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OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE KINGS COUNTY FARM BUREAU November 2022 Vol. 29 Number 11

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INSIDE



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Uncertainty continues to plague SGMA implementation

By Dusty Ference, Executive Director

Since the enactment of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), growers have battled uncertainty. Unfortunately, that trend continues. During a Nov. 1 presentation to the State Board of Food and Agriculture, Paul Gosselin, Deputy Director of Sustainable Groundwater Management for the Department of Water Resources (DWR), reported 12 basins as incomplete and one as inadequate.

The Tulare Lake sub-basin achieved inadequate status after the Southwest Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) submitted an individual Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in July, while the rest



of the basin submitted a single coordinated plan. In compliance with SGMA, sub-basins working with multiple GSPs must work under a coordination agreement. The requirement for a coordination agreement exists to mitigate differences in management practices and data inconsistencies.

It is understandable how the sub-basin got to this point; given the submission of two GSPs without a plan to do so, it leaves Kings County growers in a state of uncertainty. Unfortunately, the sub-basin needs guidance from DWR or the State Water Board to proceed.

On the opposite side of Kings County is the Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GKGSA), which is facing its own set of problems. All year, GKGSA promoted a GSP that would take effect on Oct. 1, 2022. While the growers

"SGMA" continued on page 2

Kings County releases 2021 Crop Report

Crop values rebound with value of \$2.34 billion

Kings County's 2021 Agricultural Crop Report was recently released, reflecting a rebound in crop values after a slight downturn in 2020. The county's agricultural crops and products produced a gross value of \$2.34 billion last year, an increase of 7.5 percent over 2020's \$2.18 billion.

Kings County Ag Commissioner Jimmy Hook reported that the largest increase in crop values of 13 percent was in fruit and nut crops resulting from a rise in bearing acreage, production and higher prices for almonds and pistachios. Other commodities that saw increases due



to higher prices include field crops (11 percent) and livestock and poultry products (5 percent). Apiary products increased 20 percent thanks to an increase in pollinated acreage.

Seed crops had a significant 46 percent, or \$5 million decrease in value due to lower harvested acres. Milk remains the county's top commodity with a value of close to \$723 million last year.

See page 3 for highlights of the 2021 Crop Report.



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Protect, preserve and enhance agriculture in Kings County

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"SGMA" continued from page 1

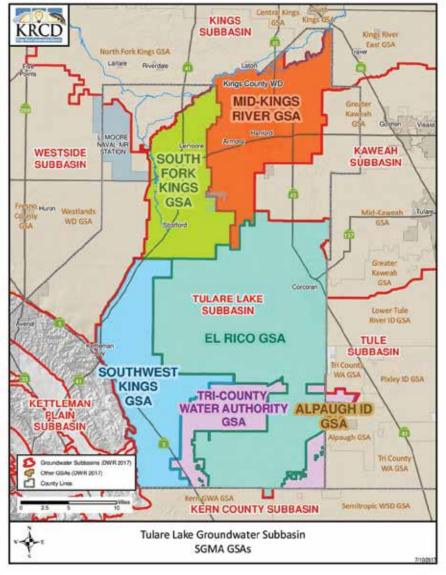
who don't receive surface water, known as white-area growers, had reservations about the plan, most figured out how to proceed despite its challenges. Three days before the program went into effect, the GKGSA board flipped the script. That change sparked a movement of growers in the area.

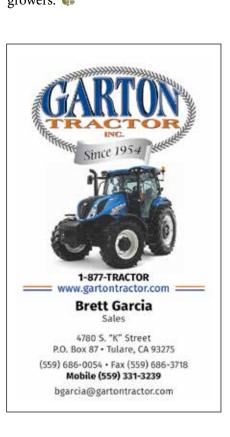
All year, growers understood they would receive credit for rainfall and to expect an assessment on pumped water at this rate. Rainfall credit was removed from one day to the next, and fees doubled. The changes were so drastic and expensive that growers rose to protest the plan change. For weeks, growers showed up and fought for better conditions, which appears to have worked. Growers are still limited on the amount of water they can pump. They did not argue for more, just for reasonable pumping rates and for credit for water provided by Mother Nature. While the possibility for unfavorable changes still exists, we remain hopeful that the GKGSA

understands the challenges white-area growers face and will act accordingly.

These are just two examples of the uncertainty caused by SGMA. To be confused, frustrated and exhausted by the topic is understandable. Changing groundwater pumping rights is a massive undertaking requiring cooler heads to prevail. As SGMA is implemented, our industry will continue to face challenges. We are committed to covering the everchanging landscape that is SGMA and continue working for the betterment of the situation for our growers.

This map shows the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) Kings County and the surrounding areas are broken into. Courtesy of Kings River Conservation District







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CROP REPORT

TOP 10 COMMODITIES in 2021

- 1. Milk \$723 million
- 2. Pistachios \$268 million
- 3. Almonds \$191 million
- 4. Cotton \$190 million
- 5. Cattle & Calves \$172 million
- 6. Tomatoes, processed \$129 million
- 7. Corn, Silage \$79 million
- 8. Walnuts \$62 million
- 9. Livestock, Poultry \$61 million
- 10. Alfalfa, Hay \$46 million

TOP 10

COMMODITIES

50 YEARS AGO, in 1971

- 1. Cotton \$29 million
- 2. Milk \$30 million
- 3. Cattle & Calves \$19 million
- 4. Barley \$13 million
- 5. Hay, Alfalfa \$11 million
- 6. Safflower \$8 million
- 7. Corn \$3 million
- 8. Sugar Beets \$2 million
- 9. Wheat \$2 million
- 10. Vegetables, misc. \$2 million

KINGS COUNTY AG Hall of Fame

Kings County is ranked:

- 1st among California counties in the production of cotton lint and cottonseed
- 2nd among California counties in tomato processing
- 3rd among California counties in the production of nectarines, plums and processing tomatoes
- 4th among California counties in the production of milk and cream, silage, apricots and peaches
- 5th among California counties in the production of pistachios and cherries
- 8th among California counties in overall agricultural production

COMMODITIES GROWN & EXPORTED FROM KINGS COUNTY IN 2021

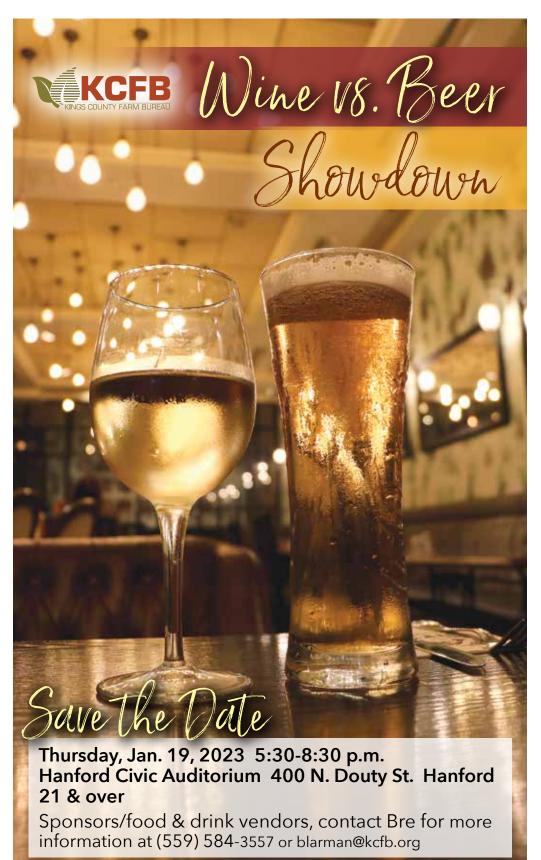
Alfalfa, almonds, apricots, Asian pears, asparagus, blueberries, cherries, cherry plums, clementines, cotton, grapes, grapefruit, kiwifruit, lemons, nectarines, onions, oranges, peaches, pepper, persimmons, pistachios, plums, pluots, pomegranates, pummelos, Sudan grass

KINGS COUNTY'S 2021 EXPORT TRADE PARTNERS

Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam

KINGS COUNTY AG BY THE NUMBERS

- Kings County is home to 890,545 total acres, 817,372 of which are farmland.
- The average length of the county's growing season is 296 days.
- The 50-year average annual rainfall total in Kings County is 8.26 inches. The 2021 season produced a below-average 7.12 inches.
- The average climate is 196 sunny, clear days, 74 partly cloudy days and 95 cloudy days.



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.

KCFB receives Economic Development Partner Award

Executive Director Dusty Ference accepted the Economic Development Partner Award presented to Kings County Farm Bureau by the Kings Economic Development Corporation. KCFB would like to congratulate the additional award recipients for this year: County of Kings, Economic Development Partner; Hop Forged Brewing Co., President's Award; and Renewable Solar, Chairman's Award. Each year, recipients are selected based on their contributions to Kings County's economy.





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Pesticide permit renewals being accepted for 2023

Contributed by Janet Eckles, Deputy Ag Commissioner/Sealer

Ag Commissioner's Compliance Report



Jimmy Hook, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer

The Kings County Agricultural Commissioner is now accepting Restricted Material Permit maps for 2023. We began issuing renewed pesticide permits on Nov. 1. Permittees' paperwork may be emailed to noi@co.kings. ca.us or dropped off at any time during business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The office will notify the growers by telephone when the permit is ready to be picked up.

It is very important to provide new complete crop maps annually that include a description of the surrounding area. These maps should include the surrounding crops, residential areas, schools, hospitals, canals/ditches, parks, playgrounds, and livestock. Any changes in the grower's crops or sites should also be submitted with the maps. These detailed crop maps allow the county inspectors to properly assess each site to locate any potential effects an application might have on people and the local environment, and are used to ensure compliance with laws, regulations, and permit conditions. These same maps may end up being used in the field by pest control advisors (PCAs) and operators (PCOs), as well as Agricultural Commissioner staff, so detail is important.

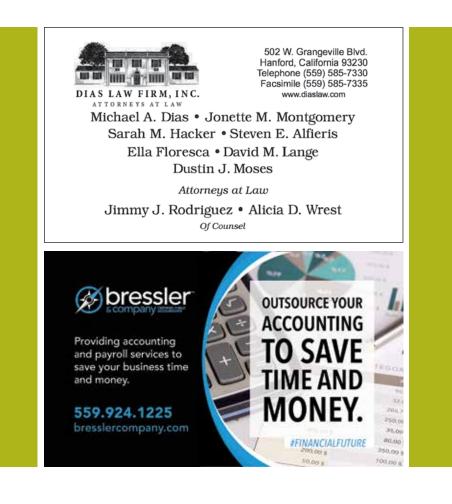
During this time, we will also be renewing Private Applicator Certificates that expire on Dec. 31, 2022. Private applicators are required to have two hours of continuing education for every year their card is valid. If you need any hours, we have classes still available this year on Nov. 16 from 6 to 8 p.m. and Dec. 7 and 14 from 9 to 11 a.m. You can sign up for those by calling our office. Each class is \$10. If you need to take the Private Applicator Certificate exam, please contact our office

to schedule a day and time. We are currently scheduling these on Wednesdays.

The Commissioner will be offering pesticide safety training for employees who handle pesticides. These sessions will be offered on Jan. 25 and 26, and March 15 and 16. Both English and Spanish sessions will take place. The cost is \$10 per session and satisfies the general training requirement of the California Code of Regulations. Please call to sign up your employees.

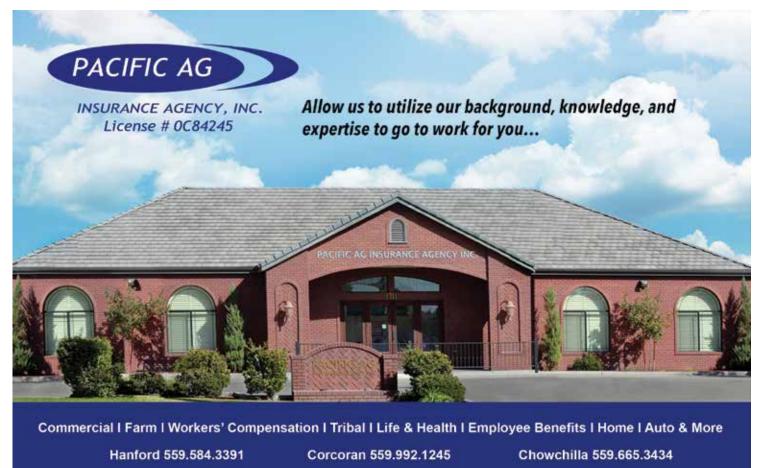
This is also the time of year when the Kings County Agricultural Commissioner is compiling our annual crop and livestock report statistics. Every year, we send out a questionnaire with the permit renewal letter asking growers for their average production and price of the harvested crops from that year. The annual crop and livestock report is useful to many people, including growers, schools, banks, and many other institutions. The information, which only you can provide, helps to promote the agricultural industry of Kings County. The office needs your input in order to compile an accurate report. Please be assured that any information you provide will be handled in the strictest confidential manner. No information is shared with any other agencies. Your data will be averaged with all data received from other growers of the same commodity from throughout the county. We would greatly appreciate it if you would please take the time to compile the questionnaire and return it to our office within the next few weeks.

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please call (559) 852-2830. ₩









Thank Jou for supporting the Harvest Classic

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in last month's Harvest Classic Golf Tournament. The proceeds from the sold out event will support Farm Day and our other ag education programs. Special thanks to J.C. Lansdowne, our Presenting Sponsor, and to all the sponsors and golfers that helped make this year's tournament a success.

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"Economic Impact Report" continued from page 1



Economic Impact Report

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 ¼ 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

SCHOOLS 51.12%





COUNTY/FIRE/LIBRARY 22.65%





CITIES



SPECIAL DISTRICTS 6.09%

Kings County REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

	2017	2018	2019	2020	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 quantifies 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	(\$1,104,932,000)
			Total Value Adjusted
Top Crop	Milk		for Cumulative Inflation¹

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

STOCKPILING FOR EXTENDED STORAGE OF INHULL ALMONDS





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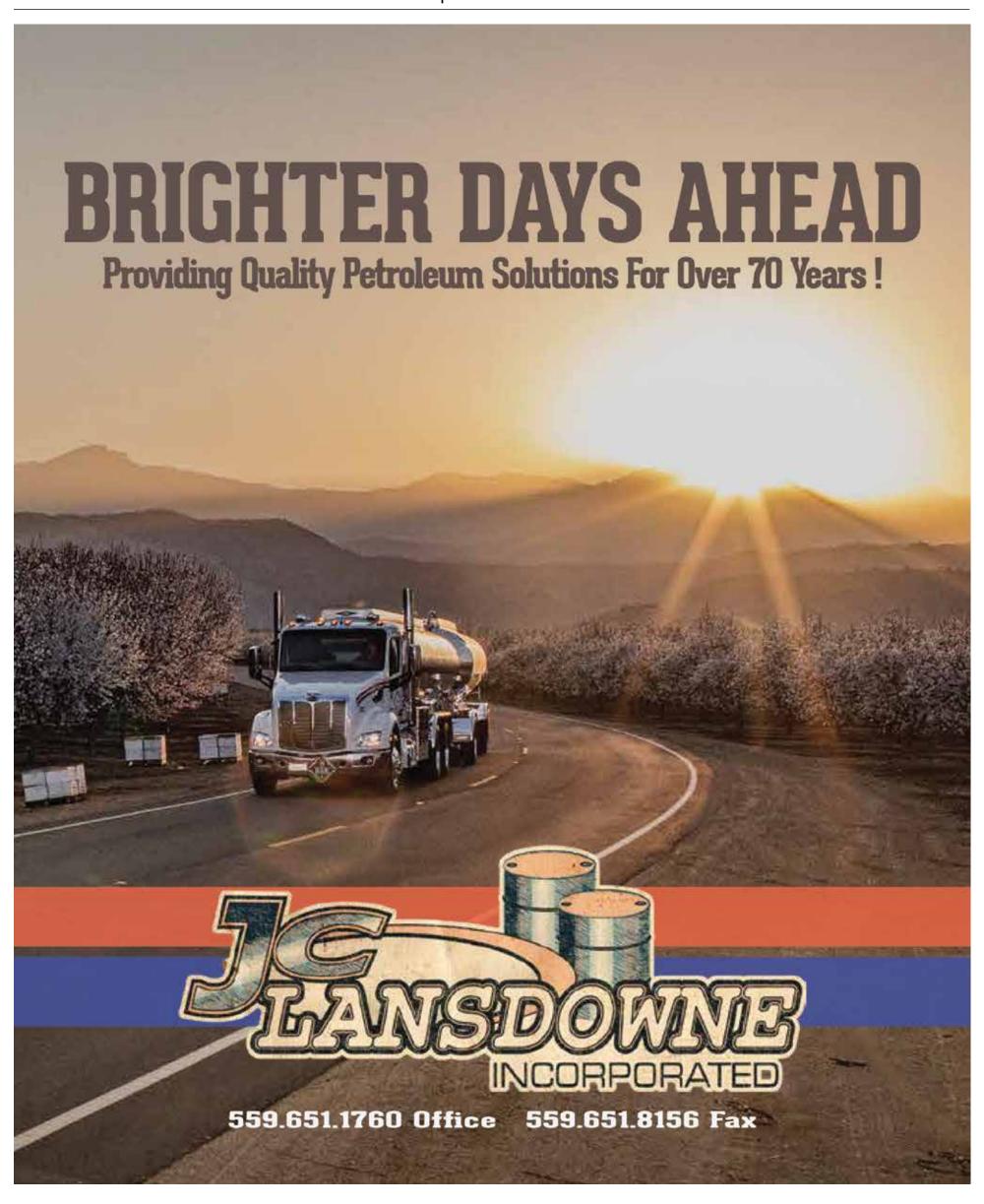
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Kings County Rural Crime Report Several crews identified in ongoing investigations

Contributed by Sr. Deputy Dakotah Fausnett

Throughout the month of October, the Kings County Rural Crimes Task Force stayed busy in the northeast end of the county investigating copper, hay and diesel fuel thefts. There were several ATVs stolen from Excelsior Farming in the area of 7th and Denver avenues. We have identified a crew from the London area in Tulare County that are suspected to be involved in these ATV thefts, and are currently working on getting the stolen property back and the suspects into custody.

Throughout October, we continued our marijuana eradication throughout the county, removing almost 1,000 additional plants. As marijuana season slows down, we will continue trying to identify grows throughout the county, so please reach out to our unit if you come across any operations we haven't gotten to yet.

Copper and wire thefts, as well as porta-potty thefts, remain steady. We are continuing to work several leads into the porta-potty thefts with ties to Riverside County and Fresno County. Regarding the ongoing wire thefts, we believe we have identified a group of individuals that may be responsible for those happening in the north end of the county, and will continue working leads to bring the suspects into custody.

Our unit identified a crew out of the Tulare/Corcoran area that is likely behind the ATV thefts that have been occurring on the east side of the county. We have also pieced together leads that suggest this same crew are the suspects involved in the hay thefts that have been occurring in the county. One of the main suspects, Jose Antonio Reyes, was taken into custody on federal charges, so hopefully some of the ATV thefts slow down. There are several suspects that have been identified, and we will continue our investigation into this crew.

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**Detective Kody Holt: **559-362-8928**Detective Colten Verhoeven: **559-469-6146**

Detective Grace Thomas: 559-530-1701



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