

**INSIDE**DISTRICT DIRECTOR
MEDEIROS **PG. 2**AG COMMISSIONER
COMPLIANCE REPORT **PG. 4**SCHOLARSHIPS
PG. 8

KCFB introduces plans to rebuild YF&R chapter in 2022

By Amy D. Fienen

Kings County has had a dynamic Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) chapter in the past, but it has been inactive for the past five years. That is slated to change in 2022, as KCFB's board of directors is taking steps to resurrect the once-popular group.

YF&R, a Farm Bureau committee that is made up of members ranging in age from 18 to 35, is a place where the ag industry's future leaders come together, and for many is a precursor to sitting on KCFB's board of directors. YF&R provides unique opportunities for leadership growth that are developed and implemented at the

county, state and national levels. A number of KCFB's current directors were once active in YF&R.

Each county Farm Bureau's YF&R committee organizes local activities and events based on member interest. They may include ag tours, community outreach, fundraising, contests, legislative meetings and social gatherings. The State YF&R

"YF&R" continued on page 11



In years past, the Kings County YF&R chapter has hosted social and networking events like this Paso Robles wine tour. KCFB file photo

Valley's chance for a wet spring is 50/50

By Amy D. Fienen

A rainy start to winter, the likes of which the Valley hasn't seen in recent memory, left residents hopeful that a wet year was in store, but a dry January did little to keep the optimism going.

The good news—or the bad news—depending on whether you're an optimist or pessimist, is that the Valley is looking at a 50/50 chance of a wet spring.

Since Oct. 1, 2021, Hanford saw 4.61 inches of rainfall, which is 1.11 inches above average for late January. The majority of that precipitation was received between the end of October through mid-December.

Meteorologist Brian Ochs with the National Weather Service in Hanford said the Valley could be in for a pattern change in February, and with it a 50/50 chance of either above or below average chance of precipitation. He expects that same trend to continue through April, after which the chance for rain typically drops considerably.

Even if a wet spring materializes, Ochs said the Valley will remain in a drought, but the spring precipitation will

"Wet Spring" continued on page 10



Deep snow covers the meadow where the first DWR snow survey of the 2022 season was held at Phillips Station in the Sierra Nevadas. The survey recorded 78.5 inches of snow depth and a snow water equivalent of 20 inches, which is 202 percent of average. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Wong, DWR



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Looking forward to the Wine vs. Beer Showdown.... again

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director



Dusty Ference

With great excitement, KCFB planned to bring back the Wine vs. Beer Showdown this year for the first time since 2020. By now, you are likely aware that we could not host the event on Jan. 20 as planned. Postponing was a tough decision to make, but we felt it was the right one.

For now, all we know is that it will happen sometime this spring. We are working out new details and will share them as soon as possible. If you got tickets for the January event, hold on to them. We will honor them at the new event.

Our great vendors are as committed to this event as we are, and they all understood the need to postpone. They have committed to a new date, and I am optimistic that additional vendors will sign up for a later date, making the new event that much better!

I don't know anyone that would have predicted COVID-19 would still be interfering with our lives so much nearly two years after detection, but here we are. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we attempt to navigate life with COVID.

We will announce new details soon and look forward to seeing you all at the upcoming Wine vs. Beer Showdown. 🍷

COMING SOON



Congratulations

to KCFB's Past President Brian Medeiros, who has been appointed district director for California Farm Bureau Federation's District 5. District 5 covers Kings and Kern counties. Medeiros will serve a four-year term representing Kings and Kern county farmers at the state level.

Member to Member *People, Products, Prosperity*

M. Green & Company LLP

By Amy D. Fienen



M. GREEN AND COMPANY LLP
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M. Green & Company LLP is one of the Valley’s largest and most respected accounting firms, but they remain true to the personalized service and commitment to quality on which their business was built well over half a century ago.

Founded in Tulare in 1951 by Maurice “Red” Green and his wife, Bernice, M. Green & Company has expanded to include additional offices in Hanford, Visalia and Porterville. They have 11 partners throughout their four Valley offices, four of which are based in Hanford.

As a full-service firm, M. Green & Company serves a number of small businesses, corporate groups and individuals, and many agriculture and ag-related businesses. The firm’s roots were in ag, and that’s one thing that hasn’t changed over the years.

Natalie Siegel, a partner in the Hanford office, said that while the Greens have passed on, their foresight to raise up partners within the firm has helped secure their company’s legacy. Rather than recruiting from other firms, all 11 partners at M. Green & Company had their start there. This allows for personalized, hands-on training, which ensures they are providing expertise that is tailored specifically to their client’s unique needs. The firm is now in their third generation of partners, and Siegel said this unique approach of recruiting local talent from within the community is part of what sets them apart. Their employees have a connection to where they live and work, allowing for a business relationship with a personalized touch.

“We have the capabilities of a bigger firm, but really enjoy the relationships we have with our clients,” Siegel said. “We make ourselves very available to our clients. They pop in and we have an informal, friendly relationship that’s mutually enjoyable.”

M. Green & Company’s accounting, tax and advisory services range from basic bookkeeping and payroll to estates and trusts, audits, business consultation and fraud examination.

Siegel said their staff stays up-to-date on current accounting and tax issues so they can help clients navigate ever-changing regulations.

“We have a broad range of knowledge and expertise, but we’re very approachable and can translate our knowledge to a regular level our clients can understand,” she said.

M. Green & Company, a gold-level Friend of Farm Bureau, supports Farm Bureau because the company had its start in the ag industry—an industry that they still actively work with today.

“We like to keep a connection with our ag clients so they understand that we support their industry,” Siegel said. “We want to stay involved in the industry our clients are involved in.”

M. Green & Company’s Hanford office is located at 1483 Bailey Dr. They can be reached at (559) 584-2751, or learn more on their website, mgreencpas.com.

The “Member to Member” feature is our way of promoting the members that help make our work possible through their financial support. Please consider doing business with companies who show their commitment to the local ag industry through their support of Farm

Bureau. If your company would like to become a Friend of Farm Bureau, please call the KCFB office at (559) 584-3557.



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Ag Commissioner's Compliance Report



Jimmy Hook,
Agricultural
Commissioner/Sealer

Make sure you're avoiding these top 10 pesticide violations

Contributed by Janet Eckles, Deputy Ag Commissioner

Each year, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) publishes a list of the Top 10 Pesticide Violations throughout the state of California. This article will address and briefly describe the top 10 violations in the state for 2020. Kings County focuses on training and outreach to all of our growers and businesses so we do not necessarily mirror the violations on CDPR's list, but we do share the top three non-compliances for 2020.

10) ADEQUATE HANDLER TRAINING: This violation falls under Handler Training in the California Code of Regulations Title 3 Food and Agriculture (3CCR) 6724. The regulation states that an employer must provide training for all employees who handle pesticides. An employer must have a training program that goes over all of the specific categories. These categories include, but are not limited to, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), safety requirements, hazards of pesticides and their use, signs and symptoms of exposure, decontamination, and more. The most common employer offenses are not retaining two years of training records and not including all pesticides that the employee will be handling. Kings County Department of Agriculture provides a handler training that covers pesticide handler training categories and can help with pesticide-specific information.

9) PROPER APPLICATION SPECIFIC INFORMATION: Application Specific Information (ASI) for Fieldworkers 3CCR 6761.1 is another violation. ASI is information made available to workers about what pesticides have been applied to the site they are working in. This must be displayed in a central location, and must specify crop and site treated, date and time the application started and finished, re-entry interval (REI), what pesticide was used, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration



number and the active ingredient in the pesticide. The best example of an ASI would be a Pesticide Use Report (PUR). ASI must also be retained for two years. The most common issues for this regulation are displaying an ASI with missing information and not retaining records for two years.

8) HAZARD COMMUNICATION FOR FIELDWORKERS: Another common violation is Hazard Communication for Fieldworkers 3CCR 6761. A grower is required to post a completed Pesticide Safety Information Series (PSIS) A-9 pamphlet at a worksite or a central location where employees start their day. This information is also required to be posted at all permanent decontamination facilities and temporary decontamination facilities servicing 11 or more field workers. This form includes medical information of where they can go to receive medical care and where to locate ASI for the grower they are working for. It is important to note that all changes in medical information must be updated on the forms within 24 hours of the change. Updating and informing employees of where this form is located are the most frequent violations.

7) AVAILABILITY OF LABELING: Availability of Labeling at Use Site falls under 3CCR 6602. All applicators are required to have a copy of the label for all pesticides being applied with them when at the application site.

6) HANDLER DECONTAMINATION FACILITIES: Violation 3CCR 6734 is Handler Decontamination Facilities. Decontamination facilities must supply workers with paper towels, water and soap. Paper towels provided must be single use. A minimum of three gallons of water per person is required at the start of every day. There is no substitution for soap. These facilities must be at the mix/load site, which must be within a quarter-mile of the application site. Emergency eyewash must be provided for each employee if eyewear is required by labeling, regulation, permit conditions, or if using a closed system. There must be at least one pint of water with the applicator or in the

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Ruth McFarren: (559) 589-7056 ruth.mcfarren@kingscoe.org

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"Pesticide Violations" continued on page 11



KCFB's 2022 Committees

As we begin a new year, we wanted to share our committee rosters so our members can see who is serving where. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, please call the office. Some committee seats are open to non-board members.

Executive Committee

- Kevin Robertson • President
- Shane Bickner • Vice President
- Garrett Gilcrease • Secretary/Treasurer
- Brian Medeiros • Past President
- Dino Giacomazzi • Past President
- Pete Hanse • Past President
- Monty Hoggard • Past President
- Michael Miya • Past President
- John Ellis • Appointed
- Frank Zonneveld • Appointed

Finance

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- Shane Bickner
- Brian Potter
- Brandon Sargent
- Brian Medeiros
- Jared Silveria
- Jon Garcia
- Kevin Robertson

Legislative

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- Kevin Robertson
- Laura Brown
- Shane Bickner

Water

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- Helen Sullivan
- Keith Grabow
- Kevin Robertson
- Monty Hoggard
- Shane Bickner
- Tony Azevedo

Nominating & Bylaws

- Erik Hansen
- Michael Miya
- Mike Newton
- Nathan Heeringa
- Pete Hanse

Wine vs. Beer

- Todd Fukuda
- Brandon Sargent
- Helen Sullivan
- Jared Silveria
- John Ellis

Scholarship

- Brandon Sargent
- Brian Potter
- Helen Sullivan
- Jackie Giacomazzi
- Michael Miya
- Steve Walker

Membership

- Brandon Sargent
- Brian Potter
- Jon Garcia
- Kevin Robertson

Crop Protection

- Garrett Gilcrease
- Todd Fukuda
- Jon Garcia
- Brandon Sargent
- Adam Taveras
- Jordan Bickner

Directors

- Shane Bickner
- John Ellis
- Todd Fukuda
- Jon Garcia
- Dino Giacomazzi
- Garrett Gilcrease
- Keith Grabow
- Pete Hanse
- Monty Hoggard
- Jared Little
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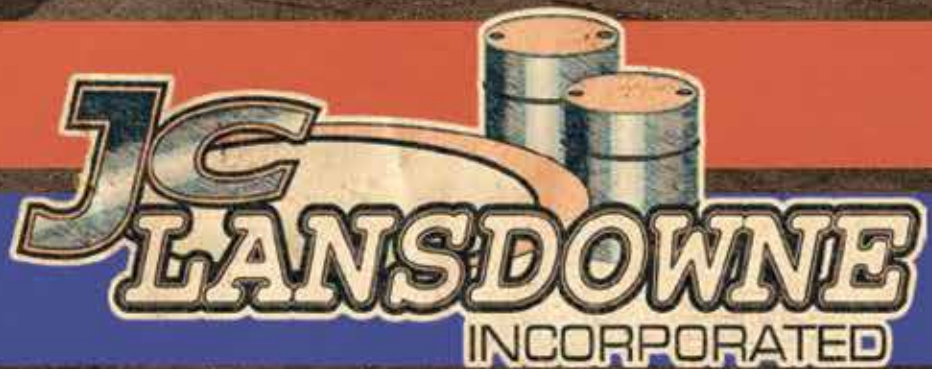
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Kings County Rural Crime Report

Unit investigating a number of various thefts across the county

Contributed by Detective Kody Holt

The Kings County Rural Crime Unit continued to take several initial reports on copper wire thefts in January which were spread throughout the county. There have been numerous wire thefts at JG Boswell property, Esajian Land Company, and Flores Farms properties. In all of these investigations, the suspects are cutting the copper wire at the well head, causing thousands of dollars' worth of damage. The wire theft at Flores Farms was caught in progress from cameras we had in the area. This caused a pursuit between the suspect(s) and our patrol units, but due to heavy fog, the suspects were not apprehended. Evidence was located at the scene and we are working on locating the suspects in this case. We have several shoe and tire impressions on our other wire theft investigations and are currently looking for suspects.

Patrol and our unit have taken several theft investigations of UTVs and trailers. JR Searcy had an ATV and trailer stolen. Our unit located the ATV and trailer in the Armona area soon after it was stolen and the suspects were taken into custody. Tos Farms also had an ATV and trailer stolen from their yard. Our unit recovered this equipment in Tulare County, along with several other pieces of equipment and UTVs from Kings County that were reported stolen.

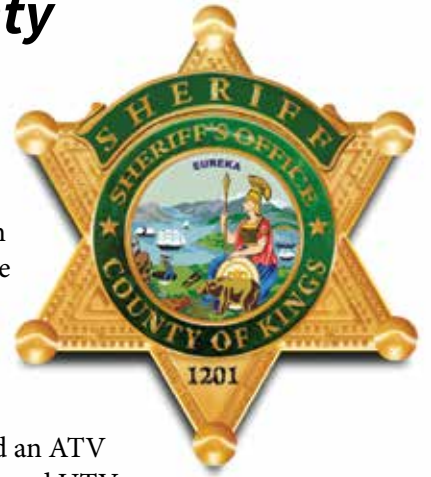
Our unit continues to see a rise in the theft of diesel fuel. This past month, Tos Farms had a trap wagon and 250 gallons of diesel stolen in the area of 6th and Clinton avenues. Be on the lookout bulletins were broadcast to the surrounding counties and we are hopeful investigative leads will come up.

We also had some produce thefts occur last month in the south part of the county. Kochergen Farms had an estimated 100 Tango trees picked and fruit stolen prior to their harvest. Kochergen Farms is continuing to harvest in the area and cameras have been installed to try and develop further leads in the investigation.

We are working hard to locate suspects and to develop leads in all of these investigations. With little to no evidence in most of them, we could use your assistance. Please call any rural crime detective if you see any suspicious activity. If you see a suspicious vehicle, get a license plate is possible and let us know. This will help up to identify possible suspects and

could lead to closing out several investigations with the same suspect.

The OAN program is still a service we provide to all farmers and ranchers. If you need equipment stamped, please call me or one of our detectives for an appointment. The Kings County Farm Bureau also has SmartWater CSI available for purchase. Contact Dusty at the Farm Bureau for further information. We can be contacted on our cell numbers anytime for assistance. Thank you for your support and we hope your new year is off to a great start! 🙌



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Detective Kody Holt
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Detective Colten Verhoeven
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Kings County Farm Bureau accepting applications for three scholarships



1 Kings County Farm Bureau Scholarship

Kings County Farm Bureau offers scholarships to students based upon academic achievement, extracurricular activities, determination, leadership skills, and a commitment to a career in agriculture. This year, the committee will use discretion on the number and amount of awards to be distributed. In addition, scholarship recipients will receive a complimentary one-year collegiate membership in the Kings County Farm Bureau.

Who is eligible?

Students must be entering a two-year or four-year accredited college or university, or vocational education institute with the intent to pursue a career in the agricultural industry. Students must be a resident of Kings County or attend a Kings County high school.

Requirements & Recommendations:

- Official high school transcript (MUST be attached to submitted application)
- MUST have 2.5 minimum G.P.A. at the time of application submission
- Two letters of recommendation (MUST be attached to submitted application. Cannot be from applicant's relative)
- MUST be pursuing a career in the agricultural industry
- It is recommended that applicant demonstrate a history of service to Kings County agriculture or the Kings County Farm Bureau through some form of volunteerism or community service project
- It is recommended that applicant's parent, employer or relative be a Kings County Farm Bureau member

2 Environmental Oversight Committee Scholarship

The Environmental Oversight Committee Scholarship is sponsored by Kings County Farm Bureau and Kings County Citizens for a Healthy Environment, originally funded by G.W.F Power Systems. The scholarship amount is a maximum of \$4,000 per year based upon interest earned by the EOC Trust Fund for a maximum of four years per recipient (\$16,000 total).

Requirements & Criteria

- Must be a U.S. citizen and a graduate of a Kings County high school
- Must have a minimum grade point average (G.P.A.) of 3.0 for the last three years of high school for an entering college freshman. Must have a minimum of 3.0 G.P.A. from previous semester for college sophomore and upper-class scholarship renewal. If the recipient's G.P.A. is below 3.0 any semester, including and following the first semester of the sophomore school year, the recipient must appear before the Scholarship Committee for scholarship renewal review.
- Must attend an accredited four-year college, university, or community college in the United States of America as a full-time student carrying a minimum of 12 units
- Must major in Environmental Science, Physical Science, Life Science, Engineering, or Agricultural Sciences
- Must submit a completed Scholarship Application to the Scholarship Committee by deadline established by the Kings County Farm Bureau
- Must submit a handwritten statement, limited to 300 words stating the applicant's educational purpose and a summary of qualifications
- Must submit a completed Financial Application
- Must submit five letters of recommendation. Two must be from an instructor or teacher at the applicant's high school, one from a counselor at the applicant's high school, and two from adult individuals who have known the applicant for at least three years.
- Must agree to an oral interview

3 Victoria A. Mueller Memorial Scholarship

KCFB is managing a new scholarship this year in honor of Victoria Alise Mueller, daughter of Paula Vinzant, our director of government and member relations. Victoria, who went by Tori, left this world too soon in November 2020 at the age of 23, soon after graduating from college.

Tori spent her childhood years modeling, acting and competing in pageants. She was a world-class equestrian and a brilliant student. She was an honor student at CSU Long Beach, where she earned a degree in biology. At the time of her death, she was interviewing at pharmacy schools, and was accepted at all eight.



Victoria Alise Mueller

This scholarship was established by Tori's family and friends to honor her memory and legacy. She loved paying it forward, helping those around her, and was a friend to all. Her legacy lives on through her organ, tissue and eye donation, made through the One Legacy organization.

The Victoria A. Mueller Memorial Scholarship is offered to students based upon academic achievement, extracurricular activities, determination, leadership skills, and a commitment to a career in agricultural science. This year, the committee will use discretion on the number and amount of awards to be distributed.

Who is eligible?

Students must be entering or currently enrolled in a two- or four-year accredited college or university with the intent to pursue a career in the agricultural industry. Students must be a resident of Kings County or attend a Kings County High School.

Requirements & Recommendations:

- Official high school transcript (MUST be attached to submitted application)
- MUST have 3.0 minimum G.P.A. at the time of application submission
- Two letters of recommendation (MUST be attached to submitted application. Cannot be from applicant's relative)
- MUST be pursuing a career in the agricultural industry
- It is recommended that applicant demonstrate a service to Kings County agriculture or the Kings County Farm Bureau through some form of volunteerism or community service project.

Donations to the Victoria A. Mueller Memorial Scholarship can be made at plantfoundation.org/victoria.

Scholarship Submission Information & Deadlines

Deadline: March 16, 2022

Applications for all three scholarships can be found on the KCFB website, kcfb.org. Completed applications must be received by 4 p.m. in the KCFB office or postmarked by March 16, 2022. Email applications sent to kcfb@kcfb.org will be accepted by the deadline date and time. Make sure that applications and all required documents (letters of recommendations, transcripts, etc.) are scanned and attached to email in PDF format.

Kings County Farm Bureau Office address: 870 Greenfield Ave., Hanford, CA 93230
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Valley Ag Spraying

“Wet Spring” continued from page 1

determine its severity.

“We’re no longer in the worst ‘exceptional’ drought category [after the recent rain],” Ochs said; “now we’re in the ‘severe’ drought category.”

He went on to say that it would take another one or two above-average months to move the Valley up another category.

The Department of Water Resources’ (DWR) first snow survey of the season at Phillips Station on Dec. 30 measured 202 percent of average for that date at that location. Regardless, DWR Director Karla Nemeth echoed Ochs’ sentiment that while the Sierras received a plentiful snowfall in December, the state remains in a drought. She warned Californians that even a series of big storms may not refill major reservoirs during the next few months.

“We need more storms and average temperatures this winter and spring, and we can’t be sure it’s coming,” Nemeth said. “So, it’s important that we continue to do our part to keep conserving—we will need that water this

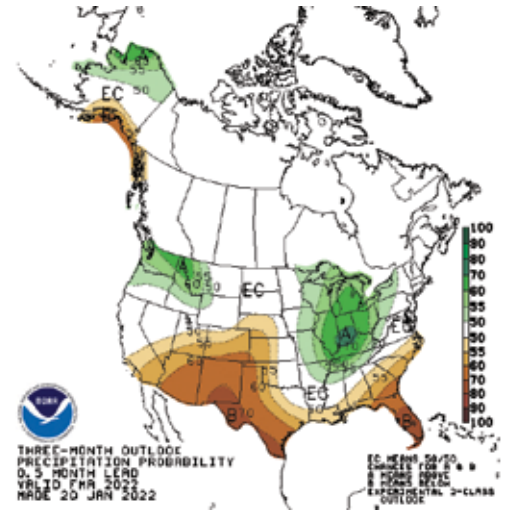
summer.”

December is the first of what are typically California’s three wettest months, but it’s not unusual for a wet December to give way to a dry January and February. On the heels of a dry January, significant precipitation will need to materialize in February to generate enough runoff to make up for our previous two winters that were the fifth- and second-driest on record.

Ochs said it’s early to start worrying.

“If it doesn’t rain before Valentine’s Day, we’d be back to average for the season, so we have a little time before we have to be concerned about another deficit,” he said.

A spring that brings bountiful precipitation is on everyone’s wish list, but the bottom line is that either way, California is facing another year of drought conditions, the severity of which rests largely on the next few months. 🙏



This graphic provided by the National Weather Service in Hanford shows a three-month outlook precipitation probability of 50 percent that the Valley will receive above- or below-average precipitation from February through April.

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"YF&R" continued from page 1

Conference is held each December in conjunction with the CFBF Annual Meeting, and KCFB is hoping to send at least one YF&R member to this year's conference.

During their January meeting, the board discussed a plan for YF&R's return. The YF&R committee will hold its first meeting at the end of February, at which time they will discuss the scheduling of four YF&R meeting tentatively planned for this year. The committee plans to invite neighboring county Farm Bureau and state committee YF&R members to offer guidance and suggestions for building a successful local chapter.

"It's important for us to engage with the younger farmers in the county and begin raising them up to be the next generation of Farm Bureau leaders," said KCFB Executive Director Dusty Ference.

We will provide information on upcoming YF&R meetings and event in future issues of "Farm Life." In the meantime, please call the KCFB office at (559) 584-3557 to learn how you can get involved. 📞

"Pesticide Violations" continued from page 4

application vehicle at all times. There must also be an emergency eyewash station located at the mix/load site to gently rinse eyes for 15 minutes. The most frequent non-compliances are not having a decontamination site at the mix/load site, not having a mix/load site location within a quarter-mile, and handlers substituting wet towelettes for soap and water.

5) CONTAINER LABELING: Another common issue is Service Container Labeling 3CCR 6678. All service containers are required to contain a label providing the name and address of the responsible person, company, and identity of the pesticide contains. Labeling must also include the signal word, i.e. caution, warning, danger, for the pesticide. The only exemption from this is a grower on their own property. This exemption does not include the grower traveling on public rights-of-way.


4) REGISTRATION: Registration in the County is Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) 11732. Anyone who intends to advertise, solicit, or operate as a pest control business in California must register in each county they do business.

3) EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE: Emergency Medical Care is a non-compliance of 3CCR 6726. Emergency medical care must be planned in advance for employees that handle pesticides. The name, address, and phone number of the medical care facility must be posted at the worksite or on the vehicle the employee is using for applications. Employees must be taken for medical care immediately when a pesticide-related illness or exposure is suspected. Not taking an employee for medical care immediately after exposure or injury, and missing information or posting are two significant violations found.

2) PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE): PPE falls under 3CCR 6738. It is the employer's responsibility to provide an employee with the required PPE for each day of work. Employers are also responsible for daily inspection, cleaning and repair of the equipment. They must provide a place to keep all PPE separate from personal clothing and in a clean and pesticide-free area. Employers should verify that PPE is used correctly and for the intended use. Using PPE that is damaged or contaminated, or not being used for its intended purpose are the two major issues found.

1) LABELING/PERMIT CONDITIONS: Labeling/Permit Condition is FAC 12793. The most common violations found throughout the state is not following the application requirements listed on the pesticide product label and applying pesticides to sites or crops that are not listed on the pesticide label.

Non-compliances on any inspection can lead to fines to the growers or Farm Labor Contractors (FLC). The best way to avoid non-compliance is to make sure you are following the regulations. Read the labels, fill out your paperwork correctly, train your employees on all the pesticides you apply, and make sure you provide them with the proper equipment to keep them safe. Our office provides training classes and outreach is available to all growers and businesses, which can take place prior to an inspection. If you have any questions, call the Kings County Agricultural Commissioner's Office at (559) 852-2830. 📞



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