Contente & Co Mello D Jerseys Tim Blanchard **Clay Groefsema** Arnold Netto **Ryan Dooley** Westlake Farms Corcoran Chamber Of Commerce Jerome Warmerdam Azevedo Custom Hay Inc **Cloverdale Dairy LLC** Theo De Haan Milkflow **Dean Johnston Tom Shelley Newton Farms**

Tim Larson David Te Velde Brooksi Almond Ranch Kent Ranch Management 3H Cattle Company Robert Rocha D & F Agricultural Enterprises Avila Farms Michael Ward Lakeshore Dairy Wood Brothers Leopolodo's Farm Service B & L Farms Mike Mendez

Kings Associate

Rick Conway Patricia Scialo Jerry Fagundes Tim Son Joaquin Mattos Brian Potter Frankie Gonsalves Bonnie Holsonbake Anthony Raven Ken Jones

Kings Collegiate Shyanna Ward



Commercial I Farm I Workers' Compensation I Tribal I Life & Health I Employee Benefits I Home I Auto & More Hanford 559.584.3391 Corcoran 559.992.1245 Chowchilla 559.665.3434



New name. Same commitment to cash patronage.

Farm Credit West is now AgWest Farm Credit. And we're still committed to sharing profits with our customers.

Patronage continues to be a unique benefit of our cooperative structure, providing earnings from our association back to our customer-members. To date, patronage dividends this year total \$366.5 million in cash patronage distributions to eligible customers throughout the west region. Proof that it truly pays to be an AgWest customer.

Grounded by tradition. Inspired by possibility.

Contact your local branch or visit AgWestFC.com to learn more.



KCFB awards four scholarships to graduating

Seniors By Amy D. Fienen

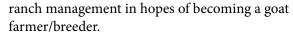
As part of their ongoing commitment to supporting agriculture education and investing in the industry's future leaders, Kings County Farm Bureau awards scholarships to graduating high school seniors each year. Since the scholarship program's implementation in 2007, KCFB has awarded over \$100,000 to more than 1,000 students. This year, four outstanding students are receiving scholarships of \$1,000 each.

Scholarships are awarded to qualified students who plan to further their education at a twoor four-year accredited college, university or vocational institute and pursue a career in agriculture. The recipients are selected based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, determination, leadership skills and a commitment to a career in agriculture.

Congratulations to the 2022-23 Kings County Farm Bureau scholarship recipients.



Landon Cardoza, son of Brian and Stacy Cardoza, is graduating from Hanford High School. He is currently undecided on what college he'll be attending, but is planning to major in farm and





Anna Dooley, daughter of Ryan Dooley and Agnes Kepenyes, is graduating from Sierra Pacific High School. UC Davis is her firstchoice college. She plans to study vet science and pursue a career as a veterinarian.

Isabella Mello, daughter of Bryan Mello and Amy Arevalo, is graduating from Hanford High School. She has been accepted to Oklahoma State University, where she plans to study animal science/pre-vet in preparation for a career as a large animal veterinarian.

Cayden Muir, son of E.J. and Carli Muir, is graduating from Hanford High School. He has been accepted to Boise State University, where he plans to study ag business to prepare for a career as an ag accountant.





FSMA-Required Produce Safety Training

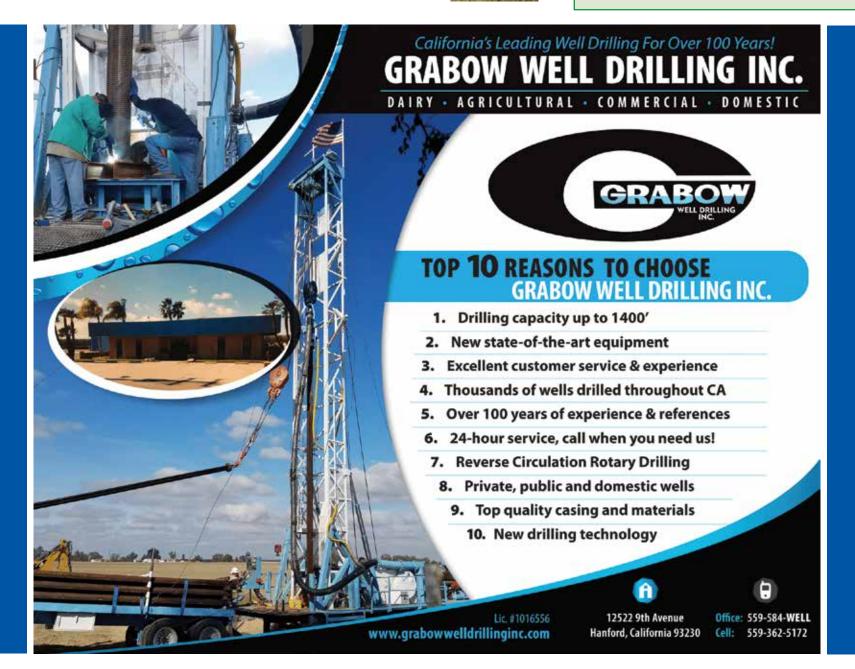
This course will satisfy the required Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Training requirements. Join us at the KCFB office for this training provided by the Food Safety Training Partnership, a cooperative effort of



California Farm Bureau, Farm Employers Labor Service, and the Safe Food Alliance.

Thursday, May 18, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. KCFB office, 870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford Cost: \$35, which includes course materials, completion certificate and lunch

For more information and to register online, visit foodsafetytrainingpartnership.org or call 916-561-5672.







JUNE 15-18TH, 2023

NEW MANAGEMENT NEW CARNIVAL NEW FOOD VENDORS NEW ENTERTAINMENT TWO NIGHTS OF RACING! 4-H & FFA LIVESTOCK PROJECTS CAMEL RIDES TRAIN RIDES ACROBATS SHARK ENCOUNTERS JUMP! THE ULTIMATE DOG SHOW AND MUCH MORE!

FOR MORE INFO: THEKINGSFAIR.COM OR 559.584.3318

BUD LIGHT

2023 FAIR HOURS:

f 🙆

June 15th4:00pm-10:00pmJune 16th4:00pm-12:00amJune 17th2:00pm-12:00amJune 18th2:00pm-10:00pmLivestock GateOpens 8:00am daily

2023 Kings Fair Jr. Livestock Auction & Dairy Replacement Heifer and Yearling Sale

Dairy Replacement/Yearling Sale-Friday June 16th at 7pm Jr. Livestock Auction-Saturday June 17th at 10am



FRIENDS of FARM BUREAU

DIAMOND



Platinum









Gold -

All Valley Printing Bacome Insurance Agency Dias Law Firm Inc. J.C. Lansdowne Inc. Leopoldo's Farm Service Inc. M Green & Company LLP Mackey & Mackey Insurance Agency Stone Land Co. Tachi Palace Casino Resort The Wonderful Company Verdegaal Brothers

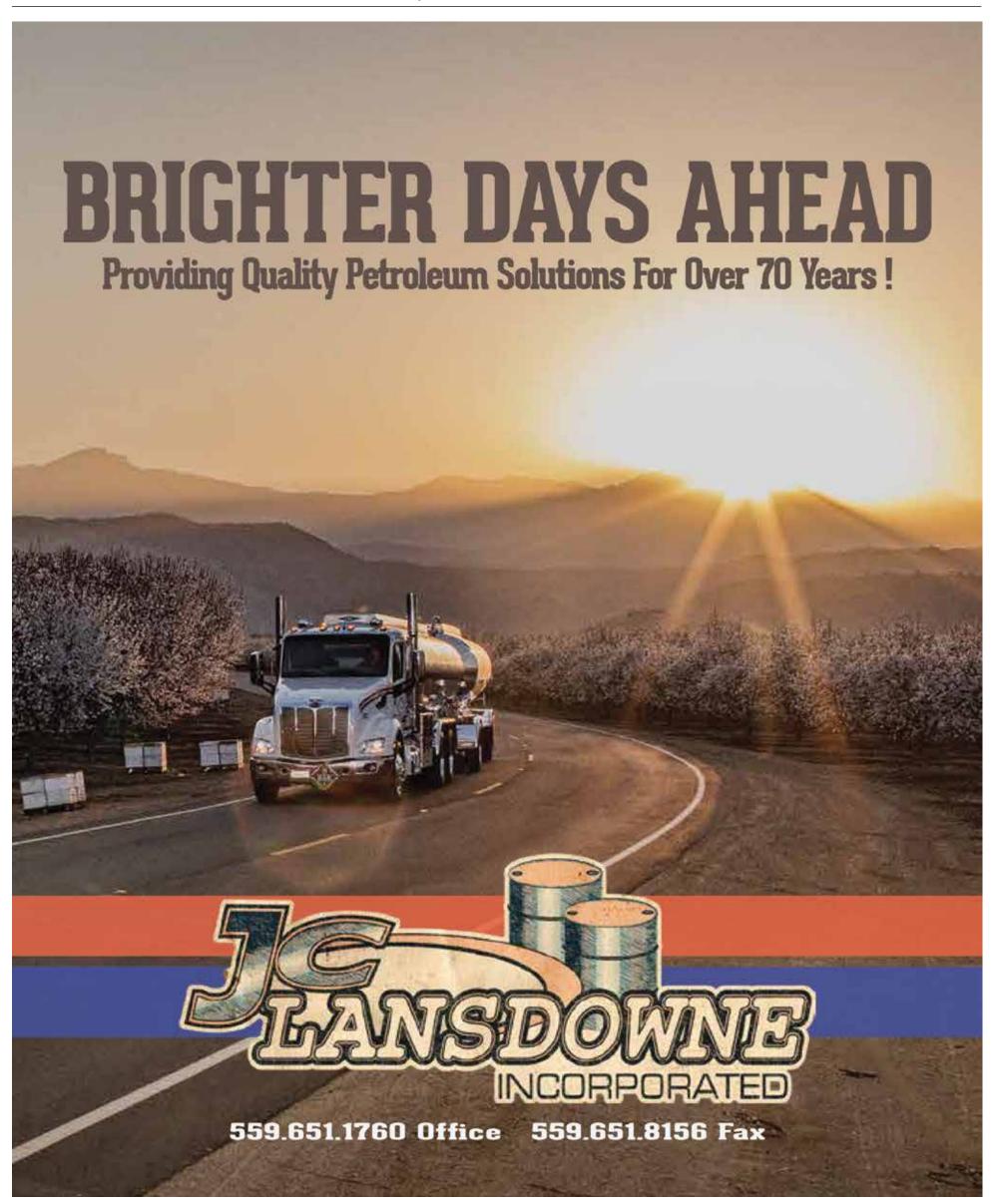
Silver -

Danell Custom Harvesting Four Seasons Ag Services Griswold, LaSalle, Cobb, Dowd & Gin LLP Hansen Industries Innovative Ag Services, LLC J.G. Boswell Company Inc. Kahn, Soares & Conway LLP Meras Water Solutions Morgan & Slates Manufacturing & Supplies OFI Pacific Ag Insurance Rain for Rent

Southern California Edison Stifel Investment Services S&W Seed Company Trinkle Ag Flying Tulare Lake Basin Water Storage District

Bronze -

Billingsley Tire Inc. Bressler & Company Certified Public Accountants CalWest Rain Garton Tractor Granger Water Specialties JP Honey Farms Keller Motors Kings Dairy Supply Inc. Laguna Irrigation District Needham Ag Services Pearson Realty Inc. Schuil & Associates Sullivan Farming LLC Torrent Resources Tulare Lake Compost Valley Ag Spraying Weinberger, Fukuda, and Associates Agricultural Consulting, Inc.



Kings County Rural Crime Report Obey road closure signs, avoid flooded areas

Contributed by Detective Dakotah Fausnett

Throughout the month of April, the Kings County Rural Crimes Task Force was busy investigating copper wire thefts, burglaries, tractor thefts and assisting with flood watch at the Tulare Lake and the Kings River.

> We tracked down a stolen Kubota tractor that was stolen near Highway 41 and Fargo Avenue the week prior. There has been a rise in burglaries to shops and outbuildings in the rural areas. We encourage members to install security systems, cameras or motion lighting at these kinds of buildings to help deter thefts.

The sheriff's office has been diligently monitoring the Tulare Lake flooding in Corcoran and the status of the Kings River along the north side of the county. We urge everyone to obey all road closure signs and do not attempt to drive through any flooded areas. There have been several rescues by helicopter and by boat in the Tulare Lake due to subjects ignoring the road closures and driving on the flooded roadways. The Detective Fausnett : **(559) 639-8704** Detective Thomas: **(559) 530-1701** Detective Holt: **(559) 362-8928** Detective Coghlan: **(559) 362-3078**

Kings River is currently closed to all recreational activities, and individuals found on the river are being cited under authority of Penal Code 409.5(a). You can find information on flooding, road closures, maps and more at countyofkings. com/community/2023-flood.

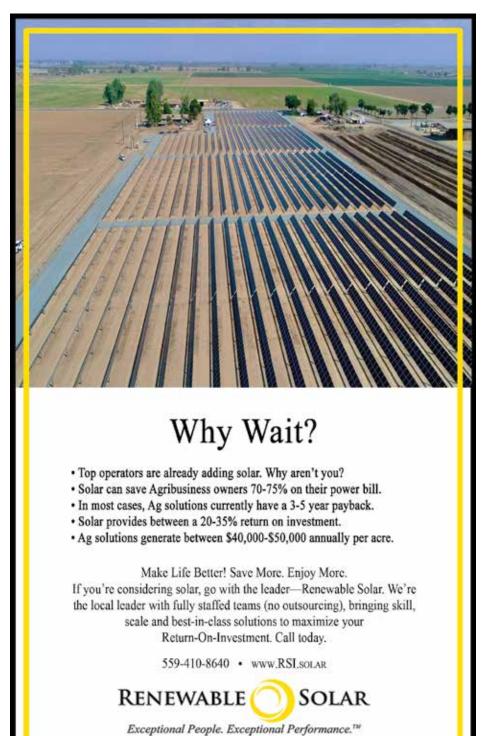
It is imperative that if anyone knows of or hears of anyone buying or selling obviously stolen equipment to call the sheriff's office. If we do not receive calls from our Farm Bureau members and community, we may not be aware of certain crimes occurring in your area. If you have any questions, feel free to call me or any of our unit members at any time.

DIAS LAW FIRM, INC.

502 W. Grangeville Blvd. Hanford, California 93230 Telephone (559) 585-7330 Facsimile (559) 585-7335

Michael A. Dias • Jonette M. Montgomery Steven E. Alfieris • Ella Floresca David M. Lange • Dustin J. Moses Leonardo D. Piceno *Attorneys at Law* Jimmy J. Rodriguez • Alicia D. Wrest





YOUR NEWEST FRIEND OF FARM BUREAU SPONSOR "PUTTING COMMUNITY FIRST."







