



The Cotton Chronicle

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April 2017

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Industry Calendar

April 12

Ginners School—
Corcoran, CA

Save the Date:

May 31—June 2
Cotton Annual
Meeting—
Monterey, CA

Visit web calendar
for details

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Legislative Hearing on Pesticides Near Schools

The Senate Environmental Quality Committee held a hearing this past month on the topic of “pesticides near schools”. **CCGGA President/CEO Roger Isom** was asked to be a panelist representing agriculture. The hearing, chaired by



Senator Bob Wieckowski, included representatives from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH, UC Davis, Sonoma County Ag Commissioner, and pesticide activists. Joining Isom on the stakeholder panel was **Matthew Allen of the Western Growers Association** as representatives from agriculture.

While the ag commissioners and others spoke in support of the proposed regulations to prohibit many pesticide applications within ¼ mile of schools and require notification of others, Isom reminded the Committee of the rigorous analysis that every single pesticide goes through at the Federal EPA level, as well as additional scrutiny at the state CDPR level. Isom pointed out that all of the perceived protections for children are already addressed in specified application rates and methods and label restrictions. Isom stated the Association’s clear opposition to the proposed regulation. The hearing was part of an oversight review process by the Senate Environ-

mental Quality Committee, and allowed CCGGA To identify problems with the proposed regulations.

DPR Releases Revised Pesticide Use Near Schools Regulation

The **Department of Pesticide Regulation** released the revised Pesticide Use Near Schools Regulation. After several months of reviewing comments, the revised regulation provides little relief to the agricultural industry from these overreaching proposals amended to become effective January 1, 2018.

Below are the most substantial changes to the document:

- ◆ Schoolsite is given a clearer definition, identifying a schoolsite as a property used as a child day care facility (defined by the Health and Safety Code) or kindergarten, elementary or secondary school. The definition includes all areas of property used on weekdays by children who attend such facilities. Commissioners can identify adjacent parks if used for school activities.
- ◆ Schoolsite does not include family day care homes, private schools, vehicles or bus stops not on schoolsite property.
- ◆ The 48-hour notification was eliminated, however annual notification would still be required.
- ◆ Growers who need to use a pesticide that was not included on the annual notification must provide the required information to the school site and commissioner at least 48 hours prior to application

Despite specific requests directly to DPR and through public comments, the regulations failed to identify commodity fumigation exempt from this proposal. The regulation was open for a 15-day public comment period from March 20th to April 4th. CCGGA who testified at the Tulare

hearing with more than 20 growers, continues to oppose the proposal.

CalOSHA Holds First Meeting on Proposed Indoor Heat Illness Regulation

In response to SB 1167 (Mendoza), CalOSHA has begun the process of developing an indoor heat illness standard. **CCGGA President/CEO Roger Isom** attended the first meeting this past week in Oakland where CalOSHA representatives unveiled the proposed regulation which would require all employers to adopt indoor heat illness plans and protections, including mandatory rest breaks. The proposed regulations would also require employers to base actions on “Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)” which would require a special temperature measurement device that costs about \$300. Labor activists were in attendance, and as expected pushed for much more stringent regulations, including mandatory 10 minute breaks every one hour, and an indoor temperature trigger of 70 degrees F. The Association submitted comments opposing the proposed regulations citing lack of indoor heat illness incidents. If implemented as proposed, it would be a significant imposition on farm shops, hullers and processors.

Water Announcement Tempers Enthusiasm on California Cotton Acreage Increase

The good news is that cotton acreage looks like it will increase for the 2nd year in a row. Record rainfall and snowpack, coupled with stable cotton prices and falling prices from other commodities are leading to an increase in cotton acreage. However, that increase is being tempered by a disappointing, less than expected water allotment from the Central Valley Project (CVP) of only 65%, and the potential flooding in the Tulare lake bottom in Kings County. As of today, all indicators of water supply are above normal. Way above. Currently, the statewide snowpack is at 164% of average, while statewide rainfall is over 200% of average to date, with Blue Canyon in the northern Sierras at 245% and Mariposa in the central Sierras at 211% of average to date. Reservoirs are all higher than average with Shasta at 87%, Oroville at 74%, New Melones at 77%, Don Pedro at 88%, and most importantly San Luis is at 98%. Flood releases are occurring at many of these dams including Shasta, Oroville, Folsom, and Millerton. Yet, with all of these positive factors, farmers relying upon the CVP water are only going to receive 65% of their allotment. While industry is thankful for the water,

it is inconceivable that the number isn't closer to 80% or more. Unfortunately, this will have a direct impact on the cotton plantings for this coming year. According to preliminary planting intentions survey conducted by the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association this past month, the Association is **currently estimating approximately 186,000 acres of pima and 70,000 acres of upland statewide for the 2017 cotton season.** This survey is based on surveys from all of the gins in California prior to planting and a lot can happen between now and when things are actually planted. If it plays out, it will represent a 22% increase in pima acreage and a 6% increase in upland acreage in California as compared to 2016.

Air District Puts “Everything on the Table” for PM2.5

Succumbing to the pressure of having to attain an impossible air quality standard with very little assistance from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) or Federal EPA, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District unveiled a long list of far reaching control measures to reduce PM2.5 this past month during the Governing Board Meeting. Those measures up for discussion include:

- **Replace all almond harvesters in Valley with latest low-emitting harvester technologies**
- **Install PM control technology on larger under-fired charbroilers installed within last 10-15 years (360 out of 1,800)**
- **Enhance CMPs for ag operations to reduce directly emitted PM**
- **Replace 23,628 older high emitting residential wood-burning devices with cleaner devices**
- **Electrify 1,053 ag pump engines in areas impacting peak PM2.5 sites where access to electricity is available**
- **Lower NOx limit for container glass plants**
- **Lower NOx emissions from various boiler, steam generator, process heaters > 5 MMBtu/hr**
- **Lower NOx emissions from various boiler, steam generator, process heaters 2 to 5 MMBtu/hr**
- **Install ultra-low NOx flare technology and require additional flare minimization practices**
- **Lower NOx emissions from various non-agricultural engine categories**
- **Replace 74,912 heavy heavy-duty trucks with upcoming 0.02 g/bhp-hr ultra-low NOx trucks that are 90% cleaner than 2010 trucks recently required by ARB's Truck and Bus Regulation**
- **Replace 110,000 medium heavy-duty trucks with upcoming 0.02 g/bhp-hr ultra-low NOx trucks that are 90%**

cleaner than 2010 trucks recently required by ARB's Truck and Bus Regulation

- Replace 102,936 light heavy-duty trucks with upcoming 0.02 g/bhp-hr ultra-low NOx trucks that are 90% cleaner than 2010 trucks recently required by ARB's Truck and Bus Regulation
- Install 2,622 natural gas fueling stations for deployment of 0.02 g/bhp-hr ultra-low NOx heavy duty trucks
- Replace 320,000 passenger vehicles with zero-emission vehicles
- Replace 76 locomotives with new Tier 4 locomotives

The price tag for all of these measures, which the District says need to be done by 2019? More than \$51 billion! The District staff laid this out today to the Governing Board stating their back is up against the wall, but realizes the above listed measures are too costly and impractical to achieve without incentive monies. Unfortunately, the District will face federal sanctions unless they can get into attainment of the PM2.5 standard by 2019. **CCGGA President/CEO Roger Isom** testified before the Governing Board on the issue stating that the almond harvesting and CMP modifications have not yet been proven to reduce PM2.5 emissions and further research is needed. Isom also pointed out that the almond industry was already proactive on the issue though by working with USDA NRCS to create and implement an incentive program for growers that utilize the lower emission technology. Isom further expressed concerns with rising electricity prices that may dissuade farmers from switching from diesel to electric, and encouraged the District to help on that particular issue. Later in the same meeting, the District brought up but did not adopt such "draconian measures" as "no farm days", "no construction days" and "no drive days" where Interstate 5 and Highway 99 would be shut down. Again, the District was trying to state the seriousness of the issue while placing boundaries on what can and cannot be done. The District will have to adopt their PM2.5 plan demonstrating attainment by August of this year.

Association Keeps Pressure on Increasing SWRCB Fees

In response to a proposed 27% increase in Irrigated Lands (ILRP) fees and a 7% increase in Waste Discharge (WDR) fees, the Association has been meeting with Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittee members who will review the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) proposed budgets. **Association President/CEO Roger Isom** has been walking the halls on the issue high-

lighting the shift of program cost burden from the General Fund to permit holders such as farms and processors. In particular, the Association has pointed out the problem with assessing the cost burden of programs such as beach cleanup and monitoring, TMDL and Basin Plan amendments on these two sources. The Association has also gone to great detail to identify concerns with the sheer cost of the WDR permit as compared to other environmental permits including air pollution permits. Currently, WDR permits typically cost more than 2 ½ times the air quality permits. With the looming budget hearings, the Association will remain vigilant in fighting these proposed fee increases.

Successful Sticky Cotton Summit at Fresno State

The California cotton industry gathered at Fresno State to participate in the 2017 Sticky Cotton Summit hosted by **California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association (CCGGA)**. Dean of the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology **Dr. Sandra Witte** welcomed the group to Fresno State campus and thanked the attendees for the ongoing support that the agriculture industry has shown for the Jordan College. Attendees of the summit had the opportunity to meet **Dr. Margaret Ellis** of Fresno State. Dr. Ellis is the recipient of a CCGGA research grant



surrounding Fusarium in cotton and fungicide efficacy, she is the first professor at Fresno State to receive a grant from the Association. As the program for the Sticky Cotton Summit got underway panels from the mill, merchant, ginner, grower, PCA and UCCE offered their perspective on how sticky cotton impacts their respective segments of the industry. In addition, USDA-ARS researcher Chris Delhom demonstrated the diverse testing methodologies that are present throughout the country,

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in part creating an issue of developing uniform testing standards for the industry to adopt. The conclusion of the summit resulted in an open group discussion that led to action items for the industry and CCGGA to pursue. The items included looking into a uniform gin level penalty for sticky cotton delivered, conducting outreach, education and retraining on thresholds and best management practices for growers, seeking additional research dollars to invest in sticky cotton testing measures as well as increasing awareness in order to have more open communication surrounding the issue. CCGGA was directed to develop an industry subcommittee to ensure the progress of the action items outlined from the day's discussion. We will be sure to provide updates and progress as these items are pursued. Following the summit Fresno State's Ag One Foundation welcomed board members and staff of CCGGA to tour Fresno State's 1,000-acre farm, the Fresno State Gibson Farm Market as well as a tour of the new Jordan Agricultural Research Center. The tour showcased the diversity of the agricultural operations students have access to use as well as the vision for the agricultural centered research to be conducted on campus for years to come.

Sticky Cotton Action Items:

- Create & quantify a gin level penalty
- Create sticky cotton website
- Provide additional training to growers on thresholds and best management practices
- Increase issue awareness
- Seek additional research funds
- Investigate possibility of putting together industry coalition to survey cotton fields
- Urge USDA to create additional code designation for stickiness
- Seek additional pesticide products for aphid and whitefly
- Revisit and promote Goodell's sticky cotton video
- Talk with Owen Taylor about outreach with Mite Fax
- Look into whitefly mapping with Pest Control Board
- Look into investigating research dollars into early stickiness detection
- Form committee surrounding sticky cotton issues and training initiatives.