



INSIDE



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE PG. 3

New report highlights agriculture's economic impact

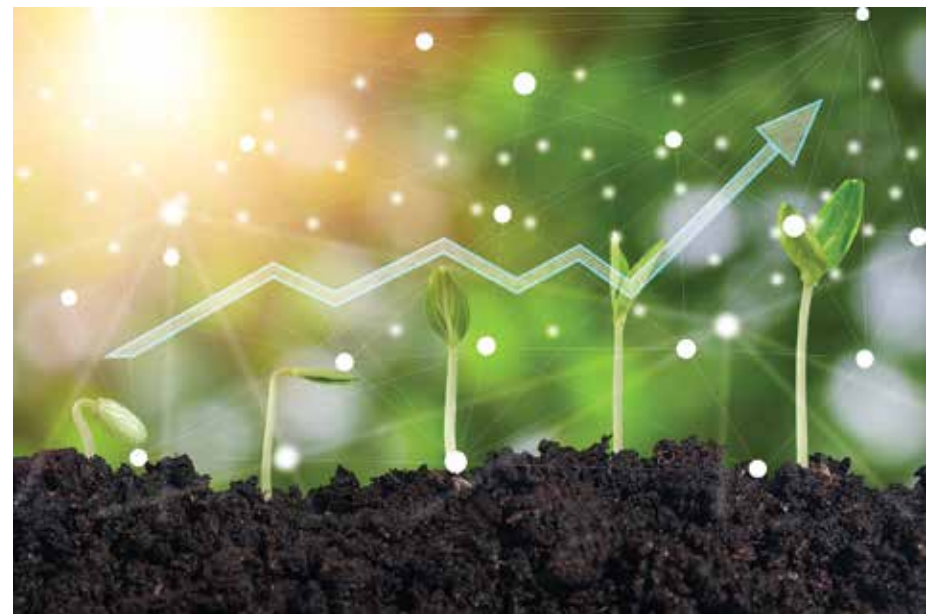
By Dusty Ference, Executive Director

The agriculture industry isn't always good at explaining its value. It's not an easy endeavor. Kings County Farm Bureau and the Kings County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) collaborated on a project never before attempted in Kings County: an agriculture economic impact report.

Everyone involved understood that agriculture was a huge sector of the local economy, but none of us were truly prepared for exactly what that meant. One of the most staggering numbers in the report is the number of jobs agriculture contributes. Before 2020, agriculture made up the most prominent employer sector, surpassed only by the County of Kings amid the pandemic.

Suppose the number of jobs in the county attributable to agriculture isn't astonishing enough. In that case, the number of teachers and county employees the county can afford because of the taxes paid by the ag industry is staggering.

The numbers in this report are crucial to Kings County. As drought impacts, SGMA, increased costs, and decreased commodity prices are considered, the implications are more significant than only to the grower. If agriculture is allowed to wither and continues to shrink, the county and its residents will suffer. The industry won't be the only sector to lose jobs and close businesses. If there was ever a time for the community to come together, it is now.



Please see page 7 for the full agriculture economic impact report.

Forecasters predict another dry winter for the Valley

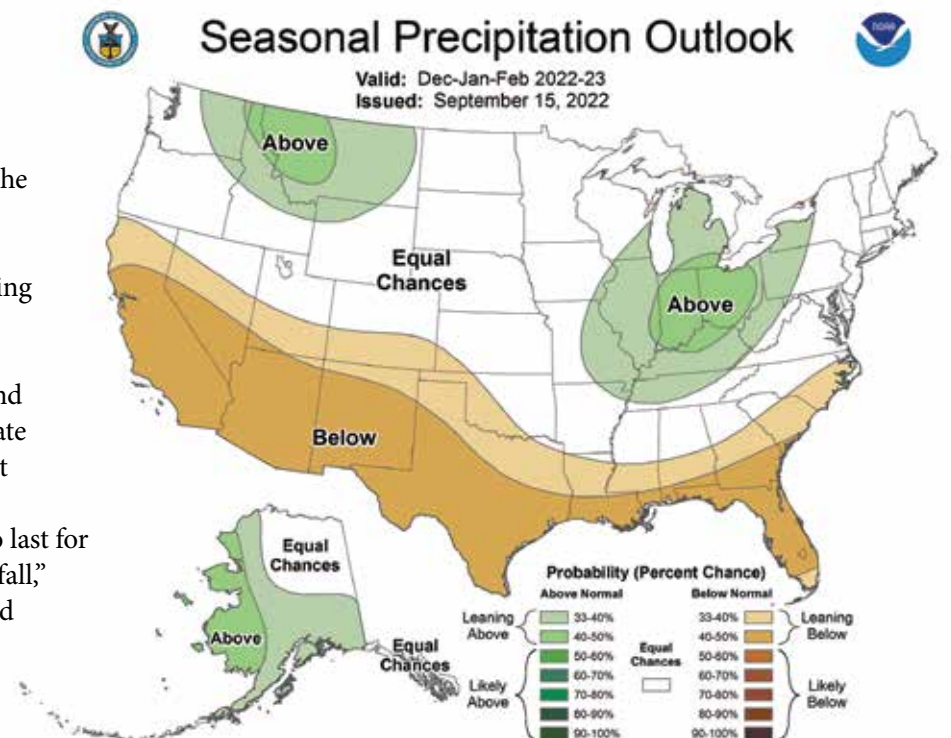
By Amy D. Fienen

If this year's winter forecasts prove correct, a fourth dry winter will leave the Valley stuck in the same devastating drought, potentially for years to come. The Valley remains inches below its normal precipitation for this time of year, and another predicted La Niña year won't bring with it any relief.

Brian Ochs with the National Weather Service in Hanford said that if this fall and winter follow the forecast models, the state will find itself in ever-worsening drought conditions.

"I would predict the drought is going to last for years because we're so far behind in rainfall," Ochs said. "We'd need three years of good precipitation to help us get caught up."

The last time the Valley saw three consecutive years of above average precipitation was from 1995 to 1998.



This map from the Climate Prediction Center shows that the Valley has a 40 to 50 percent chance of below-average precipitation from December through February. The outlook is much the same through April 2023.

"Dry Winter" continued on page 4

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Jared Little	

Executive Director

Dusty Ference
dusty.ference@kcfb.org

Farm Life Editorial

Amy Fienen
afienen@kcfb.org

Farm Life Advertising

Dusty Ference
kcfb@kcfb.org
(559) 584-3557

Farm Life Designer

Beth Greene

KCFB District Representative

Brian Medeiros

Contact

870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford, CA 93230
Phone: (559) 584-3557
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SGMA moves forward in spite of uncertainties

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director



Dusty Ference

The saga continues as California works through SGMA implementation, and the Tulare Lake Sub-Basin isn't without its share of excitement. In August, we covered the sub-basin's inability to submit a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). It's now October, and we don't know much about how the Department of Water Resources (DWR) intends to handle the situation.

However, there may be a bright spot in this story. Recently, DWR advised the Tulare Lake Sub-Basin GSA managers they should proceed with GSP implementation, including projects funded by a DWR grant awarded to assist with implementation.

The uncertainty surrounding SGMA exists as much today as was true six months ago. But if you read between the lines, it seems a path forward exists for SGMA implementation. For most of Kings County, plan steps do not include immediate pumping restrictions. They are instead focusing on projects to increase water supplies. That may change if drought conditions continue. For now, KCFB will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates to our members as we learn more. 🙌



Revised date for Kings County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting of Members

The date for KCFB's Annual Meeting of Members has changed. The meeting will now take place on **Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2022** at 5 p.m. at the KCFB office, 870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford. Questions, call the KCFB office, (559) 584-3557. 🙌

KCFB now accepting 2023 scholarship applications

Kings County Farm Bureau has long been a proud supporter of agriculture education, and invests in the industry's future leaders by awarding scholarships to graduating high school seniors each year. The window for the class of 2023 to apply for next year's scholarships is now open, and applications can be found at kcfb.org/scholarships.

Since the start of KCFB's scholarship program in 2007, the organization has awarded more than \$100,000 to deserving students. Scholarships are awarded to qualified students who plan to further their education at a two- or 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.

Scholarship applications are being accepted until 4:30 p.m. on March 1, 2023. More information, qualifications and applications are available on our website, kcfb.org/scholarships. 🙌

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

KCFB has been monitoring a number of bills that have been working their way through the state legislature this year. Here are brief summaries of several bills that stand to affect the ag industry and their current status.

BILLS PASSED

AB 2183 by Assemblymember Mark Stone (D-Monterey Bay) was signed by Gov. Newsom on Sept. 28. Backed by labor advocates and the UFW, the bill creates new ways for farmworkers to vote in union elections, including mail-in ballots, and authorization cards submitted to the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board, in addition to in-person voting. It includes a cap on the number of card-check petitions over the next five years.

SB 1066, the Farmworker's Drought Resilience Pilot Project, was introduced by Senator Melissa Hurtado (D-Sanger). SB 1066 will create a state-funded supplemental pay program that will provide cash assistance to eligible farmworkers who are struggling as a result of the ongoing drought. The bill directs the Department of Social Services to develop and implement the program.

BILLS VETOED/FAILED

AB 2550 was introduced by Joaquin Arambula (R-Fresno) and was vetoed by Gov. Newsom on Sept. 22. Had it passed, the bill would require the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to intervene with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District if they failed to attain and maintain the ambient air quality standard established by the EPA.

AB 2201 was introduced by Assemblymember Steve Bennett (D-Ventura) and representatives from Visalia-based Community Water Center (CWC). It would require local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to evaluate new well drilling permits to ensure those wells will not negatively affect domestic wells nearby before the permits can be approved by county government. The bill died on the assembly floor on Aug. 31.

AB 2932, authored by Assemblyman Evan Low (D-Campbell) and Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), is known as the four-day workweek bill. It would have moved the hourly overtime rate of 1-1/2 times the amount of an employee's pay from after 40 hours a week to after 32 hours a week. The bill would have also prohibited employers from reducing an employee's regular rate of pay as a result of the reduced hourly workweek requirement. Employers with less than 50 employees would be exempt. The bill failed to meet committee deadlines and never left its house of origin, so it won't proceed this year, but could be reintroduced next year. 🗳️

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“Dry Winter” continued from page 1

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting that California is about to see its third La Niña winter in a row. La Niña conditions are typically warm and dry, and don't usually occur over multiple years. The last time La Niña conditions persisted over three consecutive years was from 1973 to 1976.

Since Jan. 1 of this year, Hanford has received only 1.78 inches of rain, which is 3.89 inches below the 5.67 inches for this time of year. At the same time last year, we were two inches below average.

The seasonal temperature outlook for October through December shows a 40 to 50 percent chance of above average temperatures with equal chances of precipitation to fall above or below average. December through April looks much the same with above average temperatures, but with

chances for precipitation coming in at 40 to 50 percent below normal.

Ochs warns not to expect any rain to materialize until after the middle of October at the earliest.

If you believe the Farmer's Almanac, the eastern half of the country will “shake, shiver and shovel” this winter with record-breaking cold in some areas. But they're calling for more of the same in the west, with mild and drier than normal temperatures throughout California.

The potential wildcard is the Old Farmer's Almanac. For the past couple years, the two weather-predicting almanacs were aligned in their estimations for dry winters. This year, they are not. The Old Farmer's Almanac agrees that temperatures in the west will be above average, but is forecasting winter to be wetter than normal, with above-average mountain snows.

Janice Stillman, editor of the Old Farmer's



Local forecasters and the Farmer's Almanac are in agreement that California is facing another winter with above average temperatures and below average precipitation. Courtesy of the Farmer's Almanac

Almanac, said this will be the best of winters or memorable for all the wrong reasons, depending on where you live.

“One half of the country will deal with bone-chilling cold and loads of snow, while the other half may feel like winter never really arrives,” she said.

You can probably guess which half California will land in. 🙄

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Glassy Winged Sharpshooter found in Hanford

Contributed by Lynda Schruppf, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer

On Aug. 26, a Glassy Winged Sharpshooter (GWSS) insect was found by the Kings County Department of Agriculture in a detection trap placed at a local retail nursery. GWSS is an insect that is a particular threat to California vineyards due to its ability to spread *Xylella fastidiosa*, the bacteria that causes

Pierce's disease. Pierce's disease kills grapevines, and there are no effective treatments for it.

The Kings County Agricultural Commissioner-Sealer enters into an annual agreement every year with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to provide detection services to prevent the establishment of Glassy-Winged Sharpshooters. County Agricultural Inspectors are notified by shippers that are in a designated GWSS quarantine area of incoming shipments of nursery plants which then get inspected.

Shipments of nursery stock or GWSS host material from infested areas to Kings County are subject to the following: inspection prior to shipping, treatment when necessary, certification, inspection by Kings County Agricultural Inspectors upon arrival, and detection trapping in and near nurseries that are shipping to uninfested areas.

Ag Commissioner's Compliance Report



Jimmy Hook,
Agricultural
Commissioner/Sealer



The Kings County Ag Commissioner's staff immediately conducted a delimitation survey upon discovery of the single insect. A delimitation survey is conducted in accordance with establish CDFA protocols. In this case, a visual survey was conducted by Ag Commissioner Inspectors, which consisted of all plants within a quarter-mile radius of the original detection site being inspected one property at a time. This type of inspection included all plants within the nursery and any residences, commercial or croplands that fell within the quarter-mile radius. Secondly, 42 additional GWSS detection traps were deployed within a square mile centered on the initial find site.

The purpose of the survey was to quickly determine the extent of any possible infestation. In Kings County, there are 65 GWSS detection traps which are serviced every two weeks with 42 additional delimitation traps deployed within a square mile around this GWSS find site. The delimitation traps are serviced once a week and no additional GWSS have been found. At the find site, a voluntary insecticidal treatment of the nursery was performed by the

nursery the day after the find. If additional GWSS are found within or outside of the delimitation zone, the protocol will then shift to the treatment phase to make every effort to eliminate the threat. Kings County is considered to be a non-infested GWSS county; however, parts of Fresno and Tulare counties are considered to be generally infested with GWSS.

Early detection programs are beneficial to protecting our environment by limiting the need for increased pesticide applications for control or eradication efforts, and to help our growers provide consumers with an ample quantity of quality produce at affordable prices. For Kings County growers to be able to export commodities internationally, early detection programs are often an essential component toward establishing trade agreements with other counties.

For more information or should you have any questions, please contact the Kings County Department of Agriculture, (559) 852-2830 or agstaff@co.kings.ca.us.

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Reporting to the Senior Director of Agriculture Operations, the Senior Manager Ag Operations - Onions is responsible for the management of the ofi Spices - Onion Program. The responsibilities include providing leadership for the planning and management of all activities that support the contracting, planting, and growing of the onion crop to support the processing facilities and the company production plan. The Senior Manager Ag Operations will monitor and report on all competitor activities and competitive crop costs for the production areas.

Sr. Manager Ag Operations - Garlic and Parsley, Hanford CA

Reporting to the Senior Director of Agriculture Operations, the Senior Manager Ag Operations - Garlic and Parsley is responsible for the management of the ofi Spices - Garlic and Parsley program. The responsibilities include providing leadership for the planning and management of all activities that support the contracting, planting, and growing of the Garlic and Parsley crop to support the processing facilities and the company production plan. The Senior Manager Ag Operations will monitor and report on all competitor activities and competitive crop costs for the production areas.

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Jimmy J. Rodriguez • Alicia D. Wrest

Of Counsel

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“Economic Impact Report” continued from page 1



ECONOMIC MULTIPLIERS

Economic Multiplier for Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting: **1.42**

RANGE OF WAGES PAID TO AG WORKERS

Agricultural workers in Kings County make anywhere from **\$29,800** (average entry level) up to and exceeding **\$98,900** dependent upon position.

Approximately 1/4 of all jobs in Kings County are attributed to Agriculture

WITHOUT AGRICULTURE THESE JOBS ARE UNFUNDED (TAX ATTRIBUTABLE TO AG)

Total Ag Portion of Assessed Property Value in Kings County: **\$33,053,843**

- Portion Supporting Schools: **\$16,897,124.54**
 - Number of Teachers Supported (Average Wage **\$65,900**): **256**
- Portion Supporting County/Fire/Library (Highest Average Wage: Fire **\$50,100**): 149 firefighters, library workers, and other County Staff
- Portion Supporting Redevelopment/Cities/Special Districts: **\$8,666,717.63**



Kings County REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

	2017	2018	2019	2020	RANK IN STATE (2020)
THOUSANDS OF CHAINED (2012) DOLLARS	\$5,924,008	\$5,882,811	\$6,054,971	\$6,266,094	33
PERCENT CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS PERIOD		-0.7%	2.9%	3.5%	7

Actual GDP attributable to Ag: App. \$960,245,000 or 15% of the Kings County GDP (Private) is attributed to Agriculture. The next largest private industry contributing to the Kings County GDP is Manufacturing with \$661,088,000 or about 11% of the private contributions to the GDP.

GDP is measured by taking the quantities of all the goods and services produced, multiplying them by their prices, and summing the total. GDP can be measured either by the sum of what is purchased in the economy or by what is produced.

(Tentative) 20 YEAR LOOK



	2020	1985
Field Crop Total Harvested Acres	680,810	647,189
Total Crop/Vertebrate Value	\$2,179,476,000	\$552,466,000
Top Crop	Milk	(\$1,104,932,000)
		Total Value Adjusted for Cumulative Inflation¹

¹ Using SmartAssets Inflation Calculator, which indicated that \$1 in 1985 is worth approximately \$2 in 2022

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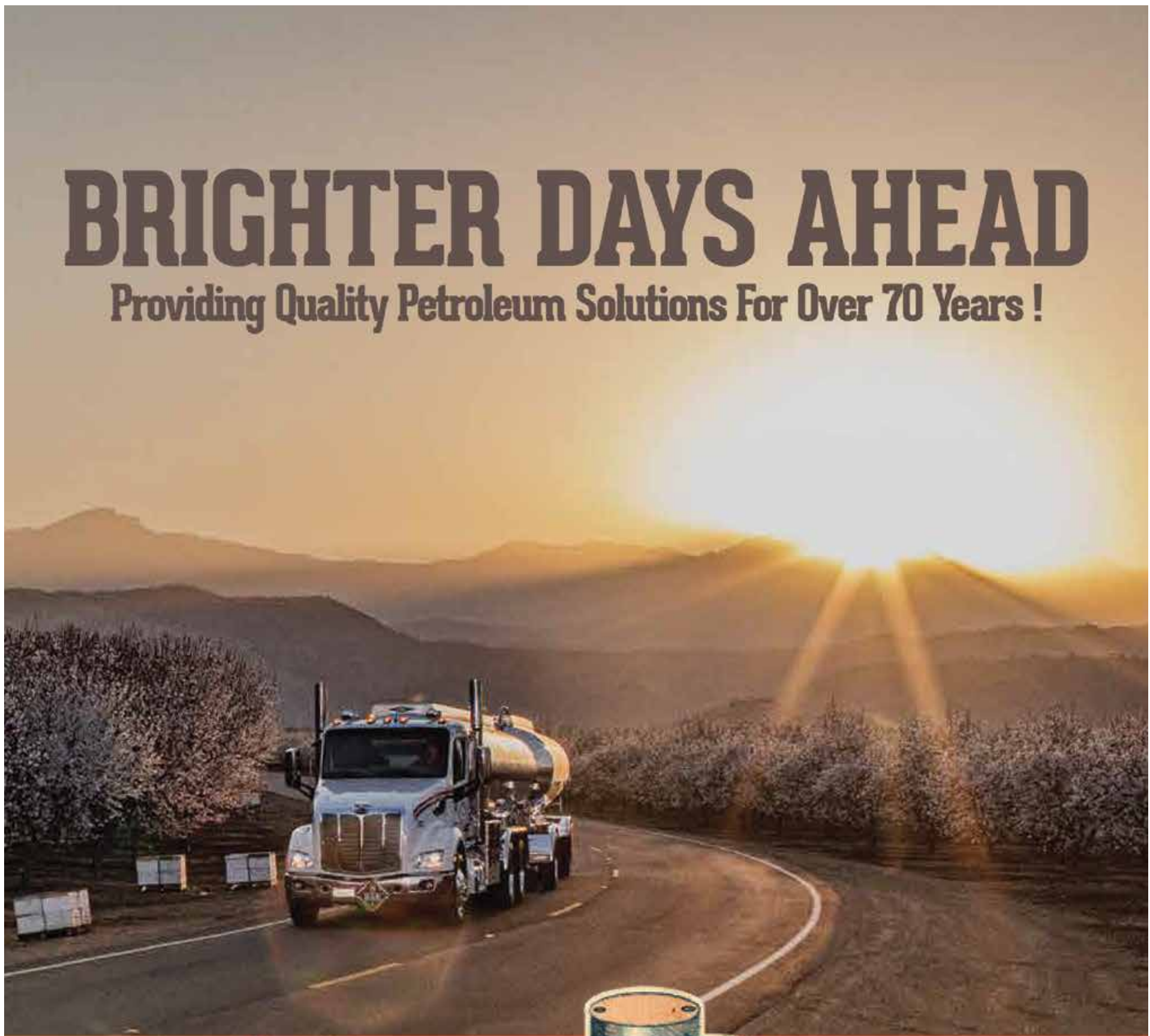
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Kings County Rural Crime Report

Porta-potty thefts continue, along with copper wire, hay and diesel fuel

Contributed by Sr. Deputy Dakotah Fausnett

Throughout the month of September, the Kings County Rural Crimes Task Force was busy in the northeast end of the county regarding copper, hay and diesel fuel thefts. We also served multiple search warrants regarding illegal marijuana grows, removing over 1,000 plants throughout the county. As the marijuana harvest season continues, so will the search warrants. We are planning on executing several more in the near future in hopes of shutting down some of the larger operations.



Copper and wire thefts, as well as porta-potty thefts, are staying steady. We are continuing to work several leads into the porta-potty thefts with ties to Riverside and Fresno counties.

Wire thefts are very difficult to investigate because more often than not, the theft is occurring in the middle of the night and the theft is typically discovered by a worker who tells another, then another, then the foreman, and so on and so forth. By the time we receive the call, half a dozen people and vehicles have walked or driven over the scene, ultimately destroying any evidence like shoe or tire impressions left by the suspects.

Over the last several months, there has been an uptick in quad and ATV thefts on the west side of the county, and we have recently been able to recover some of the stolen equipment. Our unit has identified a crew out of the Tulare area that is likely behind these thefts, and we are currently working on developing a plan to get these guys into custody to hopefully slow down some of the thefts.

Our unit also took over a theft investigation at Nichols Farms where over \$250,000 worth of pistachios were stolen. The truck driver that took this load is from out of state and has been positively identified, and we are currently communicating with the broker on locating this load.

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. 🙌

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