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Luawanna Hallstrom
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FACILITATOR

Michael Lawler

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Gabriela Hussong
Juan Dario Mendez
PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Chuck Badger, San Diego Farm Bureau
Robert Seat, Orange County Farm Bureau
Tom Nassif, Western Growers
Kasey Cronquist, California Cut Flower Commission
Frank Tamborello, Hunger Action Los Angeles
Diana Hussey, Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County
Nancy Owens-Renner, San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project
Sandra Carmona, National Latino Research Center, Cal State San Marcos
Beth Levendoski, Tierra Miguel Foundation
Alicia Finley, People's Organic Food Co-op
Judy Pollock, Orange Unified School District
Derek Casady
Doug Zilm, San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project
Al Stehley
Janet Kister, Sunlet Nursery
Frank Vessels, California Horse Council
Michael Babineau
Denise Godfrey, Olive Hill Greenhouses
Ben Drake, Drake Enterprises
Peter Kilduff, Cal Poly Pomona College of Agriculture
Ron Heimler, Cal Poly Pomona College of Agriculture
Carol Steed, California Avocado Commission

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APPARENCES (Continued)

Rachel Borgatti, Solana Center for Environmental Innovation
Jennifer Tracy, San Diego Hunger Coalition
Jerome Stehly, Stehly Farms Organic
Carl Bell, University of California Cooperative Extension
Mike Mellano, Mellano & Company
Eric Anderson
Mark Collins, Evergreen Nursery
Amy Lint, International Rescue Committee
Nancy Casady, Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Co-op
Dawn Otsuka
Bob Atkins, San Diego Ag Commissioner
Anisa Divine, Imperial Irrigation District

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PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Good morning. I'm Al Montna, President of the State Board of Food and Agriculture. I'm a rice farmer from Yuba City, California, and this is my second term on the Board, and appointed as President of the Board in March of 2005.

I'd like to take this opportunity to have the Board introduce themselves to you, starting with Don Bransford on my left.

BOARD MEMBER BRANSFORD: Good morning. I'm Don Bransford. I'm a rice, almond and prune grower in the Sacramento valley, north of Sacramento about 60 miles in a county with about 25,000 people, a little different than here.

BOARD MEMBER BACCHETTI-SILVA: I'm Ann Silva. I'm a third-generation dairy farmer from Tracy and I'm starting my fourth year on the Board.

BOARD MEMBER HALLSTROM: I'm Luawanna Hallstrom. This is my home area. Vine ripe tomato grower in San Diego.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: Good morning. My name is Josh Eddy. I'm the Executive Director for the State Board of Food and Agriculture, and I'm looking forward to hearing your comments.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Secretary Kawamura will make
some opening remarks, so we'll have Karen Ross.
Karen Ross, please.

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: Good morning, and thanks for being here. I'm Karen Ross and I'm President of the California Association of Wine Grape Growers. And one of my favorite wine grape growers, Ben Drake, and former chairman of our association is here in the audience, so it's good to see you.

BOARD MEMBER MEYERS: Good morning. I'm Marvin Meyers. I'm a diversified farmer, large almond grower in the west side of the San Joaquin Valley where we farm without water. And I've been on the Board for several years, I don't recall, back probably eight or nine years. And I'm glad to be here and I think you're going to enjoy it as much as we are. The listening sessions we've had so far have been sensational, so you'll enjoy this.

BOARD MEMBER ORTEGA: Good morning. I'm Adan Ortega. I'm a public member of the Board on my second term. I am a long-time ag advocate and I'm very pleased to be here and thank you all for being here too.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Chuck, did you have a few words you wanted to say everybody?

MR. BADGER: Yeah. I'm Chuck Badger, President of the San Diego Farm Bureau, and on behalf of the Farm Bureau in San Diego and all of the farming community, we'd
like to thank this Board for coming and making this
meeting possible.

California Ag Vision 2030 is optimistic. I like
that after the recent news of the Citrus Asian Psyllid
coming close to the border and water and diaprepes and
labor. Bob and I are kind of feeling like Job. So one
thing that's interesting is most of us are generational,
we're not the first one of our generation in farming, and
California ag has always met the challenges that we face.

And so it's just another round for our generation and the
generation that comes after us for us to help them prepare
the way to continue to farm in the great State of
California.

So thanks again for coming, A.G., and we look
forward to this morning.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Chuck, appreciate
it.

Good morning, everybody, it's good to be down in
Southern California. For many of you that I don't know,
and many of you are -- many faces here, my name is A.G.
Kawamura, and I'm originally -- we're a third-generation
grower here from Orange County, and we're still, believe
it or not, as all of you know down here, in between the
buildings trying to make a living at agriculture. And
it's something that becomes a problem when there's no
vision for the future.

Coming from Orange County myself, in a lifetime, Orange County was the number one ag county in this country in 1949, a little bit before I was born, but to watch it in the course of a lifetime, if you will, a collapse of an agricultural system is somewhat alarming. And we're certainly seeing our state has been moving forward, doing amazing things in agriculture, but not necessarily with a plan, not necessarily with a vision for what agriculture can be; and that's what really gave birth to this.

I think all of us that -- many of you have had the opportunity over these past few years to help shape what a farm bill can be. I think we all learned a lot; that if we all work together, if we converge our resources, not separated parallel efforts, trying to making agriculture better in our parallel silos, we were making the observation that parallel lines never meet, and moving agriculture forward in individual silos throughout this community we call agriculture is not going to get us anything. If anything, we've been doing a good job every year negotiating to lose less in our agricultural family here over the course of the last 40 years or so. And if that's a good strategy, I don't think anybody would believe it to be so.

And so what we're all about right now -- and this
was driven -- the question was asked how did this really come about. Many of you might have heard about the San Joaquin Valley Partnership. That was an effort that took place currently in the San Joaquin Valley that Governor Schwarzenegger had asked all the different agencies to work together to find a vision for the San Joaquin Valley.

Our Department was charged with coming up with what was the ag vision for the San Joaquin Valley, the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley, and it was at that time that we said, well, that would be great if we put together a -- tried to put together an ag vision for the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley, what about the rest of the state? And it was very clear to us at that point that we were operating without any kind an ag plan for where this state may go. And we thought about did we want to go five years out, do we want to go 30, 40 years out to 2050, do we want to come back and do 2030? And we arrived at just let's go to 2030. But certainly that's not limited in this discussion today on going beyond that or abruptly, like tomorrow, making changes that we want to see happen.

So what I certainly want to say is this: We're all able to witness around the planet that there is a collapse of agriculture in different areas, whether it's a...
full 50-year collapse in Orange County that we can observe and see that without planning these kind of things happen, whether it's in Australia where you see, for a lack of infrastructure and an eight-year drought, you see a pretty significant, severe collapse of their ag systems, whether it's countries like -- whether it's Cuba or Crimea in the Ukraine where they were fully dependent on imported goods to come in, everything from tractor parts to fertilizers to seeds, and they had a very good system that collapsed as the Soviet Union collapsed. That's yet another collapse that we've witnessed in a lifetime, all of us. These are the kinds of things that give us pause. And in the face of unpredictable weather by global warming or just unpredictable weather, we all know that unpredictable weather means unpredictable harvest, and unpredictable harvest for our world is not a good thing. And so I think what we're going to try to do with these sessions -- and I can tell you it's been very exciting. We started up in Redding, Sacramento, we came down to Tulare, we've been out to San Luis Obispo, down to Ventura. Today we're here. We might have a couple others in some of the urban areas, maybe Los Angeles, maybe San Francisco to round it out, but our thought was to bring together the stakeholders, which are all the

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citizens of California, to talk about their views, their hopes, their desires and their, more importantly, their plans and concepts of how do we get to 2030 and what does 2030 look like in an agricultural perspective for this state. It's been exciting. I'm not going to speak anymore about it because I want to be able to hear all of you.

Our Board here has been fantastic. They've been willing and ready to go and help put this whole thing together. Great work from Karen Ross here and Al Montna, and the whole group has been great. I have super staff here that's been also putting together -- we'll have a chance to introduce them at the end.

I wanted to acknowledge some of the people that are here though also that are just very, very dedicated individuals to agriculture and everything that agriculture is. Two that I want to acknowledge right away is Bob Atkins from Los Angeles, Rick Lefever --

MR. ATKINS: Wait a minute.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Oh, from San Diego, previously Los Angeles, sorry, sorry.

MR. ATKINS: It's hard to live down.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: The agricultural commission Bob Atkins, and Rick Lefever from Orange County. I don't see John Snyder or any of the guys from

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But we're the only state in the nation that has a system of agricultural commissioners that are appointed at the county level, by the county supervisors, but they form the glue that works together with us, with USDA, with the cities, with the counties, and they do an enormous amount of work. And if you don't mind, an applause for all of them.

They have very dedicated staff. Did someone else -- Eric, thank you very much, Eric Larson, who is the Executive Director here at Farm Bureau, for all of the work that you do day in and day out.

I'd like to also introduce Robert Jones. Bob Jones is the Deputy Secretary for the labor agency, as well as David Dorame who is from the labor agency. Are you both here? There's David. The labor agency, under Secretary Vicki Bradshaw has done a very good job of looking at the food chain, all the jobs that are involved in agriculture, and they've helped us realize that if -- and Vicki, Vicki Bradshaw, Secretary Bradshaw said this many a time, one of the visions that she has is that agriculture becomes a career of first choice. Wherever you start out in the ag industry, one of the visions that she has is that you have a ladder that you can go as far as your talents and your vision will carry you, and that
is something that is part of an ag vision for 2030, and
the Labor Department is a very important part of that. So
thank you for all the work you folks do.

I'd also like to make sure and acknowledge Tom
Nassif, if you're back there. I see Tom. President from
Western Growers. Bob Seat, just a long-time friend and
past president from Orange County Farm Bureau.

But, Bob, you've been involved on the State Board
as I remember, Fair Board for many years. Also Bob Vice,
who is the Past President of California Farm Bureau. Bob,
you're back there.

And with that, I think I covered most -- if I
missed, and I probably have missed somebody, I know that,
but thank you for being here. More importantly, we're
here to listen to all the things from inside your heart to
your experiences, and more importantly it's a process that
doesn't end with this year, it's an ongoing process that
we'll continue to do because ag is just a very dynamic
part of our world.

So with that, President Montna.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Mr. Secretary.

I think we should all thank the Secretary for
directing the Board to have this vision. He set us on
this mission in March, and we have taken it very
seriously. And it's not going to be a document that's
going to gather dust, that some have already expressed
their concern with, as we put this document together.
It's going to be a real plan for this industry going
forward, both immediately, because there are immediate
needs, and in the mid term and in the long term.

Bob Vice, did you bring one of our hot rods
today, or did you drive in a conventional -- good, I'd
like to look at it afterwards. As you know, Bob is a real
car buff and has some beautiful equipment.

But we want to thank all our friends for being
here, many familiar faces. The Board's sixth session now,
and one more in Sacramento and maybe some additions. So
at our Board meeting in August, we'll be doing the clean
up; so those of your friends, neighbors and stakeholders
that haven't had an opportunity, we'd welcome Sacramento
unless, as the Secretary said, we may have one or two
more.

This is your opportunity to speak on behalf of
this industry, to keep it robust and viable and address
its contribution to the environment, to the economy of
this great state and to our national security. The Board
is introducing a new paradigm shift in agriculture; and
national security and sovereignty is a big issue as we
look at commodity supplies, oil supplies, and as we move
forward. So be thinking about that in your comments.
But we really welcome you here. We're very anxious to hear -- we're here to listen. We're not going to ask many questions, we're going to take testimony. And we're going to assimilate that testimony, and the Governor and the Secretary are working on getting a document out sometime this fall.

And so, with that, thank the Farm Bureau again, Eric and Chuck. It's interesting when you say "generational," my grandfather came here as a farm worker, worked for a guy named Paul Masson, the first one, and finally got enough money to buy a little place. And it's dramatic when you say "generational," because as someone pointed out to us in San Luis Obispo, I think there's been over double digit, extreme double digit increase in Latino farmers in this state. And it's dramatic because that's the future. And it is generational; sometimes it takes a little time, took us a hundred years, but I mean it's -- it is a new paradigm shift in our farmer community also.

So with that, thank you very much. And we're going to turn it over -- Michael, would you stand up.

This is our facilitator.

Michael, please take over.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Good morning. My name is Michael Lawler, and I'm facilitating this meeting, which means that I get to pay attention to the clock and call
names and hopefully pronounce everybody's names correctly.
I'm from the University of California at Davis up north.
We are the Aggies; therefore, it is my pleasure to be here
to support the Board and to support this listening
session.
How many Aggies in the room, UC Davis Aggies?
Welcome. Welcome.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: How many Cal Poly Mustangs in
the room?
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Please, don't get him
started.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: We used to love to beat those
bull dogs.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: I have nothing to crow about
from the UC Davis side. So let's proceed with our
listening session.
What I'd like to do is I'm going to go over some
ground rules, which is a bit of a list here if you could
tolerate for a minute or two, and we'll get right to it,
but the list will help structure the day as we go forward.
I'm going to read off the ground rules for the
speakers and then I'm also going to read off the ground
rules for the Board as adopted by the Board for these
sessions.
The sessions will be videotaped, audiotaped and
transcribed. Comments and images will be made available for public use. All of this will be made available for public use on the website. The California agriculture vision is made possible in part by grants administered by the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation and the Colombia Foundation.

Everyone will treat everyone else with respect. The facilitator, that's me, will manage the discussion. As manager of the discussion I may intervene to keep the conversation on track and on time. And if you don't pay attention to me, my colleague, Jonnalee Henderson down here is very tough. So watch out for her.

Each person will strive to be complete and concise. And our suggestion is if you have written comments that are maybe going to go over five minutes, maybe edit to the, you know, the strong parts of that. We'd rather get the comments slowly and clearly so that the message is clear for our records.

Again, it will be recorded and transcribed and it will be available at the ag vision website, which is part of the CDFA website, state government site.

Cell phones and pagers will be turned off or set to vibrate during the session. So if you have one of these, please go to it now and address it so you don't have to address it later.
Speakers are welcome to pass. I don't know if we've had many speakers pass at these sessions, but they're welcome to pass if they feel like their issue has been represented by a previous speaker.

Speakers will receive an indication when they have one minute remaining, Jonnalee, one minute remaining. And when their time is complete --

MS. HENDERSON: I will stand.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Well, there you go. There should be no confusion.

Questions to the panel will be written down by staff and used for reference during any remaining time after the speaker has had their time. We have had sessions where we've had some back and forth, but again, we're trying to limit it so we can accommodate all the speakers that arrive for the day.

Each speaker will be given an allotted time of up to five minutes, you don't have to use five minutes, which are non-transferable to other speakers. You can't use one minute and give your buddy four minutes; that doesn't work.

I'll be calling out by number and name. And let me apologize in advance if I get any name wrong. I don't think I will, but if I do, my apologies to you in advance.

Written input on the California ag process is

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welcome at the time of the session or after the session.
So you can go to the website and write something down if
you heard something today or if you want to communicate
with the President or with the Secretary or the Board,
feel free to go to that. And you can send that to
agvision@cdfa.ca.gov.

The panel members, the role of the panelists, as
the President and Secretary have explained, is to listen
to the speakers. Questions to the panel will be written
down by staff and used for reference. There will be no
specific questions asked to the speakers except for minor
clarifications until all speakers have concluded
commenting. I will, as facilitator, I will manage that
discussion, and I may intervene to keep the conversation
on track and on time. And again, as you know, I will turn
to Jannalee Henderson for her assistance.

I want to mention the interpretive services
available from our colleagues over to the right from the
Spanish Language Center; Gabriela Hussong and J.D. Mendez.
They have promised United Nations' quality interpretive
services, so they go in both directions; so I plan to use
mine as needed. So if you need one, please go over to the
table here and grab one if you prefer to hear the session,
although it will be in English, if people give testimony
in Spanish, you may want to pick up one of the items.
I think that covers our general rules. I want to thank the president, President Montna, and Secretary Kawamura for their generous support and the opportunity to be involved with this, and thank the San Diego Farm Bureau as well.

With that, we're going to proceed with our speakers so -- yes.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Just one thing. You asked about if people did pass. We had one or -- we've had one or two come up and say their points had been addressed, then they highlighted one of those points; so that has happened. And there was concern because some people had been cut off, 15-minute speech rather than a 5, and if those -- if your comments will get to Josh Eddy, Josh will make sure they get into the record. And also your comments are posted online, and so you can read them as soon as they get transcribed by UC into the system.

And I wanted to thank Josh, Alison, Jonnalee, Nancy Lungren, Robert Tse, wherever Robert is, and the rest of them.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Mike.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Mike Smith our intern. He's the photo guy. So you get to know him, he'll take your picture for you.

And they're all -- anyway, what a great group of
folks. Let's give them a big hand because they've worked hard.

So with that, we'll -- Josh, you have something?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: Yes. Thank you. As we start, just for the record, if when you come to the podium, can you please state your name and the affiliation that you're with so that we can get it into the record, please.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: One more thing, Mike. We're going to try to get through without a break because it's going to get warm today, and for the value of everyone's time. So we're going to give the Board permission -- and some of these folks are harvesting, running businesses, we can't thank them enough for the time they've dedicated not only to this effort but all of our State Board meetings they attend, and they're in a very, very, very active Board on our hot agricultural issues of the state. So we'll thank them in advance. But we'll also give them permission, if they have to get up, make a phone call, whatever, not in disrespect to any speaker, but to keep the efficiency of this meeting going, we're going to give them permission in advance.

And we don't have to give the Secretary permission for anything, because he's the man, so he can
do whatever he wants to do. So anyway, back to you Mike.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you, President Montna.

Our first speaker is Robert Seat from the Orange County Farm Bureau. And, Mr. Seat, I want to make sure I direct you to the correct podium. Mr. Seat, the podium right there.

MR. SEAT: Good morning, Secretary Kawamura, A.G., Members of the Board, and all of your guests this morning. I would like to tell you about my vision and do it in three parts.

I have a vision primarily for our coastal area of southern California, but it applies to the entire state. I'd like to move up to the biggest challenge that I think would be to us getting this vision, and finally, my belief on what we must have for a flourishing agriculture in 2030.

In 1988 our state population was running at about 28 million people. Today we're at 38 million. They forecast for 2030 that we'll be a little above 46 million. In other words, we're running about five million every ten years; mainly because every time we have a Rose Bowl, another hundred thousand head this way.

In the nineties we had a study that was written up in "Scientific American," made by M.I.T. working with the University of California, that detailed that they
expect a city that will run from San Diego to Santa
Barbara roughly by 2030, and by 2050 it will be all the
way up to San Francisco, all the way up and down the
coast.

Now, as a retired marine, I was pretty sure that
in Orange County, El Toro was going to be there for the
next hundred years. Since I'd served there, I thought it
would anyhow. 1999 it disappeared. There's 4,000 acres
there. And of that 4,000 they talk about it being a great
park, but people don't realize, 1400 acres of it will be a
great park, 2600 acres are going to be developed with
thousands of homes.

Now, the marines have done a good job over
fighting in Iraq and wherever they are called, but I think
they're going to lose a big battle up the road, and it's
going to be the battle of Camp Pendleton. You're going to
see Camp Pendleton hit by developing requirements. And if
that study was true that M.I.T. did, a lot of that 125,000
acres that represents Camp Pendleton is going to be
developed. Marines may keep part of it, some of it may be
a park, but we're going to a see a lot of developing going
in that area and San Diego.

And just like every other development that we've
seen, certainly in Orange County where you have the land
to be developed, not developed immediately, they want a
farmer, they want a farmer on there to hold the taxes
down, to have some return for that land while it's waiting
to be developed.

I think we're going to see a lot of farming along
the coast up until 2030 and it's going to be on this
present Pendleton land. Therefore, if that's true, our
biggest challenge is that across the state we do need a
stable and reliable water source. And everyone of us in
this room I'm pretty sure will agree that we're short,
we're being cut back, and the latest two ag alerts from
the San Diego Farm Bureau, one of the farmers is quoted on
what he sees as cutbacks in his water supply, what's
happening down here to the tree crops. The story is we
need a reliable water source. We all agreed to it.

So what's the problem? Well, the must-have will
only occur if we change from preaching to the choir,
that's talking farmers to farmers, to talking to the
population, because the only way it's ever going to change
is when the population votes it. We've seen the
legislature try for ten years, and they've failed because
they have too many forces against them from different
sides to be able to find a way. We saw Cal Fed come up on
the scene, and it's pretty much failed.

We need a reliable water source around the Delta
that will get to our state water pumps, and then we also
need additional solid reservoir storage. If we want to get that, here's my recommendation: And I think that if every ag entity -- because I was an ex-nurseryman, and as a nurseryman I know that we can put things on our product, on our plants -- everybody can put something that's going out from their farms or from their producers in the way of a label. Here's a label similar to what I think should be going out on each of our items.

For the strawberry guy, you might put, "These strawberries will not be available in a few years if we don't build a waterway to the state water pumps and additional reservoir storage. Help us keep strawberries on your table. Only you can vote for the waterway and the reservoirs that will protect your food and keep the cost down."

Each person eating strawberries today will read that. Each of the housewives have a lot of power, more power than we think. And, folks, if each of us put some kind of a label on what goes out from our farms and reach the people who are going to do the voting, not other farmers, but the people that make the change, I recommend that we see the vision in 2030 and beyond of agriculture continuing a healthy way in California.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Bob. I didn't ask him to talk about strawberries, I just wanted him here.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: I'm glad the Secretary clarified that.

Our second speaker is Tom Nassif with Western Growers.

Mr. Nassif.

MR. NASSIF: Good morning, Mr. Secretary, Mr. President, Members of the State Board, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Tom Nassif, and I'm President and CEO of Western Growers and a San Diegan. We represent nearly 3,000 members who grow, pack and ship approximately 90 percent of the fresh vegetables and 70 percent of the fresh fruits and tree nuts grown in California and Arizona. This accounts for approximately half of the produce grown in the United States.

You've asked each of us to answer questions regarding our own vision for California agriculture by the year 2030. You know only too well the answer will depend upon whether and how we address the most challenging issues facing us in the years preceding 2030.

As far as a vision is concerned, I envision a California where farming is once again one of the most honorable professions in the nation; a California where people enhance the quality of their lives and those of their children through good health brought about by nutritious diets, which would include fresh fruits,
vegetables and tree nuts; a long first day in the country
with the best interests of its people, its farmers,
environmentalists, and conservatives intersect by
eschewing political solutions and embracing those
solutions which are science based; where the air is clean,
the water's pure, and the toils of labor reduced through
innovation and technology.

I hope for a place where our produce will be
completely safe from any type of contamination and a day
when the flavors we remember from our childhood will be
the norm and not the exception, where we enhance the
nutritional value of our food supply and reduce our
seemingly inevitable slide toward poor health and
life-threatening diseases.

In summary, I look forward to the day when our
food supply will again be the best medicine in the world.
These things are at the heart of our vision for
agriculture by the year of 2030. If you asked us about
the challenges that will prevent us from taking our
visions to reality, they're almost too numerous to
mention, so let me start with a few.

Last year I was appointed to the Commission for
Economic Development by the Governor and asked by the
Lieutenant Governor, who chairs the committee, to be the
vice-chairman.
I asked my fellow commissioners if we could establish an agricultural advisory committee where all aspects of California agriculture could be represented. My request was granted, and a committee formed and subcommittees established for research and evaluate and recommend to the commission advice on agriculture for further use by the Governor and the legislature.

The members were asked about the most challenging issues facing agriculture and to participate in those subcommittees that were responsible for the issues of particular concern to them. Of course they included regulatory costs, property rights, pest disease eradication and prevention, international trade, sustainability, messaging, communications, public relations, education and many others. However, the two most important issues raised, in my view, are the need for a stable and legal workforce and the inadequacy of our state water supply. So let me begin with water.

Perhaps the most pressing challenge facing California farmers is the availability of water. At the beginning of last month the Governor proclaimed a statewide drought. The irony is that California has plenty of water to meet its current and future needs. The problem is that we lack the facilities to properly store our abundant water supply and do not have the
infrastructure in place to convey it to the areas with the
highest demand. Therefore, as a prerequisite to any
20-year strategic plan for agriculture, the current water
crisis must be addressed with the immediate development of
surface and groundwater storage facilities as well as a
timely resolution of the Delta conveyance system.

As we are all well aware, complicating any plan
to develop additional water supplies are the restrictions
placed on water use by the Federal and State Endangered
Species Act. Because of the strict environmental
regulations imposed by these laws, judges are unable to
render decisions that balance the economic interests of
the state with the alleged threats to endangered species.

In our efforts to protect endangered species in
California, legislators, regulators and active
environmental groups have unwittingly created another
endangered species, the California farmer.

The next issue is labor. So in addition to the
water supply, California farmers face the urgent question
of farm labor availability. The lack of a legal, stable
workforce and the failure of federal comprehensive
immigration reform are cited as the primary reasons why
many of our members have relocated their operations to
other countries. The pending penalties related to the
Department of Homeland Security No Match Rule and the
absence of a workable guest worker program has jeopardized
the future of farming in California. Additionally, our
neighbors to the east have pushed through their state
legislature the Arizona Employers' Sanctions law, which
carries with it a business death provision. Thankfully we
have avoided such drastic measures, but we have had to
face that threat in California and we're going to be
facing that threat again.

So again, in conclusion, let me say that given
these immediate threats to the long-term viability of
California agriculture, it is plain to see that without
addressing the needs of our industry today, the vision
through 2030 will be irrelevant. To ensure the future
sustainability of California agriculture, we must have
both the courage at the state and national level to deal
with the pressing issues facing the industry.

The problem in Sacramento and Washington D.C.,
however, is that our representatives lack the political
will to take on these pressing challenges. Instead of
doing the right thing and breaking ground on new water
conveyance and storage facilities, streamlining the
cumbersome and burdensome regulatory environment or facing
comprehensive immigration reform, they sit on their hands
until the problems become too big to resolve, or they
suggest partial solutions which are woefully inadequate.
Fortunately, I believe that we are not yet to the point of no return, but let's not wait until we are.

On behalf of Western Growers, thank you for the opportunity to express these concerns facing the agriculture industry here in California. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Bob.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Bob.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Our third speaker is Kasey Cronquist from California Cut Flower Commission.

MS. CRONQUIST: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Secretary, Mr. President, the Board and guests. My name is Kasey Cronquist. I'm with the California Cut Flower Commission here on behalf of all the California cut flower growers. And I'll be reading my remarks and be happy to clarify with any questions that you might have.

The California Cut Flower Commission is a necessary and relevant organization that is uniquely positioned as the only organization in California representing all and only California cut flower growers and green growers. While there are a number of very large cut flower producers in the State of California, many are smaller, family-run nurseries located along the California coast. The California Cut Flower Commission represents over 275 growers and green growers from Humboldt County to
San Diego County. Approximately 73 percent of all domestically-grown commercially-sold cut flowers are grown here in California with our growers representing the largest collection of flower growers in our country.

Currently California supplies approximately 26 percent of all cut flowers sold in the United States, and with your help, we're dedicated to increasing that in years to come. Approximately 5,000 acres are devoted to commercial growing for fresh cut flowers in California; that includes more than 38 million square feet of greenhouses, 200 acres of shade cloth and 4,000 acres of outdoor fields.

For almost two decades the California Cut Flower Commission has served as an effective and invaluable resource to the cut flower growers of California. The Commission has served as the dedicated spokesman for the cut flower industry by uniting their voice and promoting and advocating for their interests, working cooperatively with CDFA as an established conduit of communication on issues that we've seen lately with the San Diego fire and the Light Brown Apple Moth. And I like to think of us as the glue that unites the growers to the CDFA and other agencies in our government system.

During the age of duty-free imports, the Commission has worked hard to ensure that our growers
remain viable and competitive in an ever-changing marketplace. The Commission is also uniquely positioned to keep growers informed and assist when necessary to ensure that flowers get to market, which over the years has resulted in saving the city millions of dollars in lost revenue.

The need for creating a positive image in agriculture, for our agriculture in the state has never been greater than what it is now and will be in the next 20 years, which is why the Commission along with the rest of California agriculture commissions and marketing advisory boards have proven to be effective resources for our farmers and growers that they serve. That is why the California Cut Flower Commission is a must-have, not just for the cut flower industry and its growers but it's also a necessary piece of ag vision for California's future.

With increasing import competition, the Commission is dedicated on branding a California product that highlights the value, the commitment to sustainability, and the dedication to quality that comes from our growers in California.

The cut flower growers of California are the number one users of the California Grown campaign, identified by my lapel this morning, which is proven -- which is a proven success in speaking to consumers' desire
to buy local. Our cut flower growers get that, and they
continue to work cooperatively to brand their product
California Grown.

Consumers who are aware of the California Grown
message are twice as likely to purchase more
California-grown agriculture products, products that they
wouldn't previously have purchased six months prior. The
California Cut Flower Commission encourages financial
support of the California Grown campaign by CDFA.

And in summary, the California Cut Flower
Commission, along with its fellow commissions, stand as a
necessary and relevant organization that will help to
ensure the vitality of California ag for years to come.
The California Cut Flower Commission is just one example
of the proven success with ambitious expectations for
significantly increased support from CDFA and California,
its consumers, for our farmers and their future.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number four, Frank
Tamborello from Hunger Action Los Angeles.

MR. TAMBORELLO: Thank you. Good morning. I'm
Frank Tamborello with Hunger Action Los Angeles. I
represent a mostly urban constituency that is the market
or potential market for all California farmers. Californians as well as all Americans and all people in the world now are currently confronting multiple food crises. We have rising food prices due to rising oil prices and diversion of food crops to biofuels. We're dealing more often with food-borne illnesses, such as salmonella and E.Coli, easily spread through overly-centralized ag operations. Changes in weather due to global warming threaten crops and food price stability.

Our current system of food subsidies facilitates large amounts of junk food full of empty calories leading to widespread obesity in low-income communities, many of whom also suffer from insufficient food. The mortgage crisis, general recession and pending retirement of the baby boomers means a great rise in the population struggling to afford food while dealing with also the rising prices of health care, utility costs, gasoline and social service programs that have been gutted or de-prioritized in the federal budget. So what could our vision be to ameliorate all this?

Our vision is that the general public is aware of California agriculture and respects it as the essence of our existence, stays informed on it and partakes in decisions regarding our food, how it's grown, and that everyone can afford it and that it's healthy. Here is a
grocery list if you will of priorities we at Hunger Action L.A. feel the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the whole state should make for a sustainable ag system that promotes healthy food for all and helps increase self-sufficiency for California.

Number one, land preservation. More farms and fewer golf courses or shopping developments. Substantial land should be set aside for agriculture, including small-scale community gardening. New farmers should be helped and encouraged. Food should be prioritized over biofuels as an official policy.

Number two, promote local agriculture so over the long run we can be less dependent on food trucked in over far-flung roads at costs dictated by the oil markets. Build up the transportation, distribution and packing infrastructure for local farmers so they can be able to bring healthy produce to urban markets, schools and hospitals on a competitive basis. California is the nation's number one agriculture producer, let's save some of that food for us.

Number three, the Department and everyone else really should stick their neck out and encourage the Governor to maximize food stamps, WIC, and other benefit programs and support policies that ease access to them rather than hinder. We still only have 50 percent of the
eligible population participating in food stamps in California, and that represents a lot of lost income for California growers.

Number four is to encourage systems that bring healthy produce to low-income consumers who are often surrounded by fast food or no food at all. Provide electronic benefit transfer equipment for certified farmers' markets and ease other bureaucratic requirements that are currently imposed on the markets. Use funding to help convert corner stores so that they can carry more fruits and vegetables. These are the stores that often the only vegetables they have the limes and lemons right next to the Coronas in the beer case.

And number five is to maintain a California-based emergency food supply or at least a plan to deal with our own disasters and potential disasters. The farm bill just passed recently made resources available for farmland preservation, organic conversion, specialty crop promotion, obesity prevention, and local food system development. These funds should be prioritized in a way that will benefit all California farmers and communities, especially farmers who are in the greatest needs of markets and communities suffering most from lack of access to healthy foods.

Thank you very much.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Frank, a quick clarification. You mentioned a 50 percent utilization rate here in California. What's that ranking and what kind of dollars does that mean we're missing as a state?

MR. TAMBORELLO: You know, I don't know exactly what the ranking is, but I can tell you that Hawaii has 100 percent participation, and I think it represents $2 billion in lost revenue for the State of California.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number 5, and I apologize, Diana Hussey, Resource Conservation District.

MS. HUSSEY: Hello. Actually, it's Diana Hussey. And I am the Education Coordinator for the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County. The program that I'm representing today is the San Diego Regional School Garden Resource Center, and this is a partnership between the Resource Conservation District and the California Department of Education's Nutrition Services Division.

And I want to thank those of you who I've seen that have dedicated time to the California School Garden Network and the California Foundation for Agriculture in the classroom, which we are an active member of.

The reason why I am speaking today is to call for more agriculture education and nutrition education.
specifically in urban secondary schools. The reason why I specifically say those two things is because there's a lot of agriculture focus and curriculum for elementary schools that I've seen from the different specialty groups, for figs, avocados, et cetera, beef, but there is not as much available for secondary teachers.

When you look at secondary education programs, you tend to see more emphasis on the 4H and FFA programs, but those programs don't work very well in urban settings because of the time constraints, or the time requirements rather, and also the space limitations that you find in urban schools as well.

And the reason why we need this, first of all, is to improve understanding of food systems, where people's food comes from, because we're finding that a lot of kids are not cognizant of where their food comes from and therefore they're making poor nutrition choices, buying more processed foods and not so many fresh fruits and vegetables, and this is causing an increase in childhood obesity and the other illnesses that come with a life-long diet of poor food choices.

And also, I think what they're planting and also like -- because when they get older, they're going to be -- they get into a field where they are planting things like with landscaping or turf management and stuff like
that, we want to keep them aware of issues that are
related to agriculture and horticulture, such as
composting and waste management, water management and
conservation, which several people have spoken of the need
for new ideas on that front already, and then also land
use.

And the second reason why we need more
agriculture education in the urban secondary schools is
because we need to encourage more people to enter the
field of agriculture and horticulture. As a former
teacher of middle school and high school, I know that
there are a lot of kids that are just lost in terms of
what they want to do when they grow up. A lot of them
look at the more public careers such as doctors, lawyers,
you know, businessman, that kind of thing, but they don't
see it as being part of the agriculture industry. So I
think that if there was more publicity in the schools
about this, then that would help the agriculture industry
as well as these young people that are looking for
something to contribute their time to.

Also the outreach to traditional agricultural
schools is not drawing the same numbers to college
programs. And I know you guys are probably seeing the
statistics on that. And those kids that are in those
rural schools, they have the option of either going into
agriculture or going into other fields, and more often they're choosing those other fields. Well, the urban kids aren't even being presented with the option of agriculture careers. So if we could bring in more programs, I think that would benefit the agriculture industry.

And what would it look like? Well, there's a lot of different ways we could do it, agriculture magnet schools, charter schools, the ROP program, they do offer horticultural science and agricultural science programs in districts that are not urban districts, at least here in San Diego; I think it's time to change that. Internships at local nurseries and a more active speakers bureau and possibly providing, you know, specific talking points to the people that are in that speakers bureau so that they can hit on some of these key issues. And with all of these -- there will be more experienced people deciding what these programs are going to look like, and definitely it will be tailored to local resources and interests.

And in the end, by 2030 I would like to take California agriculture out of the shadow of the grocery store and move it into the front of public consciousness for the sake of the health of our young people and also the economic success of the agriculture industry.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Also, I want to thank the speakers for staying within the five minute timeframe. Jonnalee has been sitting more than standing, so that's a good sign.

Our next speaker, number 6, is Nancy Owens-Renner from The Sustainable Food Project.

MS. OWENS-RENNER: Well, to help illustrate my vision, I brought a visual. Hi there. My name is Nancy Owens-Renner from San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project, and I want to thank you very much for asking visionary questions and for listening to us today.

My great-grandfather, my grandfather and my uncle were all farmers, and my cousin continues the tradition; and I have tremendous respect for farmers.

Our vision of California agriculture in 2030, and we would hope to achieve it before then, is a vision of ecological wisdom and social justice. By ecological wisdom I mean that we take an ecosystem view that is science based where we understand that we live in a closed system where toxins, pollutants and their byproducts don't go away. We want a healthy, productive system, and to achieve that we need healthy inputs, both environmental and social.

To achieve productivity with an ecosystem view,
we need to cultivate rich, healthy soils and healthy social systems to support food production. We want to go beyond organic, to go beyond the minimum government regulations, and achieve a truly sustainable agriculture system which includes local production and distribution of food, and to achieve that we need to address water policy to support food production.

This vision of social justice includes access to fresh, healthy foods grown without pesticides; freedom from genetically-engineered crops, which means freedom from potential genetic pollution; we'll have farm workers with decent working conditions, freedom from pesticides and poisons, we must treat them with respect and institute a legal guest worker program. In this vision, we have a respect for the commonwealth, the shared wealth of the land, and provide access to community garden space where people can grow their own food.

The highest and best use of river valleys and fertile land should be sustainable agriculture, not development. And government plays an important role in all of this, in developing legislation, zoning ordinances, and tax incentives that create a system of ecological wisdom and social justice, which makes good long-term economic sense as well.

The biggest challenges in achieving that vision
is that at present government is subsidizing many of the
wrong things; unsustainable, chemical-dependent toxic
agriculture. We should be taxing petroleum-based
pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Government should
subsidize the right things; tax relief for organic
sustainable farms including sustainable agricultural
research and development. We should localize food systems
and create agricultural preserves. We should support
community gardens, plan urban areas with local food
production as a top priority, and promote education where
kids can experience nature, farms, and gardens.

We need to move people and the market toward
economic and environmental sustainability. At present
non-governmental organizations are doing what the
government should be doing. The government should serve
all the people and not just a few.

How the public perception of agriculture will
change by 2030. I believe that we will take more of an
ecosystem view and see ourselves as part of our ecosystem.
We will understand the relationships between food and
health, personal, public, and environmental health. The
public will join more in the production of food and not
just the consumption of food. And in doing that we will
create more community farms and return to the victory
garden concept. Or we could continue on our current path
where corporations dominate agricultural policy and people continue to live and eat disconnected from the source of good, healthy food. Epidemic obesity, diabetes and heart disease will continue, and the public perception of agriculture will be sorely lacking and will continue in a state of disconnect with where our food comes from.

Must-haves to achieve this vision. Wisdom and courage on the part of government and the people, which come to see the connections between food, how we grow it, how we eat it, and our personal, public, and environmental health; wisdom to recognize that our food shouldn't kill us; wisdom to craft public policy that promotes excellent health, not just excellent corporate profits. And we need the courage to lead for the highest purpose and the greatest good.

We cannot keep farming and eating the way we do. We cannot sustain irresponsible use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and genetically-engineered crops. We cannot allow corporations to write our legislation. We need the courage to do the right thing and create an agricultural system that is sustainable environmentally and socially.

So returning to our vision, very quickly, this is a model of the San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project Organic Farm and Educational Center where we hope to
educate future farmers in sustainable farming practices
and help kids, their families, and our community reconnect
with the beauty of agriculture.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.
MS. OWENS-RENNER: More information at
SanDiegoRoots.org.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Number 7, Sandra
Carmona from MLRC.

MS. CARMONA: Good morning. My name is Sandra
Carmona from the National Latino Research Center at Cal
State San Marcos. And I'm also a representative of the
Farm Worker CARE Coalition. And I'm accompanied by
community leaders who are also farm workers with the Poder
Popular Initiative.

The National Latino Research Center was founded
in 1998 with the mission of promoting research, education,
and the exchange of information related to Latino and
underserved populations in the United States. We also
coordinate the Farm Worker CARE Coalition in north county
San Diego.

The Farm Worker CARE Coalition is comprised of
about 40 agencies, individuals and community members whose
vision is to recognize farm workers as a vibrant part of
the community and to improve their living, working and
health conditions and access to health, social,
educational services through empowerment, advocacy, and
coordinated efforts.

And we're also part of a larger network of groups
working statewide to improve the living and working
conditions of farm workers called Poder Popular.

Poder Popular is a community-building initiative
aimed at supporting healthy conditions in the fields,
communities, health care, media and civic life in ten of
the state's agricultural areas and is founded by the
California Endowment.

Our vision for California agriculture by 2030 is
an industry that is just, safe, sustainable, productive
and proactive in ensuring the well-being of its workers.
We envision fair living wages, working hours that include
year-round working strategies, work benefits, better
living conditions, clean air, clean water and electricity,
food banks in all agricultural communities, a pathway to
legal status, health care coverage that is accessible and
has binational coverage, increased laws and regulations
for safe and healthy working conditions, investments
towards building a healthy community that includes
community security, resources, recreation and civic
participation, increased opportunities for advancement and
Some of the challenges that we see are at a global scale, like NAFTA and CAFTA, which determine the fiscal impact on California agriculture and greatly impact the lives of those in the industry. Likewise, another big challenge is the anti-immigration laws of this country that continue to conflict with this vision.

In San Diego the time is now to make this vision a reality and eliminate the disparities. And we strongly recommend that you take into account and ensure that the farm workers are represented.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

Number 8, Beth Levendoski from the Tierra Miguel Foundation.

MS. LEVENDOSKI: Thank you for having this new visioning session today and for allowing us to speak to the vision for the future.

To create a new vision requires that we also create new ways to see so that a different kind of shared purpose and strategy can emerge. California's agriculture leadership should be applauded for creating forums such as the ag visioning listening sessions, which bring an
important opportunity for us to embrace a greater diversity of thought on agriculture. This new process allows us to look at the whole situation, including all the systems that surround agriculture, so that we can choose a direction borne out of a solid foundation of new ideas and new concepts of what is possible and desirable for the future in California and for that which would do the most public good.

An important partner in creating a new action and vision which can inspire and energize this generation is Roots of Change and its new mainstream campaign strategy with its theory of change which seeks to, and I quote, connect the people and the parts within the system that have the knowledge, links and commitments required to successfully manage a rapid transformation.

The core organizing action is to convene stakeholders in the system in order to maximize effective collaboration action. That's what's needed. Convening, provide stakeholders, it means to build new relationships and institutions to organize and implement large-scale projects and initiatives that transform the system.

That's the big picture.

I am a co-founder and current President of Tierra Miguel Farm. Although my parents didn't farm, I come from four generations of Nebraska dairy farmers on my mother's
side. Little did I know that in my fifties I would find myself farming in San Diego. But San Diego is unique for many things. One of the things it is unique for that is not commonly known is its ag profile. It ranks as the number one county in the nation for small farms under ten acres, and so on, and ranks number two in the nation with the highest number of farms. That gives San Diego a unique message to this visioning board, and it's an important part of the agricultural story, and the story is one of a new kind of integrity achieved through a truly sustainable small, local, and organic farming process.

The message we have received from our stakeholders in the work of the foundation has been consistent, and it's also expressed in the work of Dr. John Eckerd, an agricultural economist and professor emeritus at the University of Missouri and in his paper titled "The Small Farm Revolution." I just have a couple of quick things I'm going to say about it.

American agriculture, he said, is in crisis. Until recently, the crisis had been a quiet one, no one wanted to talk about it. Thousands of family farms are being forced off the land, but we were being told by the agricultural establishment that their exodus was inevitable, in fact, a sign of progress. Crisis in agriculture is a chronic symptom of the type of
agriculture we've been promoting in this county for the
past 50 years. Reoccurring financial crisis are the means
by which we allow farms to become larger and more
specialized so consumers can have more and cheap foods, by
means of which we free people from the drudgery of farming
to find occupations in town.

And that's what happened in my family. And I'm
hoping that part of the vision of California will be to
change that.

In continuing with this new vision, I wanted to
present the ideas of what eating local and small might
bring to the visioning process. Eating small and local
eliminates the middleman. Buying local foods saves on
transportation and energy and eliminates this wasteful and
unnecessary packing and advertising to which 20 percent of
the total food costs go. Eating small and local saves on
transportation. The most recent estimate indicates that
the average fresh food item travels 1500 miles from its
point of production. We're talking about non-renewable
fossil fuels, a major contributor to carbon dioxide and
greenhouse gases.

Eating small and local helps people to reconnect
to food. It helps to reconnect them to the what food
products are, which is the number one reason we are being
told by physicians that people are not changing to a diet
of fresh produce, is because they're unfamiliar with the produce items now and they are unfamiliar with how to prepare them. Eating local provides more meaningful food choices. Americans often brag about the range of choices that they have, but this choice also contributes to the local economy.

To quickly conclude, our vision for the future is focus on the long-term, stop political focusing on the short-term and narrow bottom line which has forced farms to get bigger and bigger, causing a large number of farmers to go out of business and to support better local and small farms, to build farming systems that are not only profitable, but also ecologically sound and socially responsible that will be economically viable over time.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Okay. In fairness to the speaker who brought up Nebraska, any other corn huskers out there? Anybody?

Karen, that was maybe it, okay.

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: There's only one and a half million of us in the world you know.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Okay. Speaker number 9, Alicia Finley from San Diego Root.

MS. FINLEY: Hi. I'm Alicia Finley. I'm a
member of People's Organic Food Co-op in Ocean Beach.

Having been inspired by San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project and One Garden at a Time, I would like to comment on our vision for California agriculture for 2030. We would like to see city land banks created where vacant local property within communities are purchased by the city and provided for the community to manage as community organic vegetable gardens and compost sites. We believe these community gardens would promote a closer connection with growing and cultivating our food and nutrition. We also believe these organic compost sites would give relief to our landfills, which are full of organic refuse.

We believe in the importance of having local farms or gardens creating locally-produced food and helping people in our area find local sources for their food. In lieu of procuring vacant local property, we would like to better utilize public school grounds, as these properties are already in every community. Morris High School, a part of San Diego Unified, is already modeling these community vegetable concepts. Since a large percentage of today's school-age children are obese, we feel this is an excellent way to educate our children on healthy foods and eating habits.

It would be our dream to see all community

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vegetable and fruit gardens, whether on city school property or on other city-procured lots used, operating as educational farms. We believe with our upcoming climate crisis, that creating a San Diego of the future that is more closely connected with their food source can only create a healthier San Diego.

Currently there are eight community gardens in the immediate San Diego area. These gardens consist of multiple plots assigned to individuals for crop cultivation. Currently all community gardens are full with lengthy waiting lists. We would like to see more land set aside for these types of individual plotted gardens as well as the open, large-scale neighborhood garden for the whole community to work and share in its rewards.

One successful example of an urban farm or garden is the Jones Valley Urban Farm, which is located outside of the San Diego area. This model allows for a collaborative effort between the neighborhood, the community, the neighborhood association, the public school system, and the farm itself to make full use of the community farm. The neighborhood uses part of the garden to grow their produce, the school district uses part for their educational programs, and the farm uses the other section for the production of organic produce and flowers.
for sale at farmers' markets and restaurants.
The neighborhood plot is taken care of by
volunteers, by donations from community, and city council
discretionary funds.
San Diego Roots, along with One Garden at a Time,
would like to see, with the city's help, a reclaiming of
urban lots, converting them to productive use. In
addition to growing fruits, vegetables, and cut flowers,
the suburban and urban farm is an important community
resource providing educational and economic opportunities
in the urban setting.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: This device was left up on
the front desk. Is this anybody's? I don't know what it
is, really. It's an iPhone. So it's here. You might
want it.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Number 10, Judy
Pollock from the California School and Nutrition
Association.
MS. POLLOCK: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Members
of the Board and guests. First I'd like to represent
myself as Judy Pollock, Orange Unified School District
Nutrition Service Director.
And I recommend the government of California and
the California Department of Food and Agriculture consider moving the authority over the school nutrition programs to the Department of Food and Agriculture in order to strengthen the vital relationship between California agriculture and school nutrition programs. This realignment would have a positive effect on the future of California agriculture and our future of our children.

Now, as the past state president of the California School Nutrition Association, I would like to speak on behalf of our association.

The California School Nutrition Association represents more than six million children in California and we feed over four million breakfast and lunch daily. Under the guidelines of the United States Department of Agriculture, the National School Lunch Program has a critical function of the program to safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural products.

CSNA envisions a much stronger link between agriculture providers in order to achieve the objectives set forth in the new farm bill. For this to happen, California agriculture must view itself as advocate partners of school nutrition providers and not merely vendors. We envision a seamless, vertically-integrated
food system that maximizes government efficiencies from farm to fork and utilizes schools as the primary access point for the community's nutrition education and its better understanding of agriculture and the role it plays in health.

The 2008 farm bill also envisions American agriculture in schools working in concert for this purpose. There is a need to educate agricultural providers. School food service is one of the single largest customers of California's agriculture products, yet the average farmer, rancher, dairyman or fisherman knows nothing of our needs or how to market their products to us. We have specific portion, pricing and packaging requirements that they would gladly meet if providers viewed school nutrition as a viable customer set.

There is a need for nutritious new product development. The new farm bill allocates an increase of 1.02 billion for the USDA Snack Program, which helps schools provide healthy snacks to students during after-school activities and will expand the current program to the 50 states. We need our agricultural partners and commodity organizations to develop these healthy snack foods in forms that are allowable in schools and in products that kids will eat. Schools will be more than happy to spend 1.02 billion on nutritious,
agricultural-based products if they're developed.

We envision strong nutrition education programs permanently institutionalized in schools that utilize the school meal programs as their centerpiece. We further envision a logical foundation for these nutrition education programs to be provided by agricultural marketing orders that have the ability to invest in nutrition education for their respective products. The dairy industry has been a model for years of voluntary nutrition education in schools.

The 2008 farm bill requires USDA to allow schools and other institutions receiving funds under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Acts to use geographic preference for the procurement of unprocessed agricultural products, both locally grown and locally raised. If, in fact, California schools had an ideal relationship with their agricultural providers, it is possible that we could maximize the farm bill's intent to create significant customer relationships with California agriculture and innovate direct purchasing and surplus removal programs that would benefit schools.

The recent Westlands Beef Administrative recall emphasized the need for an improved communication plan that immediately alerts school food service of issues related to food safety as it pertains to agricultural

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products. The current process is heavily reliant upon private sector distributor providers to notify their school customers. Alternately, USDA notifies the California Department of Education who then is charged with notifying the schools. A real-time direct communication from the Department of Agriculture to food service directors could cut the communication time by up to 24 hours. Critical time related to food safety is our issue.

So what are our biggest challenges? First, inadequate funding of school nutrition programs. If the proper nutrition of Americans and reduction of obesity and obesity-related disease is truly a national priority as the 2008 farm bill indicates, then funding school nutrition programs must be prioritized appropriately. CSNA envisions that CDFA and California agriculture in its entirety will support California schools in the gaining of appropriate funding for school meals, which are in large part comprised of California's agricultural products. California food and labor costs are higher than most states. The new farm bill indexes funding for other nutrition programs such as food stamps, and California schools critically need a more appropriate method of calculating and funding that include economic factoring and indexing. In fact, we cannot wait to fund school

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meals in California appropriately, if we're to achieve the
nation's priority.

I'm going to stop here because I'm out of time,
but thank you for allowing me to speak.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you very much.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you. Judy, can I ask
a quick question? Regarding the school lunch program, is
there a similar utilization rate here in California,
similar to the food stamps? Are we below, are we average,
are we above, where are we?

MS. POLLOCK: We are below the number of children
that qualify for free and reduced meals; but remember, the
National School Lunch Program at the federal level, we get
money for every child that eats a meal in California.
Only in California do we only get money or reimbursement
for only free and reduced. So not all of the children
that qualify participate.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number 11, Derek
casady.

MR. CASADY: Good morning, Members of the Board.

I'm Derek Casady, and I'm a political activist from
La Jolla, California. My family founded Des Moines, Iowa
and started the Pioneer Seed Corn Company there, which
Nikita Kruschev took an interest in when he came to the
United Nations years ago and banged his shoe on the table because he wanted those long-eared corns. And then on the side of my table, I'm a direct descendant of Daniel Boone, who was a political activist. So I have that combination of agriculture and political activism.

I notice that I feel nervous here today, and I would have thought that I wouldn't feel nervous at my advanced age. I thought there would come a point when I didn't feel nervous speaking in public, but I still do. I ran for Congress a while back and made a lot of public talks, and the nervousness still hasn't gone away.

When I think of agriculture -- by the way, I'm lucky that my wife is going to follow me in a few minutes, and she will give you a detailed account of what we support in the way of agriculture in the future. And Nan Owens-Renner, who showed that amazing model showing her idea of a sustainable farm and the things that she said, I totally support too in terms of the elements of agriculture that we want to see.

But I'm aware that we meet here today in a society where most -- where there's a great deal of unhealth, many people are not healthy in our society; our economy is not healthy, our environment is not healthy, our agriculture system is not healthy and our democracy is not healthy. And when I think of an agricultural system
in the future, I think of a different political system, because I worked ten years in the California Senate for Senator Jim Mills of San Diego and I know how decisions are made. And we do not have government of the people, by the people, ran for the people. We have government of the wealthy, by the wealthy, and for the wealthy. And as a political activist at the grassroots level, I know that that is true.

I am impressed with the backgrounds of all of you who are farmers. And part of my vision for the future would be that a farmer would be the Governor of California. I can think of no better person to be the Governor than a farmer, because a farmer knows what it's like to meet a payroll, to take risks, and to do the most important thing in our society, which is to create the food. And with the qualifications each of you have, none of you have a chance at being Governor. And you're imminently qualified, I'd take any of you for Governor of California, but none of you I dare say can raise the eight to ten million dollars that it takes to be Governor.

So my vision for the future would be a political system in which public financing of campaigns was in effect. And there are bills in our legislature and in our Congress in Washington to create a system of public financing. And if that system came into effect, each of
you, any of you could run for Governor. And it just
involves getting some signatures in your community or up
and down the state and then turning those signatures in,
and the government gives you the money to run.
I see this system that we have today as being
unhealthy because land is being covered by housing that
should be going to farming, the agriculture is oil based,
and the whole system is not sustainable as I see it except
for organic agriculture, which I am involved with through
my wife who runs the biggest food co-op in San Diego.
I got some remarks today from a local small
farmer who wasn't able to be here, and Barry Logan of
La Milpa Organic Farm, a little bit north of here, seven
or eight acres, Barry made a lot of money in the dot-com
revolution and then turned to farming and apprentized
himself to some farmers and became an amazing, remarkable
farmer. But he's pretty cynical, and he doesn't feel like
our system, our political system and our agricultural
system are responding to people like him whose concerns
need to be heard. He says a cursory examination of the
state of food and ag is evidence that the system is not
being managed for the benefit of people but for their
masters and it did not arrive at this condition through
inaction on the part of citizens. Indeed, citizens have
struggled to little effect for generations.
And I'd like to leave you with a quote from Abraham Lincoln that Barry gave me which said, this country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it.

Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: I'm assuming no comment on the political questions of the Board Members.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: I can't resist one comment. Your background with Pioneer Seed, one of the other founders was a Henry Wallace, who was one of the most remarkable agriculturalists the world's ever seen, very misunderstood, but very clear on his concept that agriculture was an important part of all society. And it's interesting that you mentioned that your family was a founder with him way back when. So --

MR. CASADY: The Casadys and the Wallaces.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: There you go.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number 12, Doug Zilm from San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project.

MR. ZILM: Hi. My name is Doug Zilm, and I want to thank you for the chance to speak today on food and agriculture. I am currently employed at Ocean Beach
People's Organic Food Co-op, and I am President of the Board of Directors of San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project.

I grew up in a farming community. I watched my grandfather farm by day, work in the Oliver Tractor Factory at night. And I've worked on both commercial and organic farms, and I have de-tasseled more than my share of acres of corn in my life.

My vision for California is to see an end to the current corporate agribusiness model that we've become and return to the roots of true agriculture. The commodification of crops for everything from fuels to plastics to non-nutritious food additives have only worked to destroy the idea of agriculture as a process of feeding our citizens with fresh, local and hopefully organic food. Living in California, we should not have to import food from other states.

The current model of agribusiness started after World War II with the success of the industrial factories and the idea that bigger is better. The idea that producing only one or two items is more profitable than diversity has been the focus behind factory farming. It gained real momentum during the Nixon tenure when subsidies came in and the colleges began to teach this idea of agribusiness. Instead of teaching growing...
techniques, they started to teach profits. They were
teaching people to be financiers and not farmers. I
didn't know any farmers growing up that got into it
because they loved balance sheets. And this is when the
fall of the family farms started to occur. Farming was no
longer about being part of the land but merely using the
land to generate profits.

The rise of agribusiness has also fueled the rise
of petrochemical herbicides and insecticides as shortcuts
to greater profits, but at a cost to the fertility of the
land and public health.

Even though California and San Diego County in
particular have a large population of family of small
farms, the agribusiness idea has still kept them from
returning to agriculture. They aren't able to achieve the
idea of food production is a community effort that allows
the farm to sell locally, directly and what can be
seasonally produced. It involves the neighbors, the
churches, the schools, local businesses and community
members, whether in direct sales, partnerships, education
or labor force.

Agriculture also means that you farm in relation
to the land and what it can provide, rather than just one
or two crops that are the most valuable in the market.
The idea that the best prices for farmers can be gained by
taking a product grown here in San Diego and sending it to L.A. to be packaged and have it be distributed and sold back to San Diego if it's not exported elsewhere in an era of five dollar a gallon of gasoline just seems ridiculous. The economies need to once again localize.

As corporatization of crop production has increased, our economy has become very dependent on fossil fuels and exports to both other states and countries while we are importing many of these same products back in from other areas. The sense of localized sustainability has been lost as has our sense of agriculture and the ability to provide for our own community's needs. The current trend of farmers' markets and CSAs are an attempt to counteract this trend, but it's not enough.

The biggest challenge to this vision is going to be the ability to create or actually recreate a system where small farms can once again compete fairly. This means the idea of farmers, cooperatives and central packing and distribution for small farmers. Much as corn and soybean farmers have farmer-owned elevators to sell and distribute their crops, we need central packing houses for vegetables, fruits, and other crops. And these houses need to be owned by the farmers so that they can set the price for their products and not a third-party broker. We need to be able to make agriculture profitable without
putting profits ahead of the people.
Really, if you want to see the must-have for this vision is to look at what they're doing in Woodbury County, Iowa, right next to Nebraska. They have instituted property tax rebates for farmers transitioning to organics and policies to promote purchasing locally-produced products by not only the government agencies but also schools, hospitals, and restaurants among other institutions.

The only way to put an end to this model of corporate agribusiness and to see true agriculture not only return and thrive is to stop rewarding the commodification of food through subsidies and get back to the idea that is the culture of farming, local community and fresh food.

Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.
Speaker number 13, Al Stehley.

MR. STEHLEY: Good morning. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. I was just going to be a listener, but one of your interns gave me a speaker badge. So my unprepared remarks. I'm not an Aggie, but I'm a dedicated UC Davis tuition payer.

I think part of the problem, and I'm a farmer, I'm in business farming, I'm farming to make money to
support myself and my family, that's the bottom line. I'm also in this because I love it. I like to do a lot of things actually, but farming is what I do for a living.

I think part of our problem is that as farmers we become too efficient at what we do and we're really good at it, and so people don't worry about their food supply unless there's a food safety issue. So as some of the other speakers have said here today, we need to do a better job of telling people what would happen if there's no farmers. As Joni Mitchell said in Big Yellow Taxi, you don't always know what you got till it's gone, often quoted. But actually, probably the Joni Mitchell tune that more applies to me is Twisted. My analyst told me I was right out of my head.

The biggest issue facing us, obviously, is water. Of course we have pest problems and San Diego is ground zero for almost every pest problem that happens, mostly, same reason that we have so many people here, is the climate. So I'm like you -- I'm nervous today, I don't know why. A.G. and I go back a long time, and I know most of you on here. I don't know why I'm nervous, maybe because I don't have my remarks prepared.

But it's water. Without water we are not going to be agriculture. And as farmers we're always trying to think about the next biggest, best crop, so this is
1 probably what I'll be making in the future. It's a gift
2 for you, A.G. I had to cut down 30 percent of our avocado
3 trees, so now I'm making salad bowls.
4
5 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Value added?
6 MR. STEHLEY: Yeah, value added.
7
8 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Not good, though.
9 MR. STEHLEY: What will we look like in 2030?
10 PRESIDENT MONTNA: Why did you cut them down?
11 MR. STEHLEY: Why did we cut down 30 percent?
12
13 Because we were cut back by 30 percent of our water. And
14 we're already efficient, so I challenge anybody to tell me
15 how I can get more efficient. I can't get more efficient;
16 so to cut back 30 percent on of my water, I had to cut out
17 30 percent of my crop. And it's not something that I
18 could be there while we were doing. I sent the crews out
19 there, told them where to cut the trees down, and I came
20 back a week later.
21
22 In 2030, what will it look like in California? I
23 can tell you for a fact it will be different. We've heard
24 about organic, conventional, sustainable, big, small,
25 agribusiness, not agribusiness. It's going to be all of
26 the above. It needs to be all of the above. We need --
27 what do we need to get us to 2030? Continued research at
28 our UC system; research, research, research, we need it.
29 Fund it publicly, fund it privately through the grower

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groups. Our citrus industry funds research.

I challenge you to convene a task force -- now I'm sounding like a bureaucrat -- to find and eliminate any impediments to profit, because it's about profit. Without profit, the farmers won't stay farming.

And if local -- we've heard a lot about local products this morning, and I agree, local is important, I always look where my stuff is coming from, but if it's so important, why isn't the country of origin labeling mandatory?

Also, we've seen over and over again the devastation that a food safety problem can bring, not only to the farms that were directly involved but everybody in that industry. We need to work on a faster trace-back. In the world of computers and internet, we should be able to trace that back within hours; I don't mean one day, two days, I mean hours. And we should all as farmers get behind that.

That's all I have to say. Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Number 14, Janet Kister from Sunlet Nursery.

MS. KISTER: Secretary A.G., Members of the Board, my name is Janet Kister. My husband and I own and operate a nursery here in San Diego County and we grow ornamental plants that we ship throughout the
United States. We farm on 25 acres and have 75 employees.

I sincerely appreciate the Secretary and the Board working to develop a strategic plan to ensure farming not only survives but thrives into the future. At our nursery we've created our own plan to grow and prosper into the future.

I want you to know what things we don't need and that's why I say this. We'll be reviewing our marketing efforts, including enhanced packaging, exploring third-party sustainability certification, developing and adding new varieties based upon market demand, expanding our customer base, adding value-added to our line, and working on an efficiency in every aspect of our business. These are all things we can do for ourselves.

It is the broader issues that we as individuals have no control over that we desperately need help on. Will we have enough water? Can we survive an actionable pest quarantine? Where will we find reliable and affordable labor supply in the future? And how do we function under increased urban pressures?

So with that in mind and in a perfect world, my vision for agriculture in 2030 would include highly efficient farms that utilize California's favorable climate and microclimates to produce a wide range of high-quality crops throughout the year; farmers having all
the necessary resources available at an affordable price to produce their crops, this is water, labor, energy; pest exclusion and eradication programs that are truly effective, fully funded and enjoy public support; the corresponding technology and research completed in advance to accomplish all of the above; regulations that are crafted with industry input that are fair, effective and financially feasible; and an influx of educated, young farmers who will continue to keep California agriculture on the leading edge; and finally, a public who is aware of and supports having agriculture in California, one that recognizes the value of local farms and has complete confidence in the safety of California-grown products.

Obviously there are many challenges to achieving the vision that I’ve spoken of. Mainly there seems to be a lack of political will to fix the state water supply, with many feeling that we can conserve our way out of this. We cannot, and we cannot survive without sufficient water. A ineffective national policy on employing an immigrant workforce to backfill our aging workforce. And again, a lack of political will to solve this problem. The number of new actionable pests entering the state each year is dramatically increasing with fewer dollars to deal with them. And I'm still not convinced that CBP is serious about looking for bugs at federal courts. There's
the fruit fly versus the drug and terrorist thing that they're dealing with.

Additionally, public support for the ensuing eradication efforts appears to be diminishing. I also have concern that the progression of the environmental movement gets to the point where many of agriculture's chemical tools are banned without effective replacements in place. There's new and more onus regulations that demand an inordinate amount of management, time and money to be in compliance that at the same time reduce the available resources we have to grow our businesses.

However, I believe the biggest challenge of all centers on the public perception of farming. If we do not have buy-in from the California public to continue to farm, with all its accompanying challenges, it doesn't matter what goals are set to fulfill the vision. When the public perceives an impact on them personally, real or not, they will drive policy on issues from immigration laws and pesticide use to land use and water that may be anti-agriculture. It is incumbent on us to reestablish the farming connection with the public.

Finally, I respectfully request that you add flowers into the policy title so as to read, food, fiber, flowers and fuel, thereby acknowledging the contribution of the second largest commodity in the California economy.
and also recognizing the health and emotional benefits that flowers and plants provide to consumers. Right now, at 3.6 billion farm gate value, nursery and ornamental plants show no sign of slowing down, and the long-term outlook for our segment is very bright.

Thank you again for holding these listening sessions and hearing our concerns. I have some ideas, kind of off-the-wall ideas, not as good as Bob's strawberry idea, but I'd like to, in the interest of time, I'm going to leave it with you. Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Okay. Let's take a 15-second break. So everybody please stand up and move their hips and move their arms, but don't leave the room.

Frank Vessels from California Horse Council?

MR. VESSELS: That's actually California Horse Council.

We currently -- we have a farm up the street called Vessel Stallion Farm. We're currently -- we do have some farming there, avocados specifically, but I'm not here to talk about that, I'm here to talk about the horse business. We are -- I am a third-generation rancher/breeder of horses.

About 18 months ago we had a group, we were able to go in and see the Secretary with the hopes of helping, he and his staff, with getting their arms around the horse
business. You identified businesses as a parallel
business; that explains the horse business perfectly. And
it's very tough to get our arms around that; as you know,
we're working to do that. We were able to identify
approximately 800,000 horses over about three months and a
lot of contacts. That represents about a $7 billion
dollar industry here in California.

This industry currently is under a lot of
pressures as any ranching or farming community is. One of
which is, specifically, alfalfa has gone up about a
hundred dollars a ton in the last year, and grain has gone
up more than that. This is for an industry that has no
subsidies.

Some of the future things that we need to
identify and help with are the animal I.D. issue. This
will help identify any diseases across the state, as a
matter of fact across the United States. Closure of
public lands to horses and their owners. The Williamson
Act, which is in some counties, identifies horses within
that Act and some does not. I know that we're working on
that currently.

We also need to get tied into organizations like
the American Quarter Horse Association. They've got some
great youth programs that we can look into. One that
comes to mind is the Junior Master Horseman, which goes
across from fifth grade all the way up through senior in high school. And these are programs that don't necessarily -- you don't necessarily have to have a horse with. You can do it in an urban environment.

We, the California Horse Council, are finding it difficult to get a lot of things done because we are a volunteer organization. So in the future we are looking and we continually look for a funding source to solidify the Horse Council or another group that will help identify all of these issues in the future.

In leaving, I would like to invite anybody to come by the farm. It's about 25 minutes north in Bonsall. Take a look at a good breeding farm. We breed race horses there, quarter horses and thoroughbreds. Some of you have been there. If you want to test the speed limit there a little bit, it will be 20 minutes.

Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Number 16, Michael Babineau.

MR. BABINEAU: Thank you. Good morning, A.G. and Board. Thank you for again for holding this session.

I was going to pass on my comments today for and decided that I really needed to stand up for farming and agriculture, as I think everybody that is in the industry

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and our whole public needs to do.

I wrote for a vision by 2030, a thriving, growing, profitable group of commodities that is supported by the government and public in providing high-quality agricultural products grown in the U.S. with the necessary labor resources to support those industries. And that's a real broad statement, but I think the must-haves are the most important thing that we need; and the two must-haves that I identified are education and infrastructure.

Education in the form of letting our public know what choices they're making and the impacts of the choices that they make with their votes and their public policies. I don't feel like enough people know where their food comes from and what the alternatives are if farming was to collapse, as A.G. said is happening. That's a scary thing, the collapse of agriculture in our state, because it produces some bad alternatives.

One would be that maybe we don't control our own destiny as far as food anymore, and could that be used against us in the future because we're dependent on somebody else for our food just like we are dependent on other outside sources for our oil right now? Oil drives our economy, food drives our bodies. Without both of those things, we can't exist as a society. And so I think that we need to make a concerted effort on letting the...
public know what the impacts of infrastructure or lack thereof are going to have on farming in the future and how it's going to affect their quality of life.

The infrastructure I'm talking about has already been talked about; but water, I never considered myself a politician, but I feel really political when I think about water and I think about how a fish in northern California could cause a bunch of farmers down here to have to cut their crops by 30 percent and reduce the food that is produced. I just don't understand that and I'm really passionate about that. We have to fix that. We need water for food.

Land use and zoning. I really feel like farmers should have some sort of a preferred status as far as land use and zoning is concerned because they produce the food that we need to eat and that provides some security to all of us. So some sort of preferred maybe tax status, land use status, where certain parcels of land that have been used for farming are protected for that use in the future and it's made affordable through favorable tax laws to be able to continue to do that.

And labor is a big issue for all of us. You know, without the right labor force, we can't produce the crops that we grow and we cherish in this state, and I feel like we haven't made enough progress on that. That's
a national problem, but again, I think it needs to be part
of our educational process with the people in the State of
California. Again, because I don't really feel like they
understand the impacts of the choice that they're making.
And then legislation. We need to have CDFA and
USDA working on continuing legislation that provides that
framework, that infrastructure for agriculture to thrive.
And so those are my comments.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Mike.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.
Speaker 17, Denise Godfrey from Olive Hill Greenhouses.

MS. GODFREY: Thank you so much for having us here today. And thank you, Members of the Board. I'm Denise Godfrey and I'm with Olive Hill Greenhouses. I'm one of the floriculture produces here in San Diego County, been around since 1973 and just second generation, hope my -- I tend to be pretty optimistic about the future, thinking my four year old's going to go in the business, because, you know, there's nothing like being attached to the land.

Today I speak to you more or less as a patron of the Vista Farmers' Markets and as an individual deeply concerned about the origins of my food.

Farming is an integral part of our nation's
sovereignty, and a nation must be able to feed itself and not be overly dependent on food exports for the health of its people and political stability, yet our farms are being threatened by globalization. Unfortunately, the consumer has no -- has a demand for year-round grapes and apples and yet doesn't realize where has all the taste gone. We've lost a connection to our food. Very few of us have parents or grandparents that have been active with the farm and let alone knowing when the seasons occur.

With the farmers' markets it allows Californians to yearn for the tastes they've been able to find locally, however, this is not a feasible model for the rest of the nation. Somehow we as California farmers need to figure out a way to get back in the hearts and stomachs of Americans. We need to create a greater demand for California and U.S. produce if we're going to keep our farms in business and successful in a globalized world.

The first step I see is education. And we've done a great job with the school gardens, but I think we can do a little bit more. There are certain projects that are limited, you know, by the school gardens; for instance, milking a cow. As a member of the Ag in the Classroom Board, we'd really like to see a demonstration for them at the 22nd Agriculture District for kids to visit and really see what's going on. And so that we can
as farmers, we can go visit with these children, let them
know what's affecting us, and so we have that connection,
because there's something about breaking bread and, you
know, really having people understand what issues are at
stake.

But part of this is, you know, not only
education, there needs to be an integration into a
lifestyle. And there are many of us and many others have
talked about poor choices that have occurred and the
consequences being obesity, diabetes, heart disease. And
I think we really need to take into serious consideration
how we as a farming community, we work with school
nutrition programs and really get us so that our kids are
incorporating plenty of fruits and vegetables into their
diet and they know -- they're craving it instead of the
fast food. You know, letting them know as far as when
they're in the lunch line that the melons are from
Coachella and the lettuce from Salinas and the tomatoes
from San Diego County, so they have that connection about
where things come from.

And I think one of the things we have to do as an
ag community is figure out how we need to reach out to
community gardens, because -- in urban garden settings,
because, you know, those are the people that really care
about where their food comes from and they understand
seasons. So I think they could be really advocates if they understand our practices and, you know, our concerns for stewardship of the land.

The other thing is the food stamp program. I really think we're a little bit shortsighted in how we do that. And it needs to follow maybe closer with the WIC Program where they actually prescribe different types of, you know, stamps towards the purchase of fruits and vegetables, nuts, and so it's more in keeping with the food pyramid.

But I think the big thing that we need to do and our biggest challenge is try to figure out how to create a hybrid between the mass market and the farmers' market, because here we've taken the time to get some really delicious food, and I don't know what happens at the grocery store, but definitely tastes different than when we first picked it. And, you know, trying to figure out a way, do we have pick dates, do we have consume-by dates, how do we emphasize the freshness and the seasons?

And finally, the big thing is, you know, we really need to look at country of origin and let people know where things are coming from and so that people can make a conscientious decision to support California and U.S. farmers. And also need to emphasize what kind of standards that we're held to.
And also, you know, what about imported produce?
They should be held to the same standards that we are.
And that would definitely help us level the playing field
and make sure that the people that are importing our food
aren't causing environmental degradation.

So I'm hoping -- that's my input. I'm just
hoping that we can move forward, and, again, I'm just --
I'm optimistic that we will have a future, but I think we
really need to cultivate the next generation.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Number 18 is Ben
Drake from Drake Enterprises.

MR. DRAKE: I wasn't going to speak, but I guess
I can't give up the opportunity to actually say a couple
of words. And I want to thank the Secretary for putting
on this session. I think it's wonderful that we as
growers in the state have an opportunity to voice our
opinions and give a little bit of advice.
Drake Enterprises is a corporation; it's a family
corporation. I'm a fifth-generation farmer. I started
raising sheep at the age of five and went through 4H and
actually was able to go to Fresno State, the national
champions, through the education that I got from farming
animals. I am a diversified farmer. I farm avocados,
wine grapes and citrus.
And I broke down three issues that I see, the biggest ones. And a lot of them have been discussed today, water as being one of them.

I sit on a water board. I see us losing the interruptible rate, I see our district retaining ag water as a rate within our tier structure of water. I think it's an important part, and as long as I'm on the board, I think it's important that we all fight for the issues that we feel are important to us. I know there's been a lot of other issues talked about today on water, so I won't go into a lot of it.

Labor is another one. I don't have sufficient labor. I'm farming about a thousand acres. Currently I have about 95 employees, and I am here today, as I do throughout the week, I'm typically on boards or committees either three to four times a week, and without having my son-in-law working for me, my wife working in the office, I have a son in college that hopefully will take over our operation, I don't spend as much time as I need to with my operation. So I think it's important as a grower that we get out and we voice our opinions and get involved. And I don't think there's enough growers in the state that do that.

One of the huge issues that I see is I've been involved in the Sustainable Wine Grape Growing Alliance
and our workbook. Without the education that we can get out to the growers and get it into their hands -- and that program came about through the Buy California Program and California Grown program. We got the money to put that program together, it was about a half a million dollars. And we're now able to give the tools to growers to be able to use that. And so people have talked about education. I think we not only need to educate the public, but we also need to educate the growers. So I think that's a huge part.

And I would love to be able to farm more organically. I do farm some of my crops organically, I farm some sustainable and I do some conventional. And the problem that I have is having to deal with exotic pests. I sit on the State's Pierce's Disease Board. And one of the problems that we have is an exotic pest. The glassy winged sharpshooter has created a hardship on my operation, and I spend a tremendous amount of time working on it, and it's because of exotic pests. So, you know, we need to stop things at the border before they come in.

A.G., you know the amount of money that we spent on that program; it's millions and millions of dollars. And we're really -- we're getting a little bit of progress, but we're not as far along as I would like to see us today.
There's some other issues in sustainability. I think we need to be looking at the biosolids that come out of our sewage treatment plants and how we can use that into ag. They want us to pay for those materials. How safe are those materials? I don't really have the greatest confidence on how safe those products are, but we need to start using in our own counties. We can't take products from L.A. County and put them into Kern County or into Riverside County, the cost of fuel, and I could use those products if they're safe to improve the soil conditions. Same thing with the waste management. There is so much green waste that's being put into the landfills that farmers today could use that to improve their soil. So I think there needs to be more science thrown in those areas to help us.

So, in closing, I would like to, again, thank you for this opportunity, and I'm happy to serve whatever I can to the State of California and I've been happy to up to this point. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Ben, on the biosolid issue and the effluence issue, most processors we deal with U.S.-wide and internationally won't accept any product raised with gray water, biosolid water, heavy metals, because the science isn't there. So if we can't sell it, that's going to be difficult. That's what we have to work
FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

Number 19, Ron Heimler from Cal Poly Pomona.

MR. KILDUFF: Good morning. My name is Peter Kilduff. I'm here with my colleague Ron Heimler. We're from California Polytechnic -- State Polytechnic University at Pomona, the College of Agriculture, the jewel of agriculture education here in southern California. And we're here to talk about another political issue facing the agricultural sector in California, and that is about the future talent stream, a critical, strategic issue for this industry we think. Ron is going to do the talking.

MR. HEIMLER: Thank you. Good morning. I'm Ron Heimler, and along with my colleague Peter Kilduff, we represent the College of Agriculture at Cal Poly Pomona. We've come here today to highlight the critical issue of human resource development for the future of the California agriculture sector and to ask for $85,000 from the Specialty Crop Funds to match fund to pilot program developing a long-term solution to this chronic and systemic issue threatening the prosperity of the sector.

Over the past 18 months we've been working with employers in the apparel sector regarding the mismatch between the needs of the industry and the flow of talent
from universities, both in terms of numbers and
career-specific capabilities. We've been successful
engaging a number of major manufacturing and retailing
organizations in addressing this problem.

At the beginning of this year, the dean of the
College of Agriculture, Dr. Les Young, asked us to address
this issue on behalf of the college. We explained the
difficulty in recruiting students into the agriculture
areas and the consequent rapid aging of the California
agricultural workforce.

Since January we have conducted informal field
interviews with members of the State Board of Food and
Agriculture and senior officers of key companies of the
industry. In addition to shortages of recruits, findings
of some of these interviews also revealed a theme that new
hires lack what has come to be known as essential
employability skills. These include math, communication,
critical thinking, problem solving, work ethic, the
ability to work in teams and a diverse culture.
Additionally, bilingual skills for on-farm management.

We've submitted a grant proposal to the
California Agriculture Research Initiative for funding
support to address the problem. The proposed project will
develop an intervention strategy initially at Cal Poly
involving a measurement phase, an implementation phase and
an assessment phase. This will be a pilot study at Cal Poly. On its conclusion we expect to have proven the validity of our approach in addressing these critical issues. We'll subsequently seek to develop industry sponsorship for roll-out of the program in partnership with other California universities with agriculture and related programs for a statewide impact.

We believe our approach will also provide a template to resolve similar issues in other high-value California industries. The estimated cost of the project is $150,000 over 12 months. Our grant requires cash match funding of $85,000. While we receive strong letters of support from a number of leaders in the agriculture industry, including most of the members of the State Board of Food and Agriculture, to date we have not been successful in obtaining commitment of financial support.

Our project is strategic in nature and not other research study that will collect dust on a shelf. The project team is entrepreneurial and understands the need to deliver what is promised the first time, on time, and on budget. It is a vision that includes communication, collaboration and cooperation among the stakeholders. It is a vision that will deliver the strongest possible competitive advantage at the least cost as a result of
processed reengineering.

California agriculture is important to the state and national economy and represents a critical component of national security. Developing a workforce that is properly equipped with the skills needed to address the challenge of the 21st century agriculture industry is of great importance. To help ensure that the appropriately trained workforce is available, three things need to take place. First we need to connect with the stakeholders who hire agriculture graduates to ensure our programs are meeting their needs. Second, we need to help to ensure the faculty who are responsible for the curriculum understand the changing needs of the industry. Finally, as important, we reframe the bias and perceptions that students in both secondary and post-secondary education have about the industry. This is critical to be able to attract students to high education agricultural programs.

California's a global leader in agriculture in terms of research, development, product and process, innovation, productivity, sector diversity and exports. Many Californian companies are positioned in specialized high-value market niches with innovative products and processes. California agriculture is driven by technology and fueled by innovation and demands a properly-skilled workforce.
However, lingering perceptions of the agriculture sectors as an archaic, low paid, sunset industry persists. These stem in part from agriculture's traditional status and declining importance in the national economy, decline of the rural populations and an aging of the workforce due to progressive reductions in the need for labor through productivity advances. Combined with lower average earnings, these perceptions have made it increasingly challenging for the industry to attract new talent. The average age of the workforce in the agriculture sector has steadily increased from 43 in 1970 to 55 in 2006.

Ensuring California's competitiveness in the agriculture sector means ensuring that the state's workforce has the skills that the agriculture industry requires. Consequently, there is a need for increased collaboration between the private sector and post-secondary education institutions, to develop a sustainable talent stream with the capabilities to drive continued technology advancement in the sector.

Exacerbating the problem is a perceived mismatch between student capabilities and aspirations, the objectives of post-secondary educational institutions and the needs that are pertinent practices of employers. New hires are seen as lacking soft skills. The result is sub-optimal hiring outcomes that impact industry.
performance with unfilled vacancies and new hires that require costly training and remedial education. Due to the perceived lack of real world relevance in course and curricula, students are considered unable to put what they have learned in the classroom into practice, requiring costly remediation. Field interviews have reported that in some cases training can take up to one year.

The issue is not a new one in traditional sectors of the economy such as agriculture. It has long been studied and debated as a source of deep-seated frustration within the industry and to some extent in higher education institutions.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a vision and we have a plan. Our project seeks to educate students with the skills that the industry needs and expects so that our students are the right people for the jobs in the 21st century workforce. Achieving this outcome will provide the human capital to innovate process and create a sustainable workforce.

We have almost exhausted our networking opportunities in the agriculture sector, and that is why we stand before you today, to emphasize our commitment to this project. I flew in from the east coast at 1:00 a.m. Peter and I drove from Pomona at 6:00 a.m. to speak for a few minutes before we return to Pomona and I return to the
east coast at midnight. The trip was mostly self-funded.

To move our project forward, we're specifically seeking support to apply for funding from the block grants that CDFA will receive from the farm bill specialty crop provision to fund our project. We have a vision; please let us make it happen for the students, the communities, the region and the state.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: I would make just an observation. I know in our own Department of Agriculture, the California Department of Agriculture, we have at our senior management level, we have almost 60 percent could retire today in our Department, and that's actually taking place in many areas throughout agriculture, not just in departments of agriculture, not just here. At the ag commissioner level as well we see a tremendous amount of retirements as well.

That workforce that's needed is something we mentioned earlier at the onset, and I would try and also potentially I will try to link you with Department of Labor. They have a tremendous study that was done. They looked at some of the key industries for California, and not surprisingly, although not well known, one of the key industries in California is agriculture, employing a tremendous amount of folks throughout the food chain. So
your study seems very timely. And with the study that was
done out of their Department, I'll certainly follow up and
ask as well if there is some support coming out of EDD or
some of the other departments out of the labor agency.
Thanks.

MR. HEIMLER: Thanks. We appreciate that.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

Number 21, Carol Steed, Vice-Chair Commissioner.

MS. STEED: Good morning, Commission or Board.

Thank you for having us today. I'm Carol Steed with the
Avocado Commission. I also come to you today as a farmer.
I farm 400 acres with my husband of avocados, citrus, and
blueberries. We are predominantly organic.

And if I had to say to you what is our vision for
2030, it would be that we are in the farming industry
still. We are very concerned. I'm sure that as you
listen to all these concerns, we have the same ones.

To address the water issue, 65 percent of avocado
growers of the 60,000 acres of avocados are on some form
of district water. They are now in a 30 percent cutback.
It is emergency time for our industry.

In addition to that, reliable labor force, both
from a professional level and from an immigrant labor
support. Also, pest control security. That's a major
issue for us that has not been addressed as intimately as
perhaps it should be. We are concerned about the pest
issues that keep coming across the border, and every other
year we have a new one entering, and USDA is not providing
support. CDFA has been wonderful, but somehow we've got
to get on top of that. And I don't think it's just
limited to the avocado industry.

These issues are not new, but our government is
distracted and dysfunctional. It is only with public
support and awareness that any progress is going to be
made.

Our generation has lost touch with where our food
is grown. Most have never even been to a farm or picked a
piece of fruit. As a relatively new farmer, ten years
old, I recall pre-farming days myself when I'm embarrassed
to say I looked at farming as a necessary evil and a
sprayer of chemicals and using lots of water. We need to
reeducate our population. We need to get them supporting
and embracing our farming industry. Ultimately we must
define and answer the question as a state and a nation, do
we value or care where our food comes from?

Our state has an opportunity to lead this nation
by embracing agriculture. We can develop a marketing
program that identifies our food source, that addresses
our issues. Consumers today still do not know about our
water shortages. They know we have a drought, but do they
know that our agriculture in Orange County, San Diego and
if necessary Los Angeles has a 30 percent cut for only a 5 percent usage? Do they know that? No. We as an industry are not doing a good job. The state has an opportunity here to lead us.

By creating a sense of urgency, we can direct this. We can develop a strategic campaign which creates public awareness and concern for our industry, it addresses our critical issue. And then this campaign will be comprehensive to each dinner table and soccer games. Only then will our politicians listen and act. They know what to do, they're just waiting for the social reason to do it.

Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Number 22, Rachel Borgatti from the Solana Center.

MS. BORGATTI: Good morning. My name is Rachel Borgatti, and I am the Compost Program Manager at the Solana Center for Environmental Innovation. We're a 25-year-old nonprofit in Encinitas, California.

As program manager I manage the composting education for several municipalities in San Diego, including the Rot Line where everyone and anyone can call in and get composting advice. This service gives me a direct line to the public and their thoughts on composting.
and waste reduction.

In addition to the usual questions on how to get started composting, I am increasingly getting calls from hospitals, restaurants, food processors, universities and residents wanting to recycle their food scraps and yard trimmings. At the same time, composting facilities throughout California cannot keep up with the demand for compost from farms, businesses and residents wanting to use a less expensive, less polluting, water-retaining alternative to the petrochemical-based fertilizers and pesticides. However, there are barriers to increasing composting in California, mostly surrounding permitting and education.

So what is my vision for California agriculture by 2030? That all agricultural and food production systems will recycle their waste, both organic and inorganic, and reduce the use of nitrogen, petroleum, and non-renewable inputs; that cities and counties will collaborate with rural communities and get the organics out of the landfills and back into the land; that it will be simple and second nature to compost both on and off site, whether you own a farm, a house, a ranch or an apartment.

But the biggest challenge in achieving this vision are now two issues. The first is permitting.
Currently there's a whole slew of issues that make permitting a new composting facility about a hundred times more difficult than permitting a landfill. It is both in the interest of CDFA and agriculture to commit to work with local and state governments to remove these impediments to composting facilities.

The second is education. Similar to recycling, composting organics should be the norm for families, businesses, farms and ranches, whether it's a pickup service or on site. Not that composting will cure all of society's woes, but it is a good step in reducing our impact on the earth, taking responsibility for the things we consume, and understanding that organics are a resource, not a waste product.

In 2030 public perception of recycling of all organics will become the norm. Whether in their backyard, on the farm, at the ranch or at work, people expect that their organics will be composted and put back into the land. Composting can connect all people to the land and let them see that soil is something you build, not just something you buy at the store.

Thank you for your time and for hosting these listening sessions.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: May I ask a quick question?

MS. BORGATTI: Yes.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Do you have a pretty significant percentage of our materials that you're bringing in for composting, is that coming out of the equine industry by any chance, the horse industry?

MS. BORGATTI: Actually, due to permitting issues, a lot of that is going into the landfills. The majority of the stuff that is being composted in San Diego County is coming from like yard waste.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Mr. Vessels and the rest of our gang with the equine industry, this is the kind of a convergence that we would then certainly look for and encourage you to put together a collaborative paper to try and talk about the usage of products then as a joint project of what can happen and then helping us then to go forward and work with waste management and look for that -- and EPA, and then trying to see if there is a way to streamline some of this. That's the kind of thing that we would expect out of this process.

MS. BORGATTI: And just a plug for the County of San Diego and the Solana Center, our manure management video just won a local Emmy, so please seek it out.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: I also would give kudos to the county fair here who has a tremendous waste reuse project as well, as a plug.

So thanks for your comments.
FACILITATOR LAWLER: It's a Blockbuster local video.

MS. BORGATTI: Online free.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Even better. Thank you.

Speaker number 23, Jennifer Tracy, San Diego Hunger Coalition.

MS. TRACY: Thanks for having this listening session. My name is Jennifer Tracy, and I'm the food stamp outreach coordinator for the San Diego Hunger Coalition.

San Diego County has the lowest participation rate in the nation for urban counties in the food stamp program, so we miss out on $144 million that could be coming into our local food economy.

Our vision for California agriculture is that we hope and are working for a year 2030 populated with people who will have the ability to access adequate, nutritious food, including all of the fruits and vegetables necessary. My vision is that this produce will be grown in California. If we cannot achieve this vision by 2030, then my vision would be to have a strong food bank with the capacity to serve all who are in need with healthy and nutritious food, which includes both the necessary staples and including fresh California-grown produce.

The biggest challenges that we're facing in
achieving this vision include an increased demand for food. I think this has been in the news a lot lately, but according to the USDA, approximately four million Californians live in households that are not able to consistently put food on the table.

And just to illustrate this, just a few weeks ago I was speaking with a mother whose teenage son was pretending not to be hungry so that he could save the food for his younger brother and sister. She wasn't able to work because she's sick, and there isn't a dad around that's working either. So there really is a big problem that's happening every day where people are not able to get food.

Food banks are facing extreme pressure to serve an increasing number of California seniors, adults and children. And historically food banks have been the proverbial canaries in the mine shaft of hunger as families turn to them first when they're hit by the impact of the economic downturn. The early signs of the economy in our communities have been apparent since last October when California's food banks started to go -- started to see noticeably higher demands, people calling hot lines, lining up at food pantries and waiting on benches for soup kitchens.

The current economic downturn coupled with
increased costs for food and other basic expenses like fuel are forcing more seemingly middle-class people to seek food assistance.

The other challenge is the food crisis. As food banks have entered a crisis stage given the sharp increase in the demand for assistance, a shrinking supply of donated food and an increased cost of food and transportation. A major source of emergency food is the USDA. Since 2002, the amount of USDA commodities distributed nationwide to California through the Emergency Food Assistance Program, or EPAP, has decreased by more than 60 percent. This decline represents about 45 million lost meals statewide.

In early 2007, California's central valley experienced a devastating freeze that destroyed citrus, other crops, causing widespread economic hardship. The state appropriated emergency funds to quickly respond to this disaster. The situation that California faces today is a different type of disaster, but this disaster also requires a quick response. It is rare for so many negative economic and food trends to come together in one time, which makes it clear that we're at the beginning of a stage of crisis here in California and a quick response is critical.

The new farm bill passed by Congress last month
will provide an estimated additional 12 million pounds of base commodities for fiscal year 2008 with an additional increase in future years. Bonus commodities will also increase in future years. However, it's estimated that the EPAP volume will not return to the peak of 2002. Additionally, these commodities are not expected to come into California until October, leaving California's food banks in a crisis situation throughout the summer. And it's well known that during the summer children have a lot harder time getting enough food because they don't have their summer lunches.

The must-have for the ag vision in California, the first thing is Farm to Family. There are lots of innovative programs working to address the greater demands, such as the California Association of Food Banks Farm to Family Program, that expansion is necessary to address the growing crisis. The Farm to Family Program is a partnership which growers and packers donate or sell produce at low prices allowing food banks to provide nutritious produce to low-income Californians across the state. And this program cannot happen without the assistance of growers and packers.

Our vision is to increase capacity by working in partnership with the state and California agriculture to secure financial support and a steady and sufficient
supply of produce to every food bank. The California Association of Food Banks has worked with legislators to propose funding for the innovative Farm to Family Program, which would benefit both growers and those in need of healthy food.

In general, there's also proposals to address the crisis by starting a state commodity purchase program, a program that nearly every other large state in the U.S. operates. To date, all proposed statewide proposals have failed. It is unfathomable that the state would not fund some type of commodity program given the agriculture abundance of California.

The proposed plans are not theoretical, they are something that exist today where hungry people receive the healthy food that they need. And if the state is as concerned with the current crisis as it was appropriately concerned with last year's freeze, then despite tough budget times, funding should be secured to ensure that seniors, adults and kids can get the assistance that they need of nutritious food.

Thank you for listening.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you.

Speaker number 24, Jerome Stehly.

MR. STEHLY: Good morning. Thank you for giving
us this opportunity. I -- people have touched on a lot of things, so my vision is to -- one of our hardest challenges, pests, is to try and see that our CDFA continue their fight against the influence of foreign lobbyists on the federal government to force us to accept crops or accept produce from countries that are infected with pests. There is the continued fight and tug of war between the federal government and our agencies here in California to try to limit the amount of exotic pests that come in to California.

At our farm, Stehly Farms Organics, we farm citrus, avocados and berries and have seen the influx of pests that could possibly get into our groves. We do not want to spray; we like to use beneficial bugs. Every year we get something new and we want to continue to fight it. There are pests that are coming in on fruit that our scientists at the UC system are -- could be -- if they get into our groves, especially in avocados, will be devastating to us, that are in Mexico that are not here. But because of trade issues, trade is being used instead of protecting the United States. I think it's important for us to protect our crops here first and not have trade. We have a great opportunity with this locally grown, that that's going to continue to go, but I just -- I envision a California where we stay strong, we stay
committed to each other, to fight, and helping CDFA fight
this tug of war of trade in exchange for allowing pests
into our farms.

Now to a lighter subject. One of my passions is
kids and educating kids and farms. So we invite our
friends and their kids out to our farms. So next year
we're starting a program inviting schools out to our farms
and having these kids see where their fruit comes from.

In the next 20 years, if we educate these
children, first of all, they are great advocates to their
parents of what goes on; secondly, the parents usually
come with them, and so they see and they can learn about
what our challenges are, what great things are about
farming and become part of it. There are all sorts of
careers in farming, I tell the kids all the time.

And people -- I have three girls, and everybody
goes, oh, that's too bad, you got no farmer to continue
on. And I say, why not? Girls can be farmers too or they
can run the operation, whatever they want to do.

So I'm a real advocate that every one of our
farmers should continue and look for ways of educating the
public by doing it on their own farm. Invite schools,
invite them to your farms, invite them to your nurseries,
invite them to your greenhouses, show them what goes on,
that there is a career out here, and that we can educate
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Jerome, one of our Board Members, Craig McNamara, operates the Center for Land-based Learning in Winters. I think he just won one of the Leopold awards. But I'd encourage you to communicate with Craig. And that's what his family, they spend all their time educating young people, high schools, first and secondary school folks, and does a great job. He'd be a good model for you to start out.

MR. STEHLY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Congratulations for the effort.

MR. STEHLY: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Number 25, Carl Bell from UC Cooperative Extension.

MR. BELL: Good morning. I also appreciate the opportunity to speak to you this morning. And I'd like to say I admire your stamina to sit there and listen to all these sessions.

I'm going to -- well, I'm Carl Bell. I'm with the University of California Cooperative Extension. I'm a regional advisor on invasive plants. I cover six counties in southern California. Previously, I spent 21 years in Imperial County as a weed science advisor for Cooperative Extension.
Extension, and I guess the university finally decided I'd finished my probationary period and let me out of Imperial.

My vision -- I actually love being in Imperial, but it's pretty warm down there this time of year.

My vision is a little bit different than everybody else's here. My vision is to have adequately-sized natural habitats in southern California that maintain native species on an indefinite basis. And I'm going to try to make a connection to CDFA.

I think everybody in this room knows that in 2003 we had wildfires that burned about 300,000 acres of this county followed by another 300,000 or so acres in 2007. What people don't always know is that 60,000 acres of the land burned in 2003 burned again in 2007 because of invasive plants. This is a significant issue that leads to all sorts of related problems throughout southern California. And here on my own, I'm the person that's supposed to solve that; but that's another point.

Invasive plants also carried wildfires into riparian areas throughout southern California, the Arundo and Tamarix in particular.

So how does this relate to agriculture? We have sort of a three-sided triangle of land use in California. We have urban development, we have farming, and we have
natural landscapes. And that triangle these days is pretty well set I think; we're not going to see -- you know, we've had a history in California, as the director was saying, of expansion of urban areas that drive farms out. Well, they drove farms into the natural landscapes and the urban areas expanded to natural landscapes. Well, that's pretty well -- you know, those days are over, we're not going to do as much of that as we used to do. So we've got to protect what we have. We've got to preserve it.

Preserving natural landscapes benefits agriculture by providing buffers around agriculture, it provides places for wildlife to interact in an appropriate way. It provides ways to deal with some of the invasive plant and other species issues in an appropriate way on these natural landscapes.

About five, six years ago CDFA took a really strong, vigorous role in developing weed management areas and invasive plant management in California. And that role has -- is a little quieter today than it was five or six years ago, and that my main pitch would be for CDFA to reinvigorate their role in that area, and for the very strong reason that CDFA has a tradition and an expertise and an infrastructure to deal with pest problems. And I can guarantee you as somebody who's worked with all the
agencies in southern California, the resource agencies do not have that expertise, they can't do the job. The NGOs, such as Nature Conservancy, do not have the expertise and the infrastructure to do that, CDFA does, and they should really step into that role and maintain it on a vigorous level.

CDFA should also facilitate coordination, collaboration, and what you might call co-locating of scientists throughout California to work on these issues. And it's not just plants; there's things like bullfrogs, Quagga mussels, New Zealand mud snails, blackbirds, I mean, we've got a huge number of issues that are prominent in this state and new ones on the horizon. And CDFA is in a place to take that role. And that would be my vision, that they recognize that farming is about land management, natural landscapes are about land management. CDFA is about managing those lands for the best uses and the best way possible.

The other thing I'd like to see CDFA really take a strong role in is communication between stakeholder groups. I've been part of the what is called the Cal HIP Process, which is kind of discussing horticultural plants that become invasive plant species, and CDFA has not had as strong a role in that topic as they could have. They have been at the table, but I think they could play for...
more of a leadership role in it.

And we've got all sorts of issues. The wildfire issue is a big, big issue; pollutants, silt issues in drains; you know, there's just a whole host of things that CDFA could facilitate communication, ongoing annual dedicated communication between all the variety of stakeholders on these issues. So that's my vision.

And just to plug my own thing here and get rid of some brochures, this is a brochure called, "Invasive Plants and Wildfires in Southern California," which has got a lot of good information on the subject. I wrote it along with a couple of colleagues. You can have thousands of these if you want them, but I'd like to at least not take these back with me.

So thank you for your time.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Carl. I would just like to thank you. Earlier I mentioned the enormous role that the ag commissioners play in this state in terms of being much of the protectors of the food supply, the environment, and public health as well. And the work that you do out of the UC, the cooperative extension, is in many ways as unrecognized heroes in terms of people that have really kept a focus on some of these priorities that have been long forgotten or overlooked or more, unfortunately, unknown.
And so, yeah, we definitely have a commitment that through this process, this kind of a discussion that you just presented to us becomes, once again, reelevated if you will, and high priority. And certainly invasive species is something that has been a focus of our Department since certainly we have at least some good news at the border stations.

Currently we'll be going through this budget, we were hoping we have a budget signed sometime this month, would be nice, at the state legislature, but you may have heard and you may know that the full funding for not only the border station programs, our inspection stations at our interstate borders, as well as some of the other programs, including diaprepes, including Red Imported Fire Ants and some of the others, that funding did come back. Part of it has come back because of the recognition by a bigger stakeholder group that these are critical programs for the state.

So thanks for your work.

MR. BELL: Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number 26, Mike Mellano from Mellano & Company.

MR. MELLANO: Good morning, and thank you for having me. I'm from Mellano & Company. We're flower growers in Oceanside and in Carlsbad, and our company also
manages part of the flower market in Los Angeles. And many of the things that I was going to talk about have already been covered, so I'll probably just concentrate on one thing. The labor issue is very important. The one thing that wasn't mentioned so far, at least I didn't hear it, about the water issue.

I very much believe that in addition to infrastructure, we need to have a free market for water. If the people of San Diego want to buy water from the people of Imperial County, and they want to sell it, we should be able to do that, and it's the same thing. I don't believe that the rice growers in northern California should be demonized because they own water that the state won't let them sell to somebody else. I very much believe that that's an important issue.

And the next thing I want to talk about is the -- I'm an optimist and I tend to be an optimist, and I also believe in capitalism and I believe that the government needs to have pro-business regulations. If there's no profit incentive, nobody's going to do anything. And there's jillions of examples of that. The Soviet Union was a primary example, Cuba's an example. And you've got to have a market-based capitalistic environment for farming to survive, okay?

And I also support the thing on research and
education, very important.

But the one thing I want to concentrate on today is, because nobody's spoken about it, and that's pesticides and pest control. Rachel Carson did a very good job of demonizing DDT. What she didn't say was that DDT was basically responsible for the control of malaria; so without DDT we would have had malaria. And it seems to me that the environmental problems with DDT are serious, but the situation with malaria that goes back to the beginning of recorded history was a much more serious issue, and that was never talked about.

And pesticides in general are being demonized. And there's nothing wrong with them, and they are not poisons and they are good. They increase productivity, okay? And I very much believe that if people want to buy organic growing material, they should buy them, but to say that we should restrict the use of pesticides that are safe and they increase the productivity of our farmers is really not quite right. How are you going to feed six or seven billion people using strictly organic programs?

There's not enough land in the world to do that. And the cost is going to go up, and that needs to be taken into consideration.

Another example, I'm going to use another example, the issue of this methyl bromide ban. The
United States signed this business with the United Nations about methyl bromide. Well, we spent all these years looking for alternatives. Well, if you look at the economic effects of eliminating methyl bromide, those economic effects are still there. And the environmental effects of the alternatives, if you add them up and their effect on worker safety, is I believe worse than the problems with methyl bromide. So why are we continuing to do this? Okay? And those are legislated restrictions, and I believe it's very bad now. You should understand the business of methyl bromide because your family farms strawberries, okay?

And then I'd like to use a third example of pesticides, which always gets people's attention. I would assume that most people in here this morning probably use some deodorant, okay? Well, I suggest you go home and read the label of that deodorant, okay? And you'll find that there's a biocide in there. And that biocide, if you look at how toxic that thing is, it's probably more toxic than most of the pesticides you're worried about, and yet you use it every single day. And what that is is that's just an example of people not understanding. And I believe that the use of pesticides, as long as they're safe and as long as they're regulated, is very important; it needs to continue.
And then lastly, not related to pesticides, but genetic engineering. Now, genetic engineering is just another word for plant breeding, and that goes back 10,000 years. And it's very difficult for me to believe that the use of genetic engineering, which is just the modern breeding technique to produce better crops, is not very important and needs to continue. Roundup Ready corn has reduced the cost of producing corn and it has reduced the cost of pesticides and it has increased the productivity and lowered the cost. And that's what we have to have.

And I believe genetic engineering over the long run is going to give us some very, very positive results, but I also understand that people are afraid of it because they don't understand it.

So that's about all I have to say. Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: We are coming up to noon, which is the scheduled time, but we have six speakers. The Board wants to hear from all the speakers, so we're going to go about 20 minutes over, just to advise the group, okay?

Is that acceptable, President Montna?

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Yes. The Board gets overtime. Actually, we don't get paid at all, but they're also, obviously, very dedicated, so we'll wait in the best
interest of everyone's time.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Let's proceed.

Number 27, Eric Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Good afternoon, Secretary. Thank you for providing the leadership that do you for California agriculture.

Of course I wouldn't be a San Diego farmer without talking about water, and water is a problem. You have to have -- to have a vision for 2030, you kind of have to have at least bifocals where you can see up close and far away. And the up close problem is next year. What are we going to do next year?

We have a lot of -- the Governor has a great plan for resolving our water crisis, long term, and he has instituted some of the short-term measures that he can. He can take the additional step of asking the President to convene the endangered species group to allow additional pumping made in an environmentally-appropriately time, when there's peak flows, so that we can get adequate water south of the Delta. It's not allowed under the Endangered Species Act.

The judge did the best he could. He's from Mendota. His community is impacted more than any other community in the state, and I know he did in his heart the best he could under the Endangered Species Act.
This group was created for precisely this situation, where you can pump water environmentally to support and prevent trillions of dollars of economic damage to southern California and all the State of California, because as we go, the state goes and the state goes, the nation goes, the nation goes, the world goes. I'll get off the water supply soapbox.

The next one is in 2030 we'd like to see the -- we are going about regulating ag discharges and the ag waivers. You and CDFA have an important role to play in that. You can't delegate that authority and responsibility to the water boards, they can't do it for ag. They'll find out after spending millions and millions of dollars that San Diego County agriculture, besides a few small -- a few significant operations, has significantly no impact on water quality, because we use drip, we don't have runoff; and spending all that money will be an absolutely -- it will be a crime, which could be diverted and used to actually clean up the water for the environment and cleaning up our beaches so the boys can swim down there. And so we don't want to repeat the experience when the water boards got involved with the dairies.

In San Diego County we had over 200 dairies; now a lot of those farmers were old and they weren't very
stubborn, there's 12 of them were stubborn, 11 of them, of course, you know are Dutch. So after the water boards got done regulating the dairies, we were down to 12 dairies in San Diego County. We now have six, and five of them are still the Dutch guys, the second or third generation of the Dutch guys. They were just too stubborn to go away. They spent the money that they had to and they just would not go away.

We don't want that experience to occur to the horticulture industry. We are moving into an era where the ag waivers are going to regulate our industry. And we have a billion-dollar industry, close to a billion-dollar industry. In 2030, I see that industry getting to $10 billion. If we don't enlist the support of the community, I see, besides the $10 billion intensive ag farm gate, I see a thousand organic certified farmers out there. And we hope that those thousand certified organic farmers wouldn't be up at the podium talking about irresponsible use of pesticides, because I don't, and wasting water and getting subsidies, because I don't. The farm bill needs to be about conservation. And the horticulture industry, of all industries, gets almost no federal money for research. And that research could be used for the quarantine issues that are perplexing you probably on a more than daily basis, and hopefully this would lead to
some of the resolution. The scientific research needs to have some answers, and I'm hoping that we get there.

I sell over 200 species of ornamental plants. In those classes some of those plants are invasive in certain places, I call them problem species, and they should be managed by regulators. But you shouldn't just do -- institute broad bans on general classes of plants that can be used for economic uses and that are beautiful and add to our environment. And so I see a lot of intensification.

And I'd like to finally follow up on Mr. Mellano's regulatory environment theme. I would love to grow a nutraceutical crop of potatoes which would cure and prevent Montezuma's revenge. Just imagine all those cruise ships going down to Baja, if they could eat some french fries on board and then not have to worry; I would just love to grow that crop. It can be grown on less than ten acres; I could grow it on my farm. We need to get that. And it would be a fantastic benefit to the environment and to people to not have to deal with Montezuma's revenge.

And there's hundreds, literally hundreds of great bioengineered products that are out there and available that have not been able to clear the regulatory hurdles. And that's how we're going to get to $10 billion. But we
need to all work together, just be big family, corporate ag and little organic farmer, we all have to work together, and we're responsible for the environment and for our communities.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you very much.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: Sir, I did have one comment for you. I think it's part of this Board, part of this Department as well and all the stakeholders in agriculture in terms of going forward with the farm bill and the coalitions that we've put together. There is specialty crop research funding that is in the farm bill, and we're looking forward to working with the California industry in implementing those programs when they become available.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker 28, Mark Collins from Evergreen Nursery.

MR. COLLINS: Hi. I'm Mark Collins. And I too admire your patience and your attention span. I'm pretty impressed.

I kind of wear several hats. I farm 300 acres of nursery stock in six different locations in San Diego. I have a couple hundred acres of avocados, organic avocados and oranges, and I run two of the very few legal composting operations in San Diego, but mostly I'm a
nurseryman. My dad was a nurseryman, my dad's dad was a
nurseryman, my dad's dad's dad and my dad's dad's dad's
dad. So basically we have five generations of slow
learners.

It's pretty much what I know how to do. And I'm
not going to bore you with a whole bunch details about all
this stuff. Our issues I think have been pretty well
represented by everybody here. It's labor, pest exclusion
and water. And that's it. But water seems to be one
that's on everybody's tongue at the moment and it seems to
be the one that kind of misses the boat.

And I heard from all the hunger groups here
talking about the need for organic farming and more direct
marketing, et cetera, et cetera, and wanting to encourage
young farmers to get into the industry. Maybe we can find
a sixth generation of slow learners. At any rate, that
being said, there won't be any if we don't get the water
thing solved.

And I want to leave you with three simple
questions about that, rather than comments. One of them
is do you think that everybody would vote for most of
these environmental issues if you asked that question
differently and said, do you really want to put all those
farmers in San Diego out of business in the next few
years? Would our current water issue based on the Smelt
issue be the same as it was if that was asked directly?

And second, would you believe the fish and wildlife
service and the fish and game if you realized that the
same science they used to determine that we needed to
protect the Smelt was promulgated by the same guys who
brought in the Striped Bass into the Delta which primarily
ate the Smelt? So how good is their science?

The next one is about the water cutbacks or 30
percent shortage. Here in San Diego the farmer who farms
on six locations like I do in four different
jurisdictions, if you go out and drill some wells and
develop groundwater and actually go off the vein and stop
using district water in one district, since it's a
regional problem, shouldn't you be able to get credit in
another district for totally cutting off your water use
and therefore being able to shift that supply to another
farm in another district since it's a regional problem?

And along those same veins, if in fact our
cutting back 30 percent, if you already, which many
nurserymen did after previous water shortages, you already
cut to the most efficient process possible, especially
since you fertilize in the water, you don't want to waste
the fertilizer, so you're already pretty efficient, would
it not -- ask is it fair for a Draconian 30-percent
cutback of your previous use as opposed to some sort of
measure of your water use that's appropriate based on acre feet of use per acre? And that would be a good question.
If one farmer uses lots and lots of water and then cuts back 30 percent, another one who wasn't wasting can't cut back 30 percent.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Mark.

BOARD MEMBER ORTEGA: I'd like to comment a little bit about the water dynamic, if it's okay with you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Absolutely.

BOARD MEMBER ORTEGA: I spent considerable time in the water world, including the Metropolitan Water District, which I left about three years ago, and, you know, the Delta Smelt is an obvious factor that the whole state has to deal with. But it's exacerbating to see what you're going through in southern California. You know, there were several comments about the impacts of runoff and fines that people will accrue as a result of focus on reducing storm water contamination. That is a problem that on an urban area is directly related to water use.
We've demonstrated in southern California that we waste about a million acre feet through residential and commercial use every year. A million acre feet is half of all the water that we import.
So I think one of the questions that I'm interested in as we pursue this ag vision is where's the proportionality here when I know that our farmers in the urbanized area from Ventura County to San Diego are amongst the most efficient in the world given the prices that you pay for water. But this dynamic where, you know, there is a big issue related to storm runoff and contamination and you're being cut by 30 percent, and that has a ripple effect on jobs and other factors in this region, things that we're all worried about, has to be addressed. And so I'm hoping to have a continuing conversation after this session with many of you on that question. Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you. Speaker number 29, Amy Lint from the International Rescue Committee.

MS. LINT: Good afternoon. My name is Amy Lint, and I work as the Community Development Coordinator with the Food Security Program at the International Rescue Committee. International Rescue Committee, actually our mission is ensure the safety of refugees and in San Diego. We resettle over 400 refugees coming from east Africa, southeast Asia and the middle east. And I'm here today to urge you as decision makers to help shape the agriculture vision with substantial efforts towards inclusion and equity, specifically for refugees, immigrants, and new
1 Americans and so as part of this sustainable food system.
2 Immigrants have played an enormous role in
3 shaping California's population over the last several
4 decades as we probably all know. And in 2000, the U.S.
5 census identified 26 percent of the state's total
6 population is foreign born. So looking at 2030, I think
7 that we can probably say that number will grow.
8 Also, there's suggestions that immigrants have
9 are the fastest growing sector of farmers today.
10 Immigrant farmers are passionate about agriculture and
11 quite experienced and have shaped the character of U.S.
12 agriculture throughout American history. Immigrant
13 farmers are diverse in terms of country of origin, where
14 they live, what they produce, and how they sell. And by
15 supporting these new and aspiring farmers, we help a new
16 generation of farmers create viable livelihoods and
17 contribute to the vitality of agriculture as well as their
18 rural communities.
19 So today we ask that support for refugees and new
20 Americans goes above just talk about fair labor wages.
21 And this means talking about small-scale
22 agricultural-related businesses where they have ownership
23 and control. And this will require culturally and
24 linguistically appropriate extension services to help
25 refugees adjust to American agriculture as well as links
to mainstream agriculture assistance agencies that the state can offer as well as financial incentives and grants where applicable. This is being recognized at the federal level, but I think it's important for California to take this on as well.

Many refugees come from agrarian cities and have skills for farming, and they're willing to work, to do intensive hands-on labor on small tracts of land. These smaller tracts are conducive to the growing of organic specialty and niche crops that many people have talked about today. The demand for specialty vegetables is mainly attributable to the significant number of foreign-born persons living in California. Greater consumer and institutional interest in better nutrition and healthier foods drives this increased demand for organic and niche crops.

Because of the skills and attitudes in communities where there is substantial agriculture activities, refugees and immigrant families can be valuable resources for community revitalization. Evidence also suggests that by engaging in farming and growing their familiar foods for consumption or sale, refugees receive physical and mental well-being benefits and therefore better integrate into this society.

In summary, as a representative of the

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International Refugee Committee Rescue Committee and the refugee community and the organizations we partner with in San Diego and as a wife of a landless immigrant farmer, we ask that California decision makers shaping our future agriculture vision include providing leverage where new Americans can get access to farm businesses and resources they need to be successful.

Thank you.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Speaker number 30, Nancy Casady from the Ocean Beach Organic Foods Forum.

MS. CASADY: Good morning, or actually good afternoon. I'm Nancy Casady, and I am the general manager of Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Co-op, which is a 36-year-old retail organic food store. We're owned by more than 10,000 families; we have gross sales of 12 million a year. We are nicely profitable, pay our taxes, and are part of a $17 billion annual organic food industry.

I want to thank you all for listening, and I want to thank the people in the room who have taken their time and shown the interest in coming to a hearing such as this.

I've never been a farmer and neither have any of my recent ancestors, but we've all been very enthusiastic eaters, as are all of our co-op members. So our vision
for California agriculture doesn't start in 2030, we'd
like it to start today.

We see it as a system of profitable -- a system
that is profitable, sustainable, and organic, and one in
which every urban community is surrounded by a farm belt.
Rigorous water management is in effect with food
production use second only to safe, adequate drinking
water for everyone. The soil is enhanced and no longer
depleted, thus ensuring topsoil for generations to come.
The distance from farm to fork has been dramatically
reduced and small family-farm operations are subsidized
through local, regional, and national governments.

California colleges and universities teach
sustainable organic farming modeled on the consistently
over-subscribed UC Santa Cruz program where young people
flock every year to learn about organic farming. Our
vision includes seeds that are not intellectual property
and cross-species genetic engineering, which has been
eliminated from the food chain. Decision makers will have
adopted the triple bottom line, which is finances, social
values, and the environment when creating policy. With
the new interpersonal skills we all will have developed to
get us through the upcoming global upheavals, farming will
finally be fun.

The biggest challenge to this vision is, frankly,
greed. It's exacerbated by the $5,000 per second we taxpayers have approved for the occupation of Iraq over the past six years. Think about what a small portion of that amount could do for California agriculture. What's needed is no less than evolution in consciousness manifested in courageous leadership and grounded in care for the earth and each other. You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday everyone will join us, and the world will live as one.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Our final two speakers, number 31, Dawn Otsuka.

MS. OTSUKA: Hi. I'm Dawn Otsuka. I don't even know if I'm a farmer or not. My husband and I bought a ten-acre piece of land in Vista and there were avocados on it, so we began to water it. And within two years we were able to make one month's worth of water bill; and then the following year we made two months' worth of the water bill; and then the most recent year, all of our crop has been stolen, so we have not made our water bill.

I have a deep-seated feeling about food production. I believe food production is the heart and soul of any society. It really has to do with our security, our national security, as evidenced by history of the demise of the bison in American, multiple war campaigns that have been lost by the lack of food. I
think food is very important. And within San Diego, from what I understand, the county has been able to support its population. In the last few years, though, I really don't know whether this still stands, whether or not our county can support the population.

I think though as a national security issue, if we could, then if there was a security problem or a natural disaster such as Katrina, and California is known for its earthquakes, we could possibly support our population until help has arrived. So I think that food is very important.

Since I am not a farmer, or I am a farmer, I don't know how you look at that, I can only speak from my own experience. And I'm sorry if I'm ignorant, but please, I am willing to learn.

Because of the 30 percent decrease in this year's water, we -- the avocado, I have a hundred trees on ten acres, that's only about one acre worth of trees, but I have seen my neighbors stump all of their trees, beautiful trees bearing trees, and yet at the same time we are bringing in fruit from other countries. I don't understand when we have fruit right here, and yet we're getting rid of our beautiful trees that supply actually better fruit.

I have tried to educate my friends in the city
that the fruit that they are buying that they think is not
good fruit is actually fruit that is imported, and if they
were to buy local fruit, the taste is very different.
Once I'm able to communicate that to them, they agree.

My own personal experience this past year was
that since we cannot seem to make a living, or my husband
travels about two hours to and from work to support my
hobby, that we offered to have our land used for a study
on planting of root stock for Riverside. However, when
they came out and looked at our property, they said it was
ideal for their study, but we could not guarantee them the
water. They tried to work on their side to get the water
waiver and they determined that they could not. So we
were denied that study. So research was not done.

I think though that another -- another problem is
ordinances. We -- I answered an ad as a good Samaritan
for a person that had been -- his beehives had been lost
considerably in the last fires, and he was looking for a
place to store his remaining hives and to possibly bring
more hives into production. And I offered my ten acres,
because naturally I'm not getting anything from my ten
acres anyway, only to realize that I did not meet the
San Diego County ordinance of having the hives situated
600 feet from any of my neighbors. Although I have a
large piece of property, there are houses, and when I
looked at the satellite, I could not find any area,
including inside of my house, that wasn't 600 feet away
from any neighbor. And I would have liked to have given
him the opportunity to store his bees, because I
understand about the bee collapse and the need to have
honey bees everywhere.

So in conclusion, not having been a farmer but
having had this brief opportunity, my conclusion for
farming is that it consists of three things, and that is
hard labor, science research, and political policy. And I
think that you are the branch that really have to do with
the political policy, and I think that you are the ones
that can give priority to farms producing food so that
these orchards that have taken years to grow aren't
unnecessarily cut down. And also to decrease the
intolerance to farming. My neighbors complain about the
noise, the odor, or, for example, one of the reasons why I
decided to not have the beehives put on my property is
that in Vista where I live there was a lawsuit that
someone was allergic to bees got stung and sued the apiary
and the City of Vista.

Thank you very much.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Bob, do you have a Right to
Farm Ordinance in San Diego County?
MR. ATKINS: Yes, we do. They do have zoning too, unfortunately. I'm not the ag commissioner.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: The final speaker for the day is Bob Atkins, San Diego County Agriculture Commissioner.

MR. ATKINS: Everybody wants to put me someplace else today, I don't know.

A.G., Board, pleasure to have you here and appreciate your patience in listening to all the comments. Most of what I wanted to say has been covered, but I did want to focus on one of our biggest issues, and that's pest problems.

And I wanted to take just a moment to congratulate ourselves, the Farm Bureau, and CDFA and the California Ag Commissioners and Sealers Association for their combined efforts to change much of what was in the farm bill as subsidies and include a more strategic view of what the farm bill ought to be, and that is pest detection, pest prevention.

And now we have the task ahead of us of again coordinating our efforts so that we make the most of those opportunities that are in the farm bill and plan the programs that will give us the best effect, increasing our trapping, and do more planning for the pests that have crept up on us, the Asian Citrus Psyllid and
Huanglongbing, citrus greening are knocking at our southern door, LBAM caught us a bit flat-footed when we had traps available that should have been deployed but for lack of money.

I really want to congratulate A.G. for his support in the budget for enhancing the border stations, but not at the expense of the high-risk pest exclusion program that the agriculture commissioners administer at the local level. We've done our best to try and make that pay off and reduce the pests found and make sure that they stay out of the state. Pleased to see that we still have our fingers on diaprepes funding, at least enough to try and continue the effort until we can find adequate funding for that. And I appreciate the opportunity to have a dog team deployed in San Diego County this fall, partly from federal funding through CDFA.

I think we need to look at some of our problems, popular buzz ward, holistically, systematically, whatever. President Montna pointed out that some of the issues with using some of the sewage solids as fertilizer, same thing goes with treated effluent waters. We're pumping virtually drinking water out to sea, which doesn't make any sense when we're in a drought, and we should be able to use those waters on horticultured landscape and tree crops with the proper treatment and research to allow for
There was mention made of recycling green waste, and some of the solids could also be incorporated in that. One of the challenges again, with bees and other things, is finding the right place to situate these endeavors so that they don't cause problems for the neighbors. So zoning has to be included in that. So by systems approach, I mean we have to look at all of the aspects and we have to do research that will meet all of those public needs as we take them forward.

One of the interesting things, we've had nurserymen speak, we've talked about pests as they affect the nurseries, the effects of quarantine, and we talked about trade; and certainly nurseries are very integral in that trade, at least the interstate trade issues. We have a one billion dollar nursery industry in this county, and it's by far the largest nursery producing county in all of its elements, the floriculture and outdoor landscape replacement crops, all of that. One of the main reasons is because we have high input costs here, high costs of water, high cost of labor, high cost of land; it's one of the few crops we can in fact produce and meet the input cost needs.

Some of these sustainable systems could in fact help us with that being able to reuse green waste, being
able to reuse water that would not be able to be used on row crops for example. These are ways that I think the industry can help itself and help solve some of these societal problems.

So I really appreciate again that you've come to listen to agriculture here in San Diego County and I thank you for allowing us to speak.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: Thank you, Bob.

FACILITATOR LAWLER: Thank you very much.

That concludes our public participation and testimony. Thank you very much for your active participation, made my job very easy, and thank you for paying attention to the five minute clock.

I'm going to pass it now to President Montna for the conclusion of the meeting.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Well, again, thank you all for your time. Your information was invaluable as we put this document together.

Regarding the stumping of the trees, that's just unacceptable to me, many of us, if we couldn't somehow move that water down here when many at this table north of Delta would be more than willing to help and we can't get it through the system. Ag will help ag every time at the end of the day, and even the demon rice grower will let go of some of that water to help an avocado brother in the...
south. And it's unacceptable to many of us. And hopefully that's one of the elements, as we get a vision going forward, that can be -- that dream can be realized and we can freely move water in the state.

Mr. Secretary, comments?

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: I continue to be not amazed but encouraged by the optimism that I see in many quarters about where agriculture can be. I'll continue to stay alarmed that there are some of the very fundamentals that we all depend on, and I think it was mentioned over and over again, an infrastructure that includes dependable labor, dependable water, and a pest exclusion system that is more than adequate but robust. I think that's as important as anything. Because you all know, you could have a crop and suddenly get shut down in a quarantine and can't move product A to location B, and that's a challenge that you will face.

We've said many times when we mentioned the word sustainability, and that is getting tremendous discussion throughout the state. Many people talk about a stool, the three-legged stool, it was mentioned earlier, the three Es; it's economics, in other words, profitability; environmental, attention as far as being a footprint within the environment that's benign; and the third one is social equity, dealing with the fact that in urban...
inner-cities people don't have access to farm products at all, they buy their food from a liquor store for example. The social equity component is tremendous. You have the farm workers here.

We had last night a session in Oxnard that was for the most part entirely from the farm worker community, which is a critical part of this. And as we mentioned, the need for labor, a dependable labor supply. All of our employees that work in agriculture, they're the pillar upon which we have a dependable supply of agriculture coming.

The fourth -- the three Es, as they call it a stool of sustainability, one thing I wanted to mention, and it was mentioned many times here, is a stool is actually pretty wobbly, you know, it's not that solid a foundation. And we certainly have wanted to include a fourth E, which would be education.

And it was mentioned many a time that education, a form of outreach, education in terms of technical education for young people coming into the industry, like what we see with FFA, education in terms of research to give us new tools, all of that is the fourth leg if you will of a table, of a platform upon which we're going to have to build a really sustainable dynamic agriculture.

And so I will say in finishing that your comments
have been exactly that, that kind of roundabout look, a
dynamic look at what we need, what's missing, some of the
glaring faults of a system, whether it's -- someone
mentioned a dysfunctional political system that can't seem
to focus on some of these very important fundamentals in
the face of some very dramatic challenges to our food
supply.

And so please stay focused, please visit our
website. Don't hesitate if you have more comments to
make. If you have friends that should have been here or
you think of that would love to participate in this
process and can deliver in written format on our website
testimony, it will be included, it will be added. And
then I'll ask you to go ahead and stay tuned and stay
plugged in with this process with us as we come forward
with that draft later this fall. And then we'll certainly
then at that point have a chance to look at it.

I think some of the other members on the Board
might have a discussion.

Special thanks though, real quickly, to Gabriela
and J.D. over here for the great job of translation for
those that were able to utilize it. Troy over here who
has been, Troy Ray, who has been our transcriber and
worked with us for several of the sessions. Thanks, Troy,
for your work. Mike Lawler, again, thank you, Michael,
for your great work in keeping us on time and moving forward.

And it really has been a really exciting and fascinating day listening to all of you. Thank you for your comments and thoughts.

Any other comments down on this side?

PRESIDENT MONTNA: We've got two down here.

And before I forget, as we go to Don and Luawanna and maybe other Board Members, we'd like to close with the Board Members' comments or any questions they may have of a speaker, but we are seeking out -- our list now is over 75 groups, organizations that some have commented, some have not, but we're going to make sure that we solicit everyone, stakeholder, in this process.

So if you have anyone that you think should have been here today, if you'd communicate that to Josh, we'll contact them and solicit their comments, any stakeholder in this business that has anything to do with agriculture. So think about that. Give it to Josh before we leave today, and we'll make sure those folks are invited to at least give written testimony. Contact him after the meeting. That would be great.

Don Bransford, Luawanna, whoever is first.

BOARD MEMBER HALLSTROM: Okay. Well, I want to say that this has been a really amazing process for all of
us here on the Board, probably beyond what we even thought
it would be. So we really do appreciate all of you being
here. I spend most of my time awake and asleep thinking
about immigration.

But it's interesting, today we had a speaker here
today who said, you know, that possibly she was speaking
from ignorance. And I'll have to say she was so far from
that. She was probably one of the most passionate
speakers here. And that was Dawn, and, Dawn, I don't know
how to say your last name correctly.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Otsuka.

BOARD MEMBER HALLSTROM: But I mean, you brought
to light something that was so interesting, the fact that,
you know, here we are, in fact somebody else gave another
statistic, that the cutback that we have here in water for
agriculture in San Diego County or southern California of
30 percent, and yet we're only -- that's only five percent
of the use. And I think that's the way it was stated, cut
back from five percent of the usage, and, yet here we are
cutting down our own fruit trees, avocado trees so that we
then have to bring in and import that fruit. I mean,
that's just astonishing. And I think if the American
people new that, they would make very different decisions.
Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER BRANSFORD: I just wanted to comment
on the water issue. Being from the north state --

MS. DIVINE: I'm sorry, the cut back on use is only around 50,000 --

THE REPORTER You're not going to be on the record if you don't go by the microphone.

MS. DIVINE: Sorry.

My name is Anisa Divine, and I'm from the Imperial Irrigation District. And the cutback in use, San Diego County uses approximately 160,000 acre feet of water a year. So a cutback of 30 percent is 50,048. And I believe what the statement was, it was that ag uses 30 percent of the water -- or five percent of the water and it was a 30 percent cutback, so that's 21.5 percent. And it is the amount of water that the water treatment plant, that San Diego has to put into the ocean produces.

BOARD MEMBER BRANSFORD: My comments, again, I'd like to thank you all for coming and your comments. I'm president of an irrigation district in the north state, we're Glenn Colusa Irrigation District. We irrigate about 150,000 acres of farm ground. And we are as concerned as you. Unfortunately, for you, you've been cut; we have not been cut.

But we have spent well over ten years in Washington trying to get surface storage built. I mean, we've gotten money appropriated, I think better than $5
million appropriated that DWR is using to build reservoirs, and our interest is the Sikes Reservoir, which is up in the north state. That's not water we need. You know, that water needs to flow south, and it would be environmental water and it would be export water.

The north state, you know, has adequate resources and supplies; and we are very concerned, we've tried to transfer water. This year our district was going to transfer water, San Luis Delta Mendota. The environmentalists filed lawsuits against -- to stop it. In fact, four districts tried to transfer water to ag interests south of the Delta, and they all filed lawsuits.

And so, you know, there's a serious attempt to prevent a movement of water. And you couple that with the problems in the Delta, and it's making it very difficult; but it's not that the north state does not want to support your interests down here, but there's just a huge bottleneck coming and it's coming in many different directions.

BOARD MEMBER BACCHETTI-SILVA: I'd like to thank all of you for coming today. And this is the most I've heard about the country of origin labeling and being an important part of our ag industry. And I sit on the California Milk Advisory Board, as Pat Van Dam does too, and I think you reeducated us in the value of the Real
California Milk sale, the Real California Cheese sale, ice cream, butter. So I do -- I want to -- I really appreciate you coming and sharing those thoughts. And that will be passed along. And really gave me a reeducation on the value of our program. Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: Okay. I'm not going to apologize, but you may have noticed that perhaps I'm not originally from California. But I want you to know that's exactly why I am so passionate and love this state so much, because of the kinds of people that you are and the kind of natural resources that we have and the national treasure that California agriculture is. But the thing that we have all acknowledged within our agricultural community for so many years, since I've been working in it for 20 years, is that we need to stop talking to ourselves and preaching to the choir.

And, A.G., I want to thank you and the staff, because what has happened through these listening sessions is I think that we finally see the opportunities to start to make those connections to work together as a community of growers and workers and eaters to change policy and the public perception. But the work of this project is just beginning, to take all of these listening sessions and the hundreds of comments that are on the website and to turn it into an action plan that we can all work on together,
because if anything's come through in all of these sessions, is that we're going to get a lot further down our road of where we want to go by working together and continuing this kind of stakeholder process. So thank you all for participating.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Anything else down there?

Okay.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: It's unusual for Adan and Marvin Meyers. I was a little bit shocked. I have to shake myself here.

BOARD MEMBER MEYERS: My frustration is overriding my brain.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Two great leaders on this Board, as are all of the rest. And Karen drew the short straw on this issue, because we have a Board Member that takes on any item, we have an agendized item. Luawanna takes labor, and Don and Marvin take water and so forth and so on. And Karen is our leader and chairman of this ag vision effort. She'll start to work the small work of the Board and CDFA to distill this as we get it together.

And so I do want to thank, one huge thanks we should give to Secretary Kawamura who will work with the Governor to take this vision for this industry. The Governor loves agriculture. He continually tells us he loves agriculture. He understands it. He milked cows as
a kid, took vocational ag courses to become a salesman;
and he sells himself pretty well, you may have noticed.
And with the Secretary decided to embark on this ag vision
process for our great industry. So I'd like to give him a
big hand. Looking forward to -- and some of our
colleagues will say, well, what are we doing this for,
this same old, end up on a shelf. And it's not going to
end up on a shelf. We have an action Governor and an
action Secretary, we're going to put this to work.

So again, we want to thank you for all your great
efforts, spending your day with us, and we appreciate it.
Stay tuned to our website. And Josh is a conduit for you.
And then again, thank you for all your comments today, we
appreciate it. And this meeting's adjourned. Thank you.

(Thereupon, the July 8, 2008,
California Department of
Food and Agriculture
Vision Listening Session
was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, TROY RAY, an Electronic Reporter, do hereby certify that I am a disinterested person herein; that I recorded the foregoing California Department of Food and Agriculture California Farm Bill Listening Session; that thereafter the recording was transcribed.

I further certify that I am not counsel or attorney for any of the parties to said Listening Session, or in any way interested in the outcome of said Listening Session.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 22nd day of July, 2008.

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