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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

OXNARD PERFORMING ARTS AND CONVENTION CENTER
VENTURA ROOM
800 HOBSON WAY
OXNARD, CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, JULY 7, 2008
12:00 P.M.

Reported by:
Troy Ray

PETERS SHORTHAND REPORTING CORPORATION   (916) 362-2345
APPEARANCES

BOARD MEMBERS
1. Al Montna, President
2. Ann Bacchetti-Silva
3. Don Bransford
4. Thomas Deerdorff
5. Luawanna Hallstrom
6. Marvin Meyers
7. Adan Ortega
8. Karen Ross
9. Donald Valpredo
10. David Wehner

STAFF
11. A.G. Kawamura, Secretary
12. Joshua Eddy, Executive Director
13. Michael Smith
14. Nancy Lungren
15. Robert Tse
16. Allison Heers
17. Jonnalee Henderson
18. Ashley Stone

FACILITATOR
19. Carolyn Penny

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APPARENCES (Continued)

INTERPRETERS

Gabriela Hussong
Juan Dario Mendez

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Bob Gray, Duda Farm Fresh Foods
Ed Burton, National Resources Conservation Service
David Landecker, Environmental Defense Center
June Van Wingerden, Santa Barbara County Flower and Nursery Growers Association
Pete Overgaag, Hollandia Produce
Delaney Ellis, Food and Agriculture Committee of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, Ag Futures Alliance
Zoila Aguilar, People's Council
Belen Seara, Pueblo Education Fund
Aubrey Sloan, Cal Health Committee, Cattlemen's Association, Cattle Disease Task Force
Emily Ayala
Margie Bartels, California Women for Agriculture, Ventura County Chapter
Andy Calderwood, Ventura County Agriculture Commissioner's Office
Steve Barnard
Karen Schmidt, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance
Phil McGrath, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance
Sandy Curwood, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance
Scott Deardorff, Deardorff Family Farms

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A P P E A R A N C E S (Continued)

Nancy Stehle, Habitat for Humanity, House Farm Workers Task Force
Chris Sayer
Sonia Flores, House Farm Workers
Lauro Barajas
Fred Klose
Gail Weller-Brown, Oxnard Farm Worker Housing Group
Moira Beery, California Farm to School Program, Center for Food and Justice
Jan Berk, San Miguel Produce
Jim Churchill, Churchill Orchard
Lisa Brenneis, Churchill Orchard
Marty Fujita, Food for Thought
Maricela Morales, CAUSE
Robert Roy, Ventura County Agriculture Association
Eric Lomeli, United Farm Workers Foundation
Darcey Lober, Ventura Unified School Distric
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PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Welcome, everyone. I'm Al Montna. I'm President of the State Board of Food and Agriculture. I'm a rice farmer from Yuba City, California. It's a pleasure to have you all here today at our ag visioning session, our fifth session I believe, from Redding to here now at this point.

I'd like to take the opportunity to have the Board introduce themselves to you and their affiliations in the agricultural world and also their length of service to the State Board, starting with Marvin.

Marvin Meyers, please.

BOARD MEMBER MEYERS: Hi. I'm Marvin Meyers. I'm a farmer in the central valley, west of Fresno where there's no water. I farm mostly almonds, but we're diversified farmers. It's a family farm. And I've been on the Board for several years. Welcome.

BOARD MEMBER DEARDORFF: Good afternoon. Tom Deardorff with Deardorff Family Farms based here in Oxnard. I want to give a special thanks to all of you for attending this session. We did a little arm twisting to get one out here on the central coast, so you can either blame me or thank me I guess. We're here today. And I appreciate all that are attendance, so thank you.

BOARD MEMBER HALLSTROM: Good afternoon.
Luawanna Hallstrom. I'm from the San Diego area. I come from a family of, I guess, fresh farm tomatoes, kind of a hot topic these days. And glad to be here.

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: Josh Eddy, Executive Director of the State Board of Food and Agriculture.

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: Hi. I'm Karen Ross. I'm President of the California Association of Wine Grape Growers. This is my second term on the State Board. And it's a pleasure to see you here. I look forward to your comments.

BOARD MEMBER BRANSFORD: Good afternoon. I'm Don Bransford. I'm a farmer from Colusa, California, and I grow rice, almonds and prunes in the Sacramento valley.

BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: Good morning. My name is Don Valpredo. I'm a vegetable farmer from Bakersfield, California specializing -- not specializing, we grow a lot of carrots and melons and peppers. And I look forward to this session, thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Again, welcome, everyone.

It's good to see some familiar faces in the room as we
start on this journey to document, govern agriculture's
future through 2030.

This is your opportunity, the stakeholders and
agriculture's opportunity to comment on a document that we
know will not gather dust on a shelf. It's an action
plan. Our Governor likes action, and he asked for this to
be created. He's a great supporter of agriculture in
California. And it's the Board's job, and we were asked
by Secretary Kawamura in March, to put this document
together.

So we started listening sessions in Redding about
a month ago, and we're going up and down the state. But
it's ag's stakeholders, farmers and our industry, those
affiliated with our industry or those that even
participate in our industry in any way to give their input
as we develop this very important document.

It's about our vitality, our viability and our
future in this great state, being the number one ag state
in the nation. And your input is essential. So we really
appreciate you taking your valuable time to share this
with the Board.

The Board's bylaw is to advise the Governor and
the Secretary on agricultural policy in this state. We
have 15 members, they're appointed by the Governor, and
they're from the public sector and from agriculture in
itself.

Josh Eddy to my left is the Executive Director of our organization as a State Board, as he said. So even after the meeting, if you have any questions about the process mechanically, we'd welcome your questions through Josh to address any concerns you may have or any information you may need.

With that, we have Carolyn Penny here who is our moderator, facilitator, and I'll turn it over to Carolyn. We do have to be out of here by 3:00, we have another session this evening. So she'll discuss the rules of this process.

Carolyn, please.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Thank you, President Montna. My name is Carolyn Penny, and my job today is to help the process run smoothly. That means all the rest of you in the room have the bigger job; so the job for all of you will be to offer your comments and to listen to each other's comments. And in just a moment I'll brief and rebrief the Board members on their job.

So first let me talk to you about how it will work for you to do your job.

We have a microphone here at the front of the room. Each speaker will have up to five minutes to offer comments. Our timekeeper over here, Ashley Stone, will
hold up a sign when you have one minute remaining, and if you go to five minutes, she'll hold up a sign that says, "Time," and she'll stand up. We do ask you to go ahead and wrap up your thoughts if you get to that time sign, go ahead and finish the sentence you're in so that we can continue to run on time and allow everyone a chance to speak.

Funding for today's session and all the ag listening sessions are made possible in part by grants from the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation and the Colombia Foundation.

This session will be videotaped and transcribed and comments are going to be made available for public use. So you need to know that before you speak.

The ground rule is that everyone will treat everyone else with respect. We ask that everybody be concise and complete. And as the person who's managing the time, I may intervene to keep us on track and on time.

If you finish in less than five minutes, that's fine. We ask, however, that you not auction off your remaining time to anyone else in the room. So less than five minutes is fine, we just ask that you not try to save your time or allocate it to someone else or anything like that.

We also ask that you turn off or to vibrate cell
phones and pagers; and now is a great time to do that if you didn't think of it before this moment.

You are also welcome to pass. If your points have been made by another speaker and I call out your name and your number as the next speaker, you are welcome to let us know that your comments have already been made by someone else.

If you have questions for the Board and the Secretary, we will make a note of them and get to them if there's any time remaining.

You are also welcome to provide written input today or at the website. And the website is agvision -- sorry, the email address is agvision@cdfa.ca.gov.

So first let me ask all of you, can you live with that as a way to go through today?

Now I'm about to brief the Board.

So as you know, as Members of the Board, you've got the job today of listening. As listeners, I'll write down questions submitted to you. If you have clarifying questions of the speaker, feel free to let us know by microphone or wave and get my attention and we'll make sure clarifying questions are asked. And I'm going to manage the discussion. As manager of the discussion, I may intervene to keep us on track and on time.

Does that work for all of you?
Thank you all very much. And with that, Al has just got one more thing to say and then soon we'll start with speaker one.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Secretary Kawamura is going to be a little late, and he sends his apologies. He had an item he had to tend to this morning for the Department, but he'll be here shortly and be attending through the end of the session and the evening sessions.

And for the Board, also, you have the instantaneous translation devices in front of you. If you have any questions, you can ask Josh to get clarity on how to use that equipment. Okay?

FACILITATOR PENNY: Thank you, President Montna. And that reminds me of something I forgot. Our two translators over here, interpreters over here are Gabriela Hussong and J.D. Mendez.

You guys can wave so folks know where you are. So if you have use of the services, that's where the voices are coming from.

And with that, we'll start with speaker 1. Speaker 1 is Bob Gray. After Bob, speaker 2 will be Ed Burton.

MR. GRAY: Thank you very much. My name is Bob Gray. My professional affiliation is I am CEO of Duda Farm Fresh Foods, which is a grower, packer, processor,
shipper of fresh vegetables. We have had a production operation in Ventura County since 1981. And in my volunteer capacity, I'm the current Chairman of the Board of Western Growers Association, headquartered in Irvine. And I did not time my speech, so I will try to read this quickly and meet the requirements.

I thank you, the Board and the Secretary, in his absence, for your efforts to develop a shared vision for agriculture in California. Although you've asked all of us to answer four questions, I'd like to focus my comments on a subject that is intertwined with each of your questions, and that is the notion of sustainability.

I did have one hard copy by the way of this, that I didn't make adequate copies, but I have left a hard copy for you.

We can project a future for California agriculture that revolves around the concept of sustainability, but we cannot do that without ensuring that accepted or even demanded definitions of sustainability do not exacerbate the ongoing loss of crops and farmland in California.

California agriculture has been a remarkable success story. Our farm gate value contribution to the state's economy is now about $34 billion. Historically, our economic contribution to California has always gone...
up, even though the amount of farmland has steadily
declined. It is a testament to the innovation and energy
of California farmers that they have been able to increase
yields and crop values to keep pace with higher costs of
operation and in spite of reduced acreage upon which to do
it.

The obvious question that any ag vision must
confront is this: Is the recent past a vision of a
sustainable future? Can we continue to expect a rising
economic contribution from agriculture even as we witness
the rapid loss of farmland and the movement of California
agricultural production to other states and nations? I
would suggest that the answer is no.

Agriculture by its very success stands as the
chief protector of our open space and conservator of
natural resources. A farmer who cannot or will not
protect his land from environmental degradation will soon
be out of business; and that is not the story of
California's farmer, yet too many in our society fail to
see the truth of that statement, thus some call for
sustainability in food production with the explicit
expectation that such a standard will mandate specific
environmental and even labor practices that may be in
serious conflict with the first mandate of sustainability
in any business endeavor, which is profitability.
A vision for California agriculture in 2030 must clearly ascertain the reasons for lost agricultural production over time. Do public policies in the state specifically and unambiguously enhance, advance or promote the agricultural sector? Stated differently, is agriculture genuinely accepted as a major pillar of California's economy now and in the future in principle, practice and policy? Will essential natural resources be available in the future to the ag economy, especially water supplies and comprehensive land use policies that promote alternatives to development?

Agriculture is an essential component of the California landscape, its edible landscape, to use the Secretary's phrase, Secretary Kawamura's phrase, and provides ecosystem value to the citizens of the state, open space, view sheds and the like. Is the tension between conservation, preservation and development at what is called the ag-urban interface, that's where the town touches the country, addressed in such a way that farmers have choices or alternatives to development? These are the critical issues to my mind that challenge the vision of California agriculture in 2030, because without these components, the industry cannot function and will not be profitable. In short, if the resources are not available and the regulatory apparatus is not supportive, this
industry will not be what it is today.

When comparing these challenges to the requirements of the human body for life, it's interesting to note that living things will die in a matter of minutes without air but may survive for days without food or water. What is agriculture's equivalent of life-critical air? That should be the primary focus of a sustainable future.

Am I completely out of time? Okay. And with that, with about a page to go, I will thank you for your time and attention and the opportunity to testify before you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Bob. We have your comments and they're well taken, and we'll get you back for a few questions if we have any questions.

BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: Al.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Don?

BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: One question. Excuse me, Bob. Since we didn't get to hear all of your comments, would you make available to us a copy of your notes?

MR. GRAY: I have one, Josh has it. And there is about a page more on these issues. I'm sorry I --

BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: I'm sorry you ran out of time because I would like to see all of it, so thank you very much.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Bob, stick around, and if we
do run out of speakers, then maybe you could sum up if we
have time left over.

MR. GRAY: Sure.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker number 2, Ed Burton.

And after those comments, we'll be moving to speaker 3,
David Landecker.

MR. BURTON: Ladies and gentlemen, Members of the
Board, it's a privilege to be here; and I really mean
that. I've chased you all over the state, but this is the
first time I've caught you. But I really wanted to be
here in person to share some of my thoughts. And I will,
after I get my chicken scratches off this nice little
speech, I'll forward them to the Board.

But as you know, I'm not a Californian, and
that's neither a plus or a minus, it's just the fact that
I had the opportunity to have worked here in the State of
California in natural resource conservation for the last
three years. I've worked 44 years in my career, and I
have to say that California in all of its families and
individuals that own and operate land to produce food and
fiber for this great state and for our country, that this
is a very, very special place in California. And what
you're about here is critical to the future not only of
California but I believe America, this way of life.
And let me just boil my comments down to some heartfelt things related to conservation. I know for agriculture to survive, you've got to be economically profitable, you've got to have all of those markets and everything that fits in with that; but a piece of that needs to be conservation of those natural resources. And that's basically our mission, is a productive landscape of a healthy environment. We believe those two are compatible and need to be handled together. And we've dedicated our entire careers and our vision as an agency to do that.

So as I look at California and if I think 30 years or 20 years out, I'm looking backwards and saying, where are we at? What I see is we've recognized that the ethic of voluntary conservation that we espouse was critical to the survival of agriculture. We recognize the regulatory, the complexity of the regulatory environment we live in, it's there, but somehow we figured out how to keep voluntary decision making by land owners at the core of getting conservation on the land; and the reason is if conservation or any other decision for that matter is owned by the heart and soul of the individual that owns and operates that place, it's perpetuated from generation to generation. If we force or regulate or make, it only lasts as long as the
watch dog's not looking over the fence.

I don't mean to be flippant about regulations, but there's a core ethic there that land owners know best how to operate those landscapes and make those good conservation decisions. And that's not to push the need for regulation away or to push the need for environmental protection away, but somehow we figured out how to do that in tandem, in concert, and stay viable with a voluntary decision-making process.

And conservation was a cornerstone of our future, because I see California as a preeminent producer of not only commodity and produce and food, but also environmental sustainability. You already are setting that example, and we've gone a long ways down the road by 2030.

And back 20 years ago we knew there were a lot of barriers and challenges facing us to get conservation on the ground, and one of the most problematic ones was the fact of dealing with regulation and permits, how to get the permits to get the conservation done. It's not so much the need to get a permit, but the process we have to go through to keep a lot of conservation from happening, or makes it way more expensive than it needs to be.

And we figured out how to come together. You know, the rangeland coalition was formed back in 2005;
they set a real example of how people from the environmental, regulatory agency and land owners' side could come together and talk about what they hold in common in terms of getting conservation on the land and then worked together to go make that happen. And we used that process to take on this regulatory issue, not to eliminate the regulations, but to streamline and simplify the process to achieve the environmental sustainability to get the conservation of the land in a timely manner.

And the third thing we did was we realized that with all the scarcity of resource, both human and financial, water and all the other issues, there was no way that any one of us could get the thing done all by ourselves, so we had to figure out how to partner up and work together to leverage our resources and our capabilities to get the conservation job done. And we achieved our vision.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service stands ready to support you as you prepare this vision and then as you implement it to be here and be a partner in that process.

Thanks for the opportunity. And I will give you these remarks. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: All right. Speaker 3, David
Landecker. Next will be speaker 4, June Van Wingerden.

MR. LANDCKER: Thank you. Good afternoon. I am David Landecker. I'm the Executive Director of the Environmental Defense Center. It's an organization up in Santa Barbara that focuses on the environmental quality of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. And as I'm sure you know, agriculture is a big part of that environment.

We applaud you in this visioning and listening process. It recognizes that the production and distribution of agricultural products is more than an economic engine that produces billions of dollars for our state. The production, distribution and consumption of food and fiber affects virtually every public policy priority of our communities, our state and our nation. Since we're all consumers of food, every resident is a stakeholder in the discussion of agricultural policy, and we can be relatively confident that almost all of those stakeholders consider the immediate personal economic implications of their decision making.

As policy makers, rather than as individual farmers, your challenge is to respect and build upon the reality of a system driven by personal economic priorities that also assures that other public policy goals are being achieved, including the collective economic good, health
and safety. Short-term personal savings often end up having long-term costs to our society. The role of public policy is to incentivize and sometimes even mandate decisions that are in our collective best interest.

We know that cheap food and efficient mass delivery systems have had hidden costs. The exaltation of fast, inexpensive food has given us a proliferation of overweight pre-diabetic and diabetic children and adults. The cost of treating those conditions isn't covered by the cost of food, it ends up being paid for in rising health insurance premiums and the taxes we pay to support Medi-Cal and other health programs. Even without national health insurance, all of us pay the cost of an unhealthy nation.

We are what we eat they say, individually and collectively. Improvements in our diet and the quality of our food will make us a better state and a better nation just as improved education has. Like education, food quality has to be a state priority, not simply an individual short-term economic decision. Like education, we need to assure that every child in our state grows up with access to food that will give them an opportunity to thrive.

We need to use our schools to give our children healthy choices that because of cost or culture they may
not have at home. Just as we don't allow our children to watch television instead of going to class during school hours, we can't give them a choice to eat food that will not nourish their bodies.

To the environmental subject, AB32 has clearly stated a public priority of the State of California to take affirmative steps to reduce global warming through cutting carbon emissions. How and where we grow agricultural products and how we deliver them to market is a major contributor to California's greenhouse gas inventory. If we are to succeed in reducing the number of miles that most produce travels to reach our tables, we've got to create better distribution methods and other economic incentives and disincentives that lead us to that end. We need to create public policy that recognizes the importance of growing food to the extent possible near where it's to be consumed.

Today farmland near urban areas is continually cannibalized to provide room for urban sprawl. This removes prime soils from use for food production, converts carbon-consuming areas into carbon producers, and localizes food production farther and farther away from the centers of consumption. Urban development policy must get beyond short-term economics and penciling out conversion costs and must begin to be driven by
longer-term economic and public needs. Protecting farmland has to be part of urban planning.

Here in Ventura County the Environmental Defense Center has been a leader in creating the Ag Futures Alliance, a critical forum in which representatives of all the stakeholders, including farmers and environmentalists, talk about ag policy and how we can fix it.

I'm going to skip over a little bit here because I'm running out of time.

What we've just begun at the Environmental Defense Center is an innovative program we call OPEN, the Open Space Protection and Educational Network, to try to determine how general plans in each of our communities impact on decisions about converting farmland or open space to agricultural use. We're, again, encouraging dialog between all the players in the system. The fact is that working together we actually can come up with solutions; that's what this is all about, and we appreciate it, but we've got to have policies that are congruent, ag policies that are congruent with land use policies, housing policies and other elements.

My time is up, and I thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Carolyn, before you start the next speaker, I'd like to introduce Dr. Dave Wehner, who...
is Dean of Agriculture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and
Adan Ortega, one of our public Members of the Board who
just entered the meeting for your information. Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 4, June Van
Wingerden. And up next will be speaker 5, Pete Overgaag.

MS. VAN WINGERDEN: My name is June Van
Wingerden. I'm currently President of the Santa Barbara
County Flower and Nursery Growers Association. There are
about 50 greenhouse operations in Santa Barbara County.

My husband and I grow cut flowers, food, fiber
and flowers in greenhouses in Carpinteria and Nipomo, both
of which are coastal towns. Our son, who is a past
business school graduate from Berkeley, is currently
managing one of our greenhouse operations in Nipomo. We
are a real family operation; every brother and cousin and
uncle my husband has all compete with us.

I grew up on a cotton and corn farm outside of
Tulare, California. It is still being farmed by the now
fifth generation and still owned by my family. It is
becoming much more difficult. There's a lot of
agriculture in California, some of it will remain by 2030,
but market conditions and our own government continue to
make our survival very difficult. I would like to see
greenhouse agriculture survive into those years; we like
what we do.
Coastal greenhouse agriculture provides a safe way to have agriculture close to the urban line. As population increases, it becomes more and more difficult to farm next to the non-farm population.

I never remember my father having a problem with a neighbor complaining ever. We farmed right around the elementary school, we all grew up there with crop dusters flying over us. That's maybe why I'm short, I'm not sure. And all farmers, just to add a little bit, my father's 88 and my uncle's 91; they're still living on their own farms, so I don't think the pesticides were really too bad for them.

But as population increases, it becomes more and more difficult to farm next to this non-farm population. Greenhouse agriculture provides a way to do this. Integrated pest management works very well in a greenhouse while offering a way to make a profit on very expensive coastal land. Unfortunately, the California Coastal Commission, charged with protecting agriculture and the County of Santa Barbara, have restricted greenhouses in the Carpinteria valley. Greenhouses are restricted from further growth because they're not pretty to look at. You've heard the last speaker mention open space. Well, agriculture is not open space, it's a business.

The Coastal Commission staff, and I was there,
actually spoke about how the walls and paths of a greenhouse cover prime soils, while ignoring the fact that a greenhouse can produce three to six times the quantity of product that is grown in the same open field space. At a time greenhouse ag should be encouraged, two government bodies who know almost nothing about farming decide that to protect agriculture in the coastal zone, they must restrict greenhouses.

Coastal greenhouse agriculture without any kind of direct subsidies has competed favorably in the world market competing directly with imports from South America. The profit margin is razor thin, and that profit is being eaten away by government-imposed regulations on air quality and water quality programs that produce more paperwork and bureaucracy than results. Coastal greenhouses produce cut flowers, vegetable plugs, vegetables, pot and container plants and many more items. We provide year-round well-paid work for our farm employees.

To survive, agriculture must have flexibility to change crops according to market conditions, access to a stable legal workforce, viable housing alternatives for employees, and less costly restrictive regulation. Any regulation on agriculture should at least be designed by an agency that actually works on a working farm and

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encourages farm viability.
The California Grown, and I was grown in California, has been beneficial. The research done by UC Davis, Riverside and Cal Poly San Luis has been invaluable to flower growers. California agriculture is resilient, but must be guarded from our well-meaning urban neighbors. California agriculture is important to California and the whole world. We must survive to 2030 and beyond.

Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 5, Pete Overgaag.

And next will be speaker 6, Dwayne Ellis. And let me say now that I am trying to pronounce names correctly, but I don't have 100 percent accuracy. I invite everybody, when you start your comments, please restate your name and accept my apologies if I got it wrong.

MR. OVERGAAG: Thank you. I'm Pete Overgaag. I'm from Hollandia Produce and also in Carpinteria. I'm a greenhouse vegetable grower. I want to thank you for inviting us to share our thoughts with this distinguished panel.

Speaking as a greenhouse grower as well, our vision for agriculture in 2030 is a lot more greenhouse production. There are many positive aspects of greenhouse growing. I have eight examples. Efficient use of water.
Most modern greenhouses are hydroponic, continuously recycling the water. Efficient use of fertilizer. Due to hydroponic methods, only the fertilizer that's needed is circulated in the water. The groundwater is protected. Again, due to the hydroponic systems, there's no water or nutrients soaking into the ground.

Minimal to no pesticide use. The greenhouse climate is controlled for the plants but also happens to be a very positive climate for beneficial insects. Having this protected environment for the predatory insects makes it much easier to keep the upper hand on the harmful insects. Our yield per acre is very high. By controlling the climate, we're able to produce more crops per year.

Labor efficiency. We're able to attach automated devices to our greenhouses, increasing labor productivity as well as creating ergonomic working conditions for the crews. Year-round production. By producing year round, we have a balanced production and balanced employment. We're also able to capture rain water. We're able to use this rain water to irrigate our crops.

Greenhouse growing does have support from the USDA. They have recognized the importance of greenhouses to produce efficiently, to offset continual urbanization of farmland and population growth. We also appreciate the support from our State, Governor Schwarzenegger and
Secretary Kawamura. In '05 the Governor signed the amendment to AB365. This amendment to the Food and Agriculture Code clarified that greenhouses are, in fact, a positive agricultural method to be included in the Williamson Act laws pertaining to agricultural preserves.

So while we have support at the state and federal level, unfortunately, the county governments are not showing their support. As June mentioned, many California counties have made it nearly impossible to obtain permits to build greenhouses, requiring extensive studies, unreasonable demands, very high fees, extensive delays. It ends up taking years, three to five years and hundreds of thousands of dollars just to obtain a permit to build a greenhouse.

Plenty of counties in other states have the opposite attitude towards greenhouse growers. I have attached an article with my written comments about a county in Tennessee that welcomed a large greenhouse grower with open arms. They did everything they could to help them get started, including installing the utilities that they would need for their project.

In addition to all of the challenges facing the rest of agriculture in our state, many greenhouse growers also have to deal with the little or no support from our local government. This is our biggest challenge facing...
the greenhouse growers. We need support at all levels to make sure our agricultural production is not shifted to other countries.

Again, thank you for having these listening sessions.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 6, Dwayne Ellis.

MS. ELLIS: We'll make that Delaney Ellis.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Oh, see, there we go, all about the name thing. I was just in time. Delaney Ellis.

Up next will be speaker 7, Zoila Aguilar.

MS. ELLIS: Good afternoon, Secretary Kawamura, distinguished colleagues and attendees. My name is Delaney Ellis, and I speak today on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Committee of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition and also as a long-standing member of the Ag Futures Alliance.

As I produced three documentary films for the AFA about different aspects of the agriculture, three themes kept surfacing. First, how do we craft policies and practices for our local farmers and ag industry in a market controlled by global forces? Second, how do we link consumers and producers so that the public values and supports and protects our agricultural assets? And third, how can we prepare for the extreme changes in agriculture that rising oil prices and climate change are going to
require? All three of these issues are rooted in an international food system that has gotten too big, too unwieldy, less responsive, and ultimately unsustainable if oil prices keep escalating.

Across the nation I see a growing trend of people wanting to know where their food comes from, how it's grown and who grows it. One spinach or tomato episode, and the public who only cared about price suddenly demands trace-back. By the time the giant conglomerates can respond, a whole segment of the industry is devastated and slow to recover.

It is difficult to construct a vision for the future using the same toolbox of assumptions that got us where we are today. The effects of climate change and the loss of abundant cheap petroleum products are mounting. All indications are it is going to get worse, much worse. The green revolution means something very different today than it did 50 years ago. As one farmer put it, we may need to go backward to go forward.

So when I think about a vision for agriculture in the year 2030, I see a far greater emphasis on smaller, more diversified, localized agriculture with farmers' markets, community gardens, and CSAs increasing in demand. Even now California CSAs have long waiting lists and can't supply the demand for customers who want fresh produce.
from a neighboring farm.

When consumers take the risk of investing, both the risks and the profits, benefits in a farmers' CSA, they're immediately reconnected with their food source and have a reason to preserve that prime farmland and to pay a fair price for the labor. As they come to remember what fresh, seasonal food really tastes like, they can do without the gassed fruit picked too early from foreign locales, which reduces the global competition. All this takes time, but it is happening even as we sit here today. Place-specific agriculture is not the only answer. In a state as bountiful as California, exports will always play a significant role, but building a diversified regional food shed and increasing our local food security is the answer that an energized group of people in the Ojai valley is committed to. Our vision is to begin greening our neighborhoods block by block with edible landscaping. We're planning to launch a modern victory garden campaign throughout the valley. We're organizing a group of volunteers who will come to someone's home and install a kitchen garden in one fell swoop with music and a meal and a lot of fun, just like an old-fashioned barn raising.

The commercial beekeeper is going to stock our gardens and farms with hives and tend them for us rather
than trucking them all to the central valley. The local
horse stables are delivering aged horse manure for our
fertilizer. Courses in permaculture, biointensive and
eco-farming are sprouting up all over the valley.

We're launching a fruit and vegetable gleaning
program so that when folks are swamped with peaches and
squash, they'll get help harvesting, preserving and
sharing the excess bounty with each other and local
nonprofits.

No, we will not produce everything we need, and
not everyone will want to participate in this movement,
but the investments in local agriculture is an investment
in our own local economy, it also serves the NIMBY
environmental folks in our community because they are
literally dealing with their own backyard. Nothing
garners respect for farmers faster than trying to grow our
own food. Ultimately, we hope to help farmers return to
becoming price makers with expanding regional markets
instead of price takers from multinationals.

On behalf of the Ojai Green Coalition, I would
like to share our deep appreciation for you holding these
listening sessions, and I'll end with our motto, which is,
keep it fresh, keep it fun, let's grow food and build
community.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Delaney.

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SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

Speaker 7, Zoila Aguilar. Up next will be speaker 8 Belen Seara.

MS. AGUILAR: Good afternoon. I'm Zoila Aguilar. I'm part of the People's Council. I'm here because I'm a farm worker, but I've seen the regulations with colleagues, fellow workers, especially the poor paid, poor working and living conditions, the insecticides that I can see are always around.

And I participate, and I was one of the fortunate people to participate in the council school board to have better food for our children; but unfortunately, we haven't been able to achieve this yet because we can see that they still give them -- feed them junk food as we call it. And what we need is better organic food for each one of our children and schools.

And we also need the support of everybody so that low-income families can purchase their food and have better housing for our colleagues, our farmer colleagues, who always have to spend more and more because they have -- many of them, as we know, they can't drive, and on top of that they're charged a percentage of their paycheck in order to transport them every day, give them a ride.

So I'm here present, and thank you very much because I also support my farming colleagues. Thank you.
FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 8, Belen Seara. And then we'll go to speaker 9, Aubrey Sloan.

MS. SEARA: Hello. My name is Belen Seara. I'm the Executive Director of Pueblo Education Fund, and we are a grassroots organization based in Santa Barbara County. We have offices in Santa Maria and Santa Barbara City. We work with farm workers' families up in Santa Maria.

And there are three issues that I want to address today. One is that we live in the 21st century, and we still have farm workers who cannot afford a union in their fields because they feel intimidated by the farmers who run anti-union campaigns when they decide to form a union. So I participated last year trying to pass SB180, making sure that farm workers have the right to do card checks, use a card check system as other industries do in this country. Right now we have elections in the fields, and that has shown that it's not working well. So we want to, you know, Pueblo Education, visions of California that doesn't treat farm workers as a second class.

Number two, my point is public transportation. As Zoila said before, this industry, agriculture uses undocumented workers as a workforce, and most of them do not have a valid driver's license. So they have to drive to get to work because there is no public transportation
available. And that represents, of course, a threat to the safety of our community.

We participated in Santa Maria along with other community organizations in implementing a van pool system. And it has shown, you know, it hasn't been one year yet, but this system allows farm workers to ride a van and to get to work. And, of course, there is no public transportation to get to the fields.

So the problem right now we are having is they relied on volunteers to drive the vans, and, of course, there are not enough volunteers to wake up at 3:30 in the morning to drive farm workers. So we are looking into option, different options.

So we want to, you know, we want to see in 20 years more public transportation for farm workers, and, of course, we would like to see farm workers to have the right to receive driver's license as well, not to get to work, but at least if they have an emergency at home they can take their kids to the hospital or the schools.

And finally, I want to envision a more diverse Board here in 20 years; hopefully sooner than that. I want to see farm workers that work in the fields, they don't own lands, being represented at this table. So hopefully it will take less than 20 years to see that.

But I want to thank you today for being here, and
thank you so much for your time.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 9, Aubrey Sloan.

Next up will be speaker 10, Emily Ayala.

MR. SLOAN: Good afternoon. My name is A.E. Sloan. I'm a veterinarian and a cattle operator in Ventura County. I serve in the leadership of California at Cattlemen's Association as Chair of the CAL Health Committee and I also have an appointment to the Governor's Cattle Disease Task Force as an advisor to the animal health branch of CDFA.

I own and manage a cattle ranch in Ventura County. My family has been in Ventura and Los Angeles County since 1896 owning and operating cattle operations. I am a third generation of California cattlemen to work these lands, and there are two more generations waiting if possible. All that having been said, I go by Bud, and I'm very happy to be here.

I would like to applaud the Department for taking a proactive stance in looking to the future of agriculture, which I hope serves as a reminder to all that California's number one economic driver isn't tourism or computer chips but rather the industry that produces food and fiber for our nation and increasingly the world.

Looking to the future, it can be difficult,
and as we've seen for generations, the only thing that remains constant in agriculture is that things always continually change. The state's cattle industry is no exception. Since the arriving of Portola and the Spanish, ranches and cattle herds have been a huge part of the dynamic agriculture industry we know today. The only certainty has been change itself. We've all grown accustomed to change.

What is my vision for agriculture by 2030?

Cattle ranchers own or manage nearly 30 million acres in California, a fact that demonstrates the prevalence of the industry and underscores the importance of maintaining ranching families to provide stewardship and economic support for our state's land and water resources, wildlife and the communities. 22 years from now, I hope California agriculture and California's beef industry in particular will remain world leaders in innovation and production of safe and healthy products.

There is a continuing trend toward a global marketplace and increasing demands for our products overseas as well as foreign investment in cattle processing facilities in the U.S. California's producers will be raising beef not just for the United States but for hungry consumers all over the world.

A positive vision for the future includes a
strong, mature industry that is recognized outside of agriculture for the many benefits it provides to California and the nation. While at times it is tempting to look for a roll back to a simpler operating environment, but continued off-farm demographic changes and California's established and seemingly much relished role as world leaders and regulatory development make that scenario rather unlikely, as we can fully expect in 2030 to remain part of the world's foremost regulatory environmental regime.

Part of a vision for a successful industry in 2030, however, includes more certainty in the production environment, more economically and regulatory-wise. This will allow producers to focus on the business at hand rather than concerns about decisions made in government that limit the availability of land and water resources upon which food production demands.

Inherent in that is recognized the fact that California law dictates standards far beyond that required for commodity production. Because of the many additional steps and precautions taken in production in California, food products from our state are of the highest quality in the world that are produced at an economic disadvantage.

What is the biggest challenge in achieving that vision? The biggest hurdle to achieving this vision is
the lack of understanding by the average person of the challenges of agriculture and the value of our safe, stable and affordable food supply. Improved awareness from the general public will be the only thing that stems attacks from interest groups on family farms and ranches that make it significantly more difficult to operate a successful business here in comparison to neighboring states or other countries.

The initiative on the November ballot attempting to dictate animal husbandry and animal care is an example of special interest groups challenging science and university developed and approved husbandry practices with emotionally-charged distortions of what is and is not human and ethical treatment.

Education of the public as to just where their food and fiber comes from is not just convenient or helpful, it is a must. The general public must understand us in order to appreciate us. There are few of us and so many of them.

Another significant challenge is the current trend in California relative to land and water use and conversion. Most of the emphasis appears to be towards development and municipal uses as well as production of high-value crops. Livestock production ceases to be the highest value use of many parcels of lands throughout the
Livestock production is pushed to the fringes in lieu of grapes, grains and other high-value crops and houses now occupying historic rangeland. California's beef cattle industry is working now with a broad group of stakeholders through the California Range Conservation Coalition.

I have a ton more. I tried to read as fast as I could, but I just can't get through it. I really appreciate your time. Basically we are a regulatory environment that is very restrictive, land use environment that is very restrictive, and we need more education of our general public. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Bud.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Bud. Bud, do we have a copy of your comments?

MR. SLOAN: You bet.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 10, Emily Ayala. Up next will be speaker 11, Margie Bartels.

MS. AYALA: Good afternoon, and thank you for having us and thank you for coming.

I'm a fifth-generation farmer in the Ojai valley. My family grows over 30 varieties of citrus; we're very diversified on a small amount of land. I often, when I got your message about this meeting, I wondered if my
grandfather had as many doubts and fears about the future as I do now.

There's a lot of doubts for small farmers in terms of marketing, competition, fuel prices, land regulation, it goes on and on. In order to be competitive, I envision California agriculture, we need to be focused on very high quality that encompasses food safety as well as something that seems to have been forgotten quite often, which is flavor. I think the state could and feds could review market standards. I think it's very depressing to go a farmers' market here in California, let alone visit friends back east whose children say, oh, I don't eat oranges, they don't taste good. That's really sad. California grows some of the best citrus in the world. Everyone in this nation should love fruit. And on that note, we should have Valencia oranges and strawberries out there on the tables, not cookies.

Some other issues that I think we really need to focus on, exotic pest exclusion and detection is just key right now. We've got the Citrus Psyllid down in Tijuana, and the Citrus Research Board is really focusing on trying to keep that out. That will really be a nail in the coffin for California citrus, especially small growers such as myself.
I'd like to see the state really encourage entities such as the University of California and Citrus Research Board. They do great work, and we really need to keep working with them.

What else? Another thing, as a small farm I'd like to see the state really help direct marketing opportunities. I encourage -- we get about a third of our income through farmers' markets. It's an awful lot of work. And some of the oversight of certified farmers' markets seems to be falling apart right now. I'd like to see more focus on trying to get farmers' markets functioning and functioning properly, not turning into swap meets.

And also for direct marketing, I think there's a lot of opportunity for institutional food purchasing, whether it be through our schools, which unfortunately don't have a budget right -- or have limited funds, but also our hospitals and prison systems, places like that. If we get our children especially to look for strawberries and oranges and not cookies, I think that's going to be great for the future of California agriculture.

Basically my sort of key goal right now, I think it's sad as a nation, I think we really need to provide food and clothes for ourselves and not rely on exports like we are right now for our fuel. We need to be able to
feed and clothe ourselves as a nation.

So thank you for having us.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 11, Margie Bartels.

Up next will be speaker 12, Andy Calderwood.

MS. BARTELS: Hi. My name is Margie Bartels, and my sister Sally and I farm about 75 acres of mostly Valencia oranges in Bardsdale, and we custom farm another 70 acres for family and neighbors there who are third-generation farmers.

I'm presenting my statement today on behalf of my sister and myself and on the members of the Ventura County Chapter of the California Women for Agriculture.

Here are some things we hope to see happening in California agriculture in 2030: Widespread consumer and government support of family farms. A majority of consumers buying and eating locally. More farmers' markets and CSAs, community supported agriculture. Gardens and salad bars will be standard in schools, hospitals, and other institutions. Less burdensome government regulation of farms. Industry-wide practices implemented by the farming community to ensure food safety. A stable, steady labor supply. Preservation of prime agricultural land by conservation easements and local development restrictions. Availability of water at
a reasonable price. An improved and more consistent invasive pest detection and exclusion system. No one in California going hungry, ever.

The biggest challenge in achieving this vision is lack of public and government support. Very few people today have a direct connection to a farm. Their perception of a farmer may be old fashioned and outdated. Urban children do not know where their food comes from. People often take for granted the abundant supply of food that is readily available to them year round. While they appreciate the beauty of the farm landscape, they forget that that is a farmers' family business and that their support is essential to that farmers' success.

Government entities must stop the endless regulation of farming and the wrangling over immigration. Farmers have long been seen as good stewards of the land and do not need constant government oversight of their activities. Debate over the legality or morality of illegal immigration will undoubtedly continue, but government must assure farmers of a reliable supply of labor.

Government must see that water sources and supplies are protected and preserved for agriculture in California. Local governments must strictly limit development of prime farmland. Government must stand up
to minority groups with their own agenda and counter their anti-agriculture theories with sound science. Government must make protection and promotion of agriculture a priority.

In 2030 public perception of agriculture will be extremely positive. Agriculture will be key in the going-green movement. Californians will be more educated about where their food comes from and most everyone will buy and eat locally. Californians will be healthier and fitter as more fresh fruits and vegetables are incorporated into everyone's diet.

Farmers, using the latest technology, will be more productive and will achieve higher yields while using best management practices on their land. The contribution made by agriculture to our state will be higher than ever providing a safe, abundant, affordable food supply and thousands of jobs throughout the state.

The must-have in an ag vision for California is balance. California must balance its desire for growth and development with its need for a safe and locally-produced food supply. California must balance competing interests who would impose unfair restrictions on farms with implementing fair and reasonable legal requirements.

California must balance support of large
corporate farms with support of small family farms.
California must balance support of traditional
conventional farms with support of sustainable organic
farms. California must balance the needs of fish with the
needs of people when deciding where to allocate water
resources. California must balance its desire to trade
with and support economies of other states and nations
with its primary responsibility to provide for the needs
of its own citizens.

California's support of agriculture is crucial to
the long-term prosperity of our state. Remember, as it
says on the bumper sticker of our farm truck, no farms, no
food.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 12, Andy Calderwood.

Then we'll go to speaker 13, Steve Barnard.

MR. CALDERWOOD: Thanks for allowing me to speak.
I'm Andy Calderwood. I'm with the Ag Commissioner's
office here in Ventura County, but don't take any of my
comments as representing the ag commission.

First of all, I would like to imagine that we
have an honest farm worker policy, one which doesn't
exploit a flood of desperate labor from foreign nations.
Anything which requires a flood of economically-displaced
refugees, essentially, is in itself not sustainable. We have to work toward developing a policy which fairly compensates workers for the work that they do.

I think it's important to remind ourselves why we're engaged in this visioning process in the first place. There is a tremendous need for change right now; I think that's why you guys have all convened this mission. We're presiding now over the most radical change the world has ever known, in at least the last few hundred million years. If you ever thought what it looked like to be at the end of one geologic epoch and the dawn of a new one, this is what it looks like right now.

There's a growing consensus of geologists who declare that the Holocene Epoch, the one that began with the end of the last ice age, is over and we're now in a new geologic epoch; that if people were to look at the strata millions of years from now, they would find a sharp line where we are right now, we've changed the world so radically. If current trends aren't reversed, we'll be presiding over probably the worst mass extinction since the great extinction of the Permien, which was before the time of the dinosaurs.

So I think -- I like the themes in your agricultural vision, and I'm not addressing a lot of the things that are ably covered there or covered by people
who have spoken already.

I think we do kind of need to address the 400-pound gorilla in the room, which didn't seem to be addressed in the visioning statement, and that is overpopulation. Anything that we do in increasing efficiencies and improving the cleanliness, reducing pollution of any of the activities we take will be swamped by unfettered population growth. At some point we have to say what is the population that the planet can manage and then work toward achieving that. We could never have sustainability with the unsustained population growth.

I'll leave my comments there.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you very much.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 13, Steve Barnard.

And after Steve Barnard we will have Sandy Curwood, Karen Schmidt and Phil McGrath.

MR. BARNARD: A.G. and Al and Dave and Don, and Luawanna and Tom and the rest of the Board, thank you for coming to Oxnard, and most of all, thank you for your time, effort and expertise in putting together a long-term plan for California agriculture.

My vision for California agriculture 2030, let's start by looking back to where we've been. Here in Ventura County, lima beans, walnuts and sugar beets

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dominated the early 1900s, then came vegetables and

citrus. Now we have thousands of acres of strawberries,
avocados, sod, raspberries, and hot houses with citrus and
vegetables on the decline. Why is this? Well, it has to
do with cost, revenue, and competition. Unless revenues
exceed costs, most of the time we are not sustainable. So
things change.

Looking ahead, California agriculture will be
competing with more people for less water. This is the
number one challenge for California agriculture. Since
the solution is a long-term process, we need more storage
and a more efficient, environmentally-friendly system of
transferring water; in other words, we need a system that
can't be shut down due to environmental issues and
politics. If we can go to the moon, I am certain we can
keep the Smelt out of the pumps. This makes a little bit
of sense.

The labor issue could be fixed easily and quickly
with some vision and common sense. We need to leave the
emotions at home.

Today California is a leader in the world food
production; but at least in products with which I am
familiar, avocados and asparagus, there are a lot of
highly-educated, well-financed, aggressive, state-of-the-
art competition coming out of South America. Their
production has higher yields, lower costs, and most of all they have a government that actually wants them to flourish, very unlike here.

Just look at the state legislator bills submitted every year that have a direct impact on California agriculture. In most cases, the people voting, i.e., the legislators, have no idea what they're voting on. Bottom line, in order to get an efficient and sufficient water system, a workable and fair guest worker program, and legislators that understand the business, we need a public relations plan that tells our story, how much we contribute to the economy, how we are stewards of the land, that we are the ultimate environmentalist, how our business pulls CO2 out of the atmosphere, and how we provide safe, healthy and nutritious food right here at home.

We don't want to be like the oil industry where they have been run out of town and now the populous is asking, what happened? We have a great story to tell, but we are getting outmaneuvered in addition to being severely outnumbered. We need to play offense.

Thank you for your time and good luck.

FACILITATOR PENNY: So next up we have Sandy Curwood, then Karen Schmidt, and then Phil McGrath.

MS. SCHMIDT: Good afternoon, and thank you for
the opportunity to speak to you today. I am Karen Schmidt, Executive Director of an environmental organization here in Ventura County called Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources, or SOAR. With me are Sandy Curwood, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at the Ventura Unified School District, and Phil McGrath of McGrath Family Farms.

MR. McGRATH: Hello. Welcome to Oxnard. I know you're getting an earful.

We are here to speak on behalf of the Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance, of which all here are members and many more in this audience have been or are. The Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance is a ten-year-old coalition of growers, environmentalists, labor advocates, civic leaders, and dedicated to making sure that farming remains viable in Ventura County in perpetuity.

MS. CURWOOD: Two key guiding principles underpin our work and are fundamental to our vision for the future of agriculture in Ventura County and the state.

One, all people across generations are linked to each other and interdependent through our social, ecological and economic systems and are accountable for the effects of our actions on each other and our future generations. We must ensure that our actions today do not degrade the earth's resources, including soil, air and...
water and we do not impede the ability of the future
generations to thrive.

Our list of must-haves for a California ag vision
is best summarized in an AFA position paper entitled, "A
Community of Good Stewards, Building a Sustainable Food
System in Ventura County," the full text of which is
available on our website at www.agfuturesalliance.org
along with more detailed recommendations on issues from
pesticide use to land use and farm worker housing and
health.

MR. McGRATH: Our goals are echoed in the Roots
of Change goals that have already been presented to you
with some of our current and former members participating
and formulating. We particularly share a belief in the
importance of collaborative partnerships to achieve
sustainability in agriculture and field systems, to
protect and restore strategic farmland, and reward farmers
for their conservation services, to develop regional
supply, purchasing, and distribution infrastructure, and
build regional identity systems for food to support new
and existing Farm To School programs, to re-link urban and
rural communities, to make healthy food available and
accessible to low-income populations, and to provide basic
security, health care, housing and meaningful livelihoods
for all food and farm workers.
MS. CURWOOD: AFA members believe that responsibility for maintaining the vitality of our agriculture and our food systems is shared by farmers, policy makers and consumers alike. Acting on this belief, we developed a set of guidelines and goals for each of these community partners.

MS. SCHMIDT: Consumers influence farming's future by the way they spend their food dollars and through their decisions at the ballot box. Some of the actions consumers can take to support agriculture include urging retailers to stock locally and sustainably farm products, buying directly from producers, being willing to pay more for locally-grown farm products, supporting political candidates and policies that reinforce farming's viability and opposing those that would undermine it, and supporting farm worker housing.

MR. McGRATH: For farming to remain healthy, the industry must respect the ecological integrity of the resource base and operate in harmony with a broader community. There was a time this community was defined by ag. This community now is defining agriculture, and that's why you're all here.

 Farmers can steward their resources and the environment and forge stronger links with their urban neighbors by taking these other actions; reducing or
eliminating the use of potentially harmful materials,
using renewable energy sources whenever possible,
maximizing efficiency of water, providing labeling
information about where and under what conditions products
were grown, ensuring safe and equitable working conditions
for farm workers.

MS. CURWOOD: Elected representatives who set
public policy affect farming through their decisions
regarding urban boundaries, development, and
transportation projects, zoning and other regulations.

Some of the policies that can reinforce agriculture's
viability and sustainability include confining development
within designated urban boundaries, supporting farm worker
housing, requiring developers to create buffer zones
between urban use and neighboring farms, avoiding prime
farmland when siting schools, jails, and other public
facilities, and not extending or expanding transportation
corridors across agricultural land.

MS. SCHMIDT: We believe that our community,
business, and state leaders need to map out a bold and
inspiring vision for the future of agriculture and food
systems and to develop market-based strategies to achieve
that vision that have been honed against a range of
what-if scenarios that examine the possibility. Many
would argue the inevitability that our society and economy
in 2030 will look significantly different from today as a result of climate change, water scarcity and rising energy costs.

We wish you great success in your efforts and stand ready to help you in any way that we can. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Up next would be speaker 16, Scott Deardorff.

And let me check in with right now with Secretary Kawamura and President Montna.

We're approximately through your time limit and halfway through your list. Do you have any input about breaks or would you like to continue?

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: I think we'd like to continue.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Continue. Let's go to 20 and then see, maybe take a short break at 20, just five minutes. Okay?

FACILITATOR PENNY: And I'll check back in with you after speaker 20.

Up next is speaker 16, Scott Deardorff. Up after that will be Nancy Stehle.

MR. SCOTT DEARDORFF: Hi. My name is Scott Deardorff, fourth-generation family farm here in Oxnard.
And it's no coincidence that my name is spelled the same as Tom's.

You know, the word "sustainable," you've heard a lot about it today, I'm sure you've heard a lot about it on your travels up and down the state; and I wouldn't say it's a new buzz word, but it's definitely a buzz word that's getting more and more traction. Firms want to be identified as sustainable, they want their products to be identified as sustainable. I think that's to differentiate themselves from other products on the market. But since everyone's using that, I think we're all buying sustainable and consuming sustainable products, at the least we're trying to.

I think CDFA's mission here and their mission on their vision tour is to create and look for a vision of creating a sustainable agricultural industry in California. And being that that's a buzz word that's been out there a lot these days, there's lots of pressure to define sustainable and create a label or whatever you want to call it to have a hard definition for the word "sustainable" from educational or academic societies and American National Standards Institute, everyone's looking to define "sustainable."

In our company, in our family farm we look at sustainability as a journey, it's a never-ending journey,
there's no defined definition for it. We're always striving to be more sustainable every day.

And we try to follow the three Ps, people, planet and profit. And when I talk about people, I mean the social component, providing adequate wages, fair wages, access to affordable health care, farm worker safety and housing. And on the planet side, of course that's the environmental side. Looking at efficiencies to lower our impact on resources, to what we call soft farming, lower impact and use of harsh chemicals and also organic farming.

And to me, the basis of sustainability is the third P, which is profitability. Without profitability you can't support the other components of sustainability. And to be more profitable, we're always looking to get the highest prices for our commodities through marketing and through new markets around the world and exporting.

And there are also three, I believe, responsible parties to create a sustainable agriculture or sustainable industry. Number one being, of course, the farmer or the producer has a responsibility to balance those three Ps and keep them in balance and be profitable so that we can be sustainable in the future. But I also think the consumer has a huge responsibility in creating a sustainable industry. They need the support of education
to make intelligent choices at the supermarket about buying sustainable products, and I think CDFA can help with that education. And also, and more importantly today, and that's your role, being the government, I think that's the third leg of creating sustainable agriculture and the third responsible party.

And I think the government and CDFA in particular can encourage to the extent possible fair and comprehensive immigration reform policies. I know this is more of a national issue than a state issue, but I think the more we can voice our opinions and have an impact on that, the better we as a state will be in agriculture. And also to advocate for a reliable and high quality water supply.

Here in Ventura County we have the irrigated agricultural lands group, which is funded by the farmers here in Ventura County, to monitor, self-monitor if you will, our runoff here from our farmland. So agriculture is paying a cost for that right now. And I think the CDFA can help in continuing high quality water but limiting to the extent possible the financial impact on farmers and making sure that the high quality water that is also there for consumers, they pay their fair share on that.

Also, land use. I can't think of a more high-pressure land use, high-cost land use area than
California. With the increased pressure to develop our land, we need fair and comprehensive land use policies, and to that extent, to what extent CDFA can do on that, well, maybe helping create incentives.

And probably more of a national issue, but that would be the death tax issue, which makes it extremely hard, especially for California farmers, to pass on their land to the next generation with our high land cost compared to other states.

CDFA can also monitor proposed legislation and policy and give unbiased and timely information to the policy makers, make sure they have the facts in front of them before they make those decisions.

One last thing before I go, I know my time is almost up, but that is on the notion of research and development. I think that's a huge component, that California needs to stay competitive in the industry for years to come, through productivity. We're trying to feed more people with less ground, mechanization so we don't have to rely so much on foreign labor to come over here and help us; but also, most importantly, especially with recent events, and that's food safety. I think, you know, we're all pretty familiar with what's happened with the tomato industry, and being a tomato grower, that's near and dear to our hearts, and the misinformation and the
inaccuracies that happen can be detrimental to an
industry, let alone the state.

So I think the more active role CDFA can play in
food safety, research and development and education, that
would help California agriculture. Thanks.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Scott.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up, speaker 17, Nancy
Stehle. After that will be speaker 18, Chris Sayer.

MS. STEHLE: Good afternoon. Thank you very much
for this opportunity to address this group. My name is
Nancy Stehle. I am a board member of Habitat for Humanity
Ventura County and also a member of the House Farm Workers
Task Force here in the county.

My concern is adequate housing for farm workers,
an issue which has been raised by a number of the other
speakers before me. Habitat for Humanity of Ventura
County has been building homes here in Ventura County for
25 years with low-income families. Many of our 44
homeowners are farm workers. Before moving into a Habitat
home, many of our families were living in garages, six
family members to a one-bedroom apartment, and even in
cars. We had one family with a young child who was living
in a car for six months. Many more families still live in
such situations, and I believe this is unacceptable.
I believe a must-have for agriculture is adequate farm worker housing. Some of the hurdles to providing housing are zoning restrictions, density restrictions, inadequate funding, lengthy permit processing, burdensome site improvement requirements, and of course, the ever with us NIMBY attitude.

By 2030, all farm workers -- my vision of 2030 would be all farm workers will be housed in adequate housing, both either rental or home ownership.

Thank you for this opportunity.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Nancy.
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 18, Chris Sayer. And then next will be speaker 19, Sonia Flores.
MR. SAYER: Mr. Secretary, Members of the Board, thank you for coming down to Oxnard this afternoon. I'm proud to be a fifth-generation farmer in Ventura County. We grow avocados and citrus today, but our family operation dates back to when dry farmed lima beans were a staple of the Ventura economy. We've seen many changes and many crops, but we've continued to evolve. To my mind, this is the essence of sustainable agriculture.

Much will be said today about the need for supporting small farms. In no area is a small farm at a greater disadvantage to large competitors than in
regulatory compliance. When a single set of shoulders has to bear the weight, the burden gets heavy. If it is the goal of our policies not to have small farmers choose to lay that burden down, we must examine the load.

As these listening sessions give way to policy formulation, let us consider chipping away at the layers of policy that exist already. Some were problematic already, and others may become contrary to the newer policies adopted to lead to our 2030 vision. I hope we will seek good policy rather than simply more policy.

Agricultural policy has tended to favor large producers and a small range of crops for global distribution. You may hear advocates tell you that the proper role for policy is to favor the opposite end of the spectrum, very small, highly-diversified farms serving local markets. I ask you to recognize they're replacing one extreme with the other. That sell works in politics, economics or any other field of human activity. Let's apply the concept of biodiversity to the economics of farming. Just as we now recognize that a range of species must inhabit a given habitat for a healthy environment, a variety of farms makes for a healthy farm economy.

With Ventura county's diversity of crops, there's not a day in the year that something isn't being harvested and sent to market. Our large operations are essential to
maintain a healthy population of equipment dealers and
service providers. Mid-size family farmers often provide
much of the leadership, and local co-ops and associations.
Small farms help to sustain the agricultural service
economy and often pioneer specialty crops while feeding
local markets. There's room for them all. We need them
all. Our vision should embrace them all.

Now, for the topic of local and regional food.
There is currently a great deal of enthusiasm for this
approach, and I happily support efforts to greatly
strengthen this aspect of our food system; but as we look
to create policy, we must ask how local should we be? To
be sure we could do more, only five to ten percent of food
going to local consumption could yield a great reduction
in the amount of energy used for transportation and of
foods for local economies. What's the right amount of
local food? Is it 10 percent? 30? 80 percent? I don't
have the answer for you other than to suggest that there
is a point beyond which we're not increasing diversity
opportunities for growers and consumers, we're restricting
them. Be it again, the antidote to extreme globalization
is not extreme localization.

To look at the broader view for a moment, there
is a nutritional crisis all over our country, and
California agriculture has the ability to deliver
nutritional produce throughout the year. It is appropriate both ethically and economically that we do so. Changes in policy should recognize that agriculture is a source of economic strength for California and a resource for our nation.

This state was built with the labor of those seeking a better life through hard work. And for all our faults and sins along the way, our state and country have been the greatest generators of wealth, freedom and human happiness the world has ever seen. Today the energy to continue this growth comes not from the east but from the south. California must lead the way to a practical, workable, immigration reform. The people who travel here seek work and economic opportunity, and that is what we have to offer. A well-managed border is within the national interest of both the United States and Mexico. California stands to gain if we enact meaningful reform, but no state stands to suffer more if we fail.

I'd like to also address the issue of invasive pests, Light Brown Apple Moth and the newly arrived Asian Citrus Psyllid, which clearly draw some attention, but to keep under my timeframe, I'll go straight to the close.

I often hear it said that we must have a common vision of the future and creativity and innovation will be necessary for success. But if innovation and creativity
are the solution to the problems of our food system, then
is a common vision the meaningful goal? Has genuine
innovation ever emerged from within a broadly-held common
vision, or has it been the fringe view, the uncommon
vision that's been the origin of innovation? History is
filled with the creative souls who have found new ways to
accomplish what was thought to be impossible.

Our role here today is not to define how the
system of 2030 will look; today we begin to define the
possibilities, clearly we must leave them open. We cannot
expect to find the results we seek by limiting our
options.

I'm reminded that here in Ventura County where
we're lucky to have people working on innovative Farm To
School programs, institutional and policy obstacles
prevent them from fully realizing the potential of these
programs. Will our new policies set them free? I hope
so.

I'm pleased that CDFA's recognizing these issues.

Again, Mr. Secretary, I thank you for your time.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Chris.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up, we have speaker 19,
Sonia Flores, and then we'll have speaker 20, Lauro
Barajas.

MS. FLORES: Hello. My name is Sonia Flores.
I'm the coordinator of House Farm Workers, a project of the Ag Futures Alliance Farm Worker Housing Task Force that was founded in 2004. Our organization includes broad-based representation from growers, leaders in ag, civic groups such as the League of Women Voters, and faith-based groups such as VC Clue as well as concerned citizens.

We support and promote the provision of safe, decent and affordable housing for farm workers in Ventura County. This objective is accomplished through community education, advocacy and linking of resources. Here are a few statistics: According to the HUD Fair Market Rents Report for 2007, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Ventura County is $1,525 per month. That works out to $18,300 per year just to rent an apartment. The median-priced single-family home in 2007 costs $572,000 to buy. It is difficult to nearly impossible for the average citizen of Ventura County to rent a house, let alone purchase one. How much harder is it for a farm worker who on average earns an estimated $17,000 per year?

The majority of farm workers are living in substandard conditions and are often forced to live with two, three or more families in a single-family house just to make ends meet. This is unacceptable.

We are a community that prides itself on being an
agricultural community, but the fact is that local
agriculture would not survive without both the farmer and
farm worker who strive to keep it going. Without a doubt,
one of the must-haves in an ag vision for California is
increased funding for the construction of new farm worker
housing projects. We must recognize that farm workers are
truly the backbone of the agricultural industry and we
must support at every level the creation of safe housing
for these workers and their families.

Thank you. And I also have brochures that talk
about our organization.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 20, Lauro Barajas.

And then that's when I was going to --

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Just keep going.
FACILITATOR PENNY: Keep going?
SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Just keep going.
PRESIDENT MONTNA: Yeah.
FACILITATOR PENNY: All right. So after speaker
20 we'll have speaker 21, Fred Klose.

MR. BARAJAS: My name is Lauro Barajas, and I
work for United Farm Workers. And today I come to talk in
favor of the growers. I'm not usually really do this, but
I think it's time.

And my vision for 2030, it's hopefully we can eat
more local-grown fruits, vegetables, the food we consume.
I feel really good in this time when I can go to the store
and buy California grown peaches, nectarines, grapes;
they're so good. I'm tired of Chilean fruits and
vegetables, especially peaches and nectarines. But I
think the growers, they need the support of the government
to survive. And I think it's pretty hard for them to
continue in the business.

I was pretty upset with Mexican government
because just to give you an example, five, ten years ago
they was importing more than 60 percent of corn to feed
the people. That's a shame, isn't it? So the problem is
every year we have kind of the same. Because we can see
more people -- more things that more fruit, vegetables,
whatever, we consume coming from other parts of the world.
So in April I went to Michoacan, Mexico. You
know, when I started going to the fields and I start
looking at a lot of strawberries and blueberries, so I
thought I was in Oxnard, not in Michoacan. So I went to a
place where they were filling up these big trucks. They
use the labor, cheap labor, indigenous there, bring it
here. That's the problem we have.

And that when I said that it's pretty difficult
to continue surviving in agriculture, the government don't
really step on it and put some clear rules
So basically we need growers and farm workers. Without two of them, we're in trouble. We need to depend on what China wants to do with the food we wanted to consume. And just compare when you eat Chilean peach and California peach; it's nothing to compare.

So I have the same concerns as the rest of the other speakers about housing for farm workers, because we have two issues here, we don't have enough, and farm workers, they are decent people, I'm one of them, but there's not enough housing, and it's pretty expensive. And we need the farm workers living here because they need to harvest here. So the business (unintelligible) the transportation, that (unintelligible) farm workers, and I finish with this: I think it's pretty a shame that United States use the farm workers to feed the nation, but we're not providing the basic rights.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 21, Fred Klose. And then we'll have speaker 22, Gail Weller-Brown.

MR. KLOSE: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the Board, A.G., good to see you. I'm very glad to be here today, particularly since I was in Sacramento.
yesterday and was given a great reason to come down here
and get out of the smoke up there.

I actually sat through the Sacramento session a
couple of weeks ago, and I kind of came in too late, so I
pulled number 75 or something like that and would have had
to stay there till midnight before I got on, so I decided
I'd come to Oxnard.

I'm going to kind of run through the points on
what is my ag vision for California, starting with the
first point. I think pretty much my vision, as you
probably have heard from everybody else, is kind of for a
healthy, vibrant California agriculture, you know, in some
fashion. Now, what's my definition of a healthy, vibrant
California agriculture? I kind of look around the world
and I say, you know, what should we be looking at? And I
hit upon France. And I'll tell you why France. France
has a government that rigorously supports and defends its
agriculture and its farmers. It has a population that
strongly believes in the value of French agriculture to
society, and that same population knows that French
products are the best in the world.

There's also a world market out there that agrees
with them, in that the world believes that French products
are the best in the world. And France is recognized
worldwide for its cuisine and also as a desirable tourist
destination for people that want to go hang out in the
south of France and drink wine and eat nice cheese.
That's where you go. So I thought, you know, France may
have some other things going against it, but as a model
for California agriculture, I think we have -- we could do
worse.

Next I'd like to focus my comments on the second
and the fourth question and kind of skip over the public
perception part of it.

What kind of challenges are we going to -- do we
see right now in order to kind of meet our goal of getting
to be France or getting to be French? And I would have to
say that probably one of the biggest challenges we face
now is the globalization of the food trade and how we as
California agriculture fit into the globalization of the
food trade.

As we all know, the bulwark of California ag
products are what we call the specialty crops. These
specialty crops developed in California in what I would
call a closed system, where California supplied the nation
with fresh fruits and vegetables in somewhat of a vacuum.
There was not a lot of competition coming from overseas.
In fact, we haven't really, except for bananas, we haven't
seen much in the way of fresh product competition up until
the early nineties.
Now, most of the world operated at a subsistence level. You know, all of these Chile -- we heard the previous gentleman talking about Chilean nectarines; in the eighties it was running at a subsistence level. They were not producing fruits and vegetables to export, they were trying to kind of grow a little bit of corn to feed themselves. Today that's all changed, we're in a completely different environment.

I heard one of the previous speakers talking about, you know, the geologic zones; and I think we're in a new geologic zone. Today there are many, many competitors, whereas before we didn't have those competitors. And these competitors are both here in the United States, I mean, talk to a garlic grower, or in some of our export markets.

Let me give you an example of the Japanese avocado market. If anybody here has any experience with avocados, the California Avocado Commission built the Japanese avocado market. The Japanese did not eat avocados prior to the California Avocado Commission going in there and basically teaching them how to eat avocados. Today it's a very large market for avocados, but last year, you know how many avocados we shipped? Zero. No recorded shipments of avocados to Japan. They were all Mexican avocados because the Mexicans came in after the
California Avocado Commission built the market and brought into it cheap, cheap product.

Now, some of these changes are inevitable, others are a result of U.S. trade policy that favors midwest grains at the expense of specialty crops. Nearly all of the free trade agreements that this country has entered into have been with countries with low labor costs, which favor, as we know, specialty crops.

I'll move on, I'm running out of time. I would just like to kind of move on to the next one, you got my point.

But the problem that we have in California is that we do not have a statewide way of dealing with these free trade agreements. How do we position California in the world market? We're subject to Washington D.C. and what Washington D.C. thinks we should be as opposed to what we as California agriculture thinks we should be.

So I think I'll just leave it at that. Thank you all for your time.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Fred.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks, Fred.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up is speaker 22, Gail Weller-Brown. And next after that will be Moira Beery.

MS. WELLER-BROWN: Hi. My name is Gail Weller-Brown. I'm the convener of the Oxnard Farm Worker
Housing Group. We support and promote the provision of safe, decent, affordable housing for farm workers in Oxnard, including the building of new housing and upgrading or preserving of existing housing. We do this through community education, advocacy, and linking groups that address farm worker issues, housing issues.

I'm only addressing the must-have in the ag vision for California.

In order to ensure that agriculture continues in our community and that the farm workers have access to housing that is safe, decent and affordable, we've been urging Oxnard to do its part by changing the zoning to allow the development of farm worker housing on smaller parcels and substandard lots. Money needs to be committed to ensure that this development takes place. As Sonia mentioned before, farm workers earn an average of $17,000 a year. We're doing everything as community members to deal with this issue.

These people aren't strangers, they're people with hearts and souls; most important, they live in our city, they have children in our schools and they work extremely hard to make a living. And they need a decent place to live.

And I know Delaney mentioned this film that she's produced, and if you would be willing to watch it, I would
be willing to buy it. It's short and it's very much to
the point. So if you have the time to watch it, I'd be
very happy to buy a copy for you.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 23, Moira Beery. And
then we'll go to speaker 24, and I don't know if it's Jan
or Jan Berk.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Carolyn, maybe the Board needs
to return a phone call or stretch a leg. Feel free to
because we're going to go right through in respect to our
audience's time. So thank you.

MS. BEERY: Hi. My name is Moira Beery, and I'm
the California Farm To School Program Coordinator at the
Center for Food and Justice. And we're based at
Occidental College in Los Angeles.

My vision for agriculture in California would be
a system that mandates sustainability in agriculture and
also one that relies more heavily on smaller scale
agriculture and one that focuses on the food needs of
Californians. And specifically to that end, I'm here to
advocate for Farm To School programs. And one thing that
I think we really need here in California is a statewide
 coordinator for Farm To School that's housed at the
Department of Food and Agriculture. I would like to see
Farm To School become part of the mission of CDFA.

I also think we really need higher meal reimbursement rates for school lunches and school meals, and specifically reimbursements that can be used to buy locally grown food.

We also need policies that allow schools to have a preference to buy locally-grown foods so that they can take part in Farm To School programs.

Some of the challenges to achieving this would be funding for smaller agriculture and also for direct marketing opportunities for farmers and for farmers' markets. We really need to think about restructuring our ag economy to allow space for smaller agriculture, which is left out of conventional food distribution systems. And we also really need to focus on education and awareness around agriculture.

I work in Los Angeles, and I'm really dumfounded by how kids know almost nothing about agriculture. And I think so much of this could be achieved through Farm To School programs with the marriage of highlighting locally-grown foods in the cafeteria and then following that up with nutrition education and ag education in the classroom.

Farm To School presents really good opportunities to teach people about where their food comes from and why
that's important. Farm To School has been shown to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among students. It's also a great opportunity for farmers to participate in direct marketing opportunities. And at the root of it, it just really makes sense for California food to go to California's kids.

I would really like to see greater collaboration between CDFA and the Department of Education, which administers the School Lunch Program. I think for Farm to Schools to grow, we also need rules that will allow and facilitate institutions to buy from farmers' markets. And we need greater integration with existing distribution infrastructure, such as the Department of Defense system.

And I think that a staff person at CDFA to focus on Farm To School could really help to achieve some of these goals. California has been the leader in Farm To School for the last ten years, but some of our neighboring states like Oregon and Washington have recently passed policies to support Farm To School and they do have statewide staff people that are focused on Farm To School; and I think that California needs to now follow in their footsteps so that more farmers and more schools can take part in Farm To School.

Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.
FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up we have Jan Berk, speaker 24. And the we have speaker 25, Jim Churchill.

MS. BERK: My name is Jan Berk, not Jan, but my son would love to be --

FACILITATOR PENNY: Sorry.

MS. BERK: No, that's okay. I've been called that many times, it's not a problem.

I'm with San Miguel Produce. I'm wearing a few hats here actually today. My partner, Roy Ishimori, is a third-generation farmer here in southern California. San Miguel's been here in Ventura County, Oxnard, for about 30-some years. I'm also wearing a hat of the Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement Board. I serve on that board as well as the 31st DAA. And I'm on the Ventura County Fair Board. So I'm just going to kind of talk about a couple of different things.

A lot has been mentioned here today. I brought a whole speech, and I think I'm going to just kind of summarize some of what I've heard, try to reiterate that, and talk a little bit about where I think we -- some of the things I think are important to a couple of the organizations that I serve on and us as a farming and grower processor and shipper here in Ventura County.

Over the next decade California agriculture will continue to face many challenges. You've heard a lot of
them today; sustainability has been mentioned many times, globalization has been mentioned many times, labor has been mentioned many times. There's a lot of different issues that we face, and obviously you're going to play a role, and we're all going to play a role in addressing those issues and how we get the right resources to get our arms around those is very critical.

And, you know, farmers in general and the ag industry in general is very independent. They're very resourceful. They're very capable of getting their arms around issues and programs and making change. The Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement is obviously one of those good examples where here was a very critical issue, the Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement has quickly got their arms around that and has actually started to make some change. There's no doubt that that still needs to evolve and it probably needs to evolve even further throughout the entire United States, but it's a start.

And as we face as an industry additional issues, we need to look at the resources that we currently have and try to pool those in a positive and meaningful way to find the right solutions to move forward.

One of the challenges that I see is that as an industry, agriculture is the number one industry here in California. You've heard the globalization and there's a
lot of outsourcing, how many farmers are either continuing to shut or move their operations either in part or in total outside of the -- outside of the United States even, or outside of these states. That's a challenge that we face. We face that as an industry as well as as a state with other businesses. We're always seeking and chasing after businesses to come, we spend billions of dollars recruiting businesses from all over the world. A lot of money goes into that.

In addition, I want to talk a little bit about a pooling -- we talk about addressing the public and how does the public get engaged with the industry and in addressing that gap. I just want to read one thing here. In the early 1800s the first county fair was founded in an effort to provide farmers a venue to share best practices and resources for working the new land in this country. The goal is to become independent from the goods of the European countries. Today the purpose of the county fair is to reiterate this history and to celebrate ag within our communities. The county fairs are an advocate, a voice for agriculture, connects the dots between agriculture and industry and its community.

The 31st DAA encourages the CDFA to continue to support county fairs as it looks to the future of the ag industry in developing this new vision. We hope that the
CDFA will look to the county fairs and support and enhance this new vision that you come up with to utilize that asset going forward.

On behalf of the LGMA, the 31st DAA, and San Miguel Produce, we would like to thank you for your time and for your efforts and we look forward to working with you in establishing this vision and making it go forward.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up we have speaker 25, Jim Churchill, and then we'll have speaker 26, Lisa Brenneis.

MR. CHURCHILL: Thank you for initiating this conversation, this cool idea; I hope your butts can stand it.

My name is Jim Churchill. I farm with my wife. We farm specialty tangerines up in Ojai.

A couple of things. My first point is that I hope that there still is agriculture in California in 2030. A lot of economists and other people get all excited about the transition to the information economy and the service economy, but you can't eat or wear information or services. Agriculture is a complicated team effort requiring many skills, and as there are fewer and fewer of us farmers, I fear that the necessary skills might not survive. So looking to the future, I hope that we will institute or re-institute classroom instruction in...
the wide subjects that support production.

With respect to the implications of increasing energy, a bunch of things come to mind. There's no reason that growing should be confined to rural areas. Cities have lots of places where food can be grown, and there should be policies and initiatives to support urban food production and distribution.

That's one. Another one, and I don't know if there's a role for a state agency in this, but the path that our Pixie tangerines that we grow in Ojai take to the Vons in Ojai is as follows: We pick them in Ojai, we ship them to Fillmore, they get packed in Fillmore, they get shipped to Vernon, they get repacked in Vernon, they get shipped to a Vons distribution center I don't know where, they get shipped back to Ojai. And then because the people in Vons have never heard of them or anything, they get stuck in a small shelf in the bottom. And it's silly. And I don't know if this is a state agency deal, but it's silly.

And then just on a personal note as an eater, the next thing, with respect to energy costs, speaking as an eater and as a consumer who doesn't know about other facets of agriculture, I would really like to see state-licensed packing houses, slaughter houses, meat slaughter houses, regional, locally, so that I could eat
meat that didn't get raised in Coalinga and shipped to Iowa and shipped back to me.

I know of no reason why we shouldn't be allowed and encouraged to farm our land for sunlight, to erect photo voltaics and sell that electricity back to the utilities and get paid for it. So, that's a policy I'd like to see.

Everything we know about the United States diet -- I'm on to another topic now; that was energy, okay. Now, I'm on to diet and health. Everything we know about our diet in the United States suggests that as a nation we're eating way too much highly-processed stuff and that we'd be better off if we ate more fresh vegetables and fruit. I think that this is because in the United States, our food culture is not really a food culture, it's really a culture about corporate profit. And I'm in favor of profit, I rely on profit myself, but the way our national farm policy has been distorted to encourage clearly undesirable outcomes is disgraceful, and I would hope that by 2030, maybe that would be different. I don't hold a lot of hope, but small hope.

As an independent grower and shipper, I seek to establish a contract of sorts between myself and my customers. I want to produce and sell fruit that really tastes good and that people will recognize as such. I am
not willing to try to make my living by selling at farmers' markets. They are fun, we do our local Ojai farmers' market, and we like the cash, but they're a huge time sink for us.

And anyway, I don't produce or sell enough fruit, I don't produce or sell enough fruit to interest a major grocery chain and I don't want to try to do that. The big grocery operations are interested in standardization and predictability, and I'm interested in establishing a relationship built around flavor. So I need counterparts out there in the world who recognize -- whoa, okay.

I'd like to see a world in which Walmart and Costco and Ralphs and Vons have not entirely taken over the job of supplying produce to people who eat, because I don't think they're doing what needs to be done.

We need safe -- effective safeguards against invasion of exotic pests. And we need an immigration policy that legitimates the presence of Mexicans in the United States, that allows them to work in agriculture and allows us to hire them. And we need support for the university.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks, Jim.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up we speaker 26, Lisa Brenneis. And then Marty Fujita, speaker 27.
MS. BRENNEIS: Hello. Thank you for doing this.

I know how hard it is to sit hour to hour just listening
and listening and listening, so I salute you. I hope
these remarks which have been very moving to me to see so
many people who have given so much thought and goodwill to
this topic, I hope that the remarks will be made generally
available on the website, because it's just agriculture
really is big, isn't it, here in California.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Lisa, all these are published
after on the website, all the comments are published. And
the minute we can get them back from the transcribers, we
get them published. So if you go to the website, you can
pick up even your own testimony.

MS. BRENNEIS: Well, I think right there you may
be starting something that will help us in 2030; so that's
great.

Thank you for inviting me. My name is Lisa
Brenneis. My husband Jim and I operate Churchill Orchard
up in Ojai. And so I'm going to concentrate on a specific
vision today. A rejuvenated regional distribution system
for California's agricultural products that supports
growers, wholesalers, retailers, and customers of all
sizes by recognizing that a vibrant food system requires
opportunities and efficiencies at every scale. Scale
comes up over and over and over again in the food
production and distribution business, and as many of you know because of your experience, scale changes everything over and over again.

So I'd like to -- I'll just race through our own story as a way of illustrating how scale has caused limitations and opportunities for us.

Since we picked our first saleable crop of Pixie tangerines back in 1988, our primary challenge as small growers has been finding right-size customers. With the early support of a single extraordinary store up in the bay area, our business has grown from 80 original Pixie tangerine trees to over 30 Pixie growers in the Ojai valley producing and selling over a million pounds a year. We were fortunate every step of the way, but the people and organizations that supported our growth are under constant pressure.

The Monterey Market purchased and sold our entire crop of Pixie tangerines for six years, while the trees grew up basically. Pixie was an excellent but unknown variety. Even if there had been an established market, we didn't have enough fruit to supply even a small independent chain. Monterey Market is an extraordinary start-up incubator for innovative agriculture; the sourcing and retailing skill attracts a large group of educated adventure shoppers who adopted our fruit and made
it possible for us to take the next step.

Still too small to supply a grocery chain, we connected with Melissa's World Variety down in Vernon, energetic wholesalers who developed a national business by serving as a bridge between smaller specialty growers and mid-size to large grocery chains. So Melissa's goes through a lot of exertions to connect and aggregate small growers so that they can collect enough product to be able to even knock on the door of a mid-size grocery chain.

This is where we're at. This is where the scale has gotten us.

The current mainstream system has undercut the health of terminal markets throughout the state. That would be the system of mega grocery chains contracting with mega growers directly and kind of leaving out the wholesale markets, the terminal markets. I think that that's a very limited kind of efficiency, I think it's a limited definition of efficiency; and when you see a more diverse market that supports all along the chain, small, mid-size, and large growers, I think that's a much more efficient system that serves the needs of the population of California much better. And so there is my time.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Lisa.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 27, Marty Fujita.
And then will be speaker 28, Maricela Morales.

MS. FUJITA: Secretary Kawamura and Board, thank you for this opportunity. Fujita is actually the Hispanic version of my name, which is actually Marty Fujita.

So in addition to advocating for California local fresh produce for your snacks, I'd also like to advocate on behalf of reusable water bottles.

The natural landscape and agricultural landscape has changed so much in just a generation. I recall my father's photos of the L.A. basin being all orange groves when he was a kid. And in my own lifetime growing up in Orange County, I've seen countless strawberry and bean fields being paved over for housing developments. And since moving here to Ventura County five years ago, after more than a decade of doing international environmental work, I've witnessed the same kind of development pressures that threaten rich agricultural heritage in this county.

And I also wanted to just mention that I'm a cofounder of Food For Thought, which is the fourth Farm To School program in California.

Today I'd like to advocate on behalf of keeping agricultural life alive in California as a resident of this county, as an eater, a kind of successful gardener, and an evolutionary ecologist and environmentalist. I
generally agree with the comments of the Roots of Change
campaign for a new mainstream developed to provide a new
vision for 2030. And as a member of the Ventura Ag
Futures Alliance stewardship committee, I also am very
supportive of their recommendations.

But as an evolutionary ecologist, a mother very
careful about my children's future and the future of
humanity in general, I'd like to kick it up a notch and
I'd like to challenge the notion of what sustainable
agriculture really means in light of the escalating
threats and exigencies posed by climate induced --
climate-change induced factors. I don't think we really
know what the term sustainable means anymore in light of
these factors. And as a friend has said to me, who is
here in this room, ask me in a hundred years what
sustainable means and maybe I'll have an answer for you.

Numerous studies are coming out that point to
climate change feedback loops that are inducing erratic
weather patterns that include drought and deluge, freeze
and record heat spells, acidification of the Pacific
Ocean. That is happening at a rate 50 percent faster than
what the IPCC predicted just a year ago.

Secondary effects that are just as damaging to
agriculture include such things as increases in the number
and in the voracity of the kinds of alien species and
pests that are coming across and invading our agricultural 
fields, and shifts in growing zones and growing seasons.

Global warming is already beginning to have a profound impact on our food and agriculture system at the local, regional and international levels as growing patterns, trades and markets shift to accommodate changes in available weather, the length of the growing season, as evidenced in changes in production of several crops already in California, like wines in the Napa Valley and here in Ventura County with the losses of avocados and citrus with these aberrant freezes as well as fruit and flower drops that have happened very recently.

Okay. I'm not going to go into a lot of the other bad news that I had about climate change, but what I really want to stress is that I think we have the opportunity, and the window time is very short now, like less than a decade, for really thinking out of the box and thinking about adaptive strategies. And I'm really advocating that agricultural sectors in California begin to have conversations and cross-pollinate with other sectors, business, education, in California government, and water, and energy, and think proactively about adaptive strategies for this.

I'd like to offer a couple of suggestions for consideration to allow agriculture to survive in the face
of climate change. Number one, plan and conduct modeling research to determine optimal growing areas in California using predicted changes in factors such as water availability, weather pattern, soil types, migration of pests, et cetera; develop these adaptive scenarios to secure high-priority areas for the future; think about and encourage cooperatives of farmers, retail, distribution, land trusts in these areas; identify ag for easements; promote regionalization of food and distribution systems that would support family farms and smaller distributions in retailers, which would also provide greater food security and healthier foods; increase diversification of crops to minimize impacts of pests and meet food needs of the regions, and this also goes along with maintaining the genetic diversity of a lot of crops so that we have the ability to respond to drought and climate change.

And I guess I'm going to have to end it right there. I think we can be net carbon -- have a net negative impact on our carbon footprint and farms can provide alternative clean energy sources from wind and solar as well.

Here's my comments. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 28, Maricela Morales.
And then we'll be at speaker 29, Rob Roy. You have a total of 31 speakers on my list, just to let you know where you are.

MS. MORALES: Good afternoon, Honorable Secretary Kawamura and Members of the Board of the Food and Agriculture. It is a truly historic and significant undertaking to travel throughout the State of California to hear from people directly in order to develop a shared vision and goals for California agriculture by 2030. It is historic to have you in Ventura County, and thank you for being in Oxnard in particular.

I want to specifically recognize Secretary Kawamura's decision to hold an evening session, including translation. This was an important decision that demonstrated your concrete willingness to take into account farm workers, a segment of the agriculture community without which agriculture could not exist.

My name is Maricela Morales. And in Redding -- I read the transcripts from Redding and Sacramento, thank you for those; you spoke, Secretary Kawamura, and you said, in our state, in agriculture, you've got all kinds of leaders trying to move us forward in all the different counties, parallel efforts to move the state forward in an agricultural direction. The parallel lines don't meet.

What we need to do is have converging lines and a vision...
where we're all headed.
And I want to speak from my own experience of converging lines. I'm California born but born of immigrant parents. And I grew up in Los Angeles and at four years old moved to Ventura County. And at that age I remember, I remember moving from a place where there was only concrete and asphalt to a place where I was surrounded by agriculture. And I grew up working in a grocery store where farm workers and their children came to buy their food. And for as much as our family struggled, being small business owners, for as much as we struggled and lived on hand-me-downs, even at a young age I was aware that I was better off than the farm worker children that I went to school with and whose parents came to our store.

Today, working as Associate Executive Director of CAUSE, our mission is to promote economic, social and environmental justice, as a member of the Ventura Ag Futures Alliance, as a council member of the City of Port Hueneme, as a Stewardship Councilmember of the Roots of Change fund, what is a must-have is for us to truly work collaboratively to engage the diverse sectors of our community from the grass roots to the grass tops. We need farm workers at the table at all levels. This is a real challenge.
The other thing that we need is to raise the focus on social equity. Having read the transcripts, the triple bottom line or the three Es keep coming up. The need to look at the environment, to look at the economy or profitability for all scale of farmers and food producers, and the third E of equity comes up as well. Equity is the one that, given my personal history, I am most familiar with.

And there are six things that could be addressed under social equity, and they have to do with farm workers as well as low-income communities. Number one is a living wage and workforce development. Farm workers are often said to be unskilled laborers, but I know that I do not have the skill to work as a farm worker. They are skilled workers and they deserve a living wage and they deserve workforce development to move on and up. Health education. 70 percent of farm workers are uninsured. Worker health and safety. Only a month ago a 17-year-old two-month-pregnant young farm worker died of heat stroke. Safe affordable housing for farm workers. Legal status. And an end to food deserts that plague our low-income communities. Those are six specific policy recommendations under social equity.

And just to end, that we are at a time of transition and we have examples of working together as
opposed to against one another. And as an example, CAUSE, Roots of Change, Ag Futures Alliance and many others stand with you to work towards these goals. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: All right. Speaker 29, Rob Roy. Then we'll have speaker 30, Erica Lomeli, then speaker 31, Darcey Lober.

MR. ROY: Good afternoon, Mr. Secretary, Members of the Board. My name is Rob Roy. I'm the President and General Council of Ventura County Agricultural Association and I have served in that capacity for the last 31 years having devoted my entire legal career to representing the interests of farmers, most of all here in Ventura County. So most of my experience has been on the ground dealing with the farmers day to day in their lives.

Unfortunately, as an attorney most of my efforts towards viability of agriculture have been at the cost of lawsuits. That's been my preferred method of maintaining the viability of our farmers, and it's worked quite effectively, but I'm really glad that you're here today, because I feel like Don Quixote out there twisting from windmills. It's nice to see that there might be an alternative way of exploring the viability of maintaining this precious industry.
I'm just going to basically respond to some of
the interrogatories that you posed today for the meeting.
And in terms of what's my vision for agriculture for 2030,
there are a number of things I'd like to see. I'd like to
see regulatory laws that are based upon sound science and
not scare tactics regulated by the media. I would like to
see international competition that has less restrictions
and less trade barriers in them for our farmers. I would
like to see a skilled and dependable workforce that won't
be displaced by mechanization, which means that some
people in Congress have to get off their duff and do their
job.
I would like to see more availability of water
and good quality water for our farmers. I would like to
see less environmental cost and burdens that are
confronting our farmers both from the California
Environmental Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act.
I would like to see more public support for the plight of
farmers. I think that, you know, Ventura County is not
your typical county; I think we have a lot of public
support here for our farming industry, and it's nice to
see that.
I would like to see more uniform and consistent
laws that don't change with administrations. I think it's
important that once we set laws in place, that growers
like to know that they have a long-term investment and they have laws that they can depend upon. And I would like to see more funding for conservancies to purchase the farmers' development rights so that those farmers who want to stay in farming but are pressured by the high cost of developing their property, whether it be for family reasons or state purposes, have the ability to sell those to conservancies and maintain their properties in farming.

What would be the biggest challenges? The biggest challenges I think are two. One is changing public perception of agriculture. We need to promote agriculture as a national resource, one that basically promotes the health and security of our citizens. I would hate to see us in the time of war depending upon a foreign nation submitting our food supply.

I would also like to educate the public on the challenges that confront our farmers day to day and what are the benefit of the environmental and air quality benefits. A lot of people never consider what the contribution of agriculture is to air quality in making any regulatory laws. Purdue did a study in 2004 that said that they took all of the acreage that was in Williamson Act contracts in '93 and they found out that production agriculture sequesters carbon at a certain amount per ton per acre. And I think their estimate was 13 or 15 tons of
carbon are sequestered every year in California because of ag production, yet no one seems to want to talk about that in the public discourse.

I would also like to seek more positive changes in both Congress and the California legislature through legislature promoting the viability of the industry and the need to reduce this onslaught of regulatory laws. I mean, some of the following, I mean, we have redundant and excessive federal and state employment laws, we have excessive air quality and environmental restrictions that are not based upon sound science. I'm not advocating that we get rid of them, but they need to be based upon sound science, as well as the host of other particular laws that are actually affecting the per acre cost of farmers on a daily basis.

What is the must-have in the vision? Well, first of all we need strong laws and regulations enabling the CDFA to protect the agricultural industry. We're losing ground on the pest exclusion and pest eradication effort. We have laws in place that are being eradicated by private citizens seeking temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions. That power has to be reinstated in order to protect the industry. We need to have more regulatory control of the retail organizations that are essentially monopolizing our industry. Growers have
become price takers, not price makers. We need to develop more funding for mechanization. Mechanization will have a role in this century with regard to the agricultural industry.

And in closing, I would just like to say that when you take it all down to its basic level, this definition of viability, which seems to be an amorphous term, it's really -- I was talking to a farmer in the audience, it's all about, really, energy, very simply, because if a farmer doesn't have energy, he can't farm. Whether it's the energy from water, the energy from the solar, you've got to move tractors to a field, you have to move pipes, you have to move tools and equipment, you have to transport those products to a processing facility, you have to operate a processing facility; all that depends upon energy, and it really depends upon cheap energy sources, such as solar, natural gas and other sources. And this is something that we have to really look into in the next 20 to 30 years.

So thank you for your time.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Rob.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Rob.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Next we have speaker 30, Erica Lomeli. And then we have speaker 31, Darcey Lober.

MS. LOMELI: Good afternoon. My name is Erica
Lomeli. Thank you for being here. I'm with the United Farm Workers Foundation, and much of our work is aligned with the efforts of the UFW.

I guess I'm just here again to reiterate a lot of the issues that many of the speakers have been addressing, but I do have one main concern.

I see a vision by 2030 is an agriculture industry where practitioners and regulators are operating with, someone mentioned, the triple bottom line, which is economic, environmental and social equity. It's really important to always -- I guess I'm here representing farm workers, that just as agriculture is not viable without growers and natural resources, agriculture is not viable without farm workers.

In order to enhance the life and livelihood of farm workers, it is important to address the issues of housing, health care, worker and healthy and safety issues; and my main concern is the legal status. I'm here to ask you, because we do need the help for immigration reform. The ability for farm workers to live and work in the United States legally, it is a fundamental aspect of a more sustainable farm labor system in the U.S.

And I guess one of the must-haves that I would like to share is that this is the meaningful participation of the hundreds of thousands of farm workers that are part
We ask the CDFA to broaden their constituents to include farm workers and perhaps designate a seat on the CDFA for a farm worker to be part of or an ag worker organization to be a participant.

And that's it. Thank you.

FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 31, Darcey Lober.

MS. LOBER: Hi. I'm a School Garden Coordinator for the Ventura Unified School District. And I wanted to say that I don't know what the vision of farming will be in 2030, so I can only give you what I would like to imagine society looks like.

Because the right to secure for one's self clean air, water, food and shelter are fundamental and worthwhile to human existence, I think that is our goal, because we want to be around longer than the next 100 years and we don't want to have to move away from the land which now sustains us, we don't want to exhaust the capabilities of that land. We need to find farm systems that fundamentally support not only all the people involved in the creation and maintenance of them, but it does so in a way that is in harmony with the much larger workings of nature.

At the risk of sounding like a luddite, I think farming will go back to not only being a business concerned with profits and its own bottom line, but will...
be scientists exploring how to figure out new ways to
maximize the yields and the resources they have site
specific, ecologically-sustainable environments. I want
this because my 17-year-old son has a desire to go into
farming.

I would like to see organic gardening and
permaculture as a core curriculum in all schools, the
framework through which English, math, social studies,
history, science, nutrition, physical ed will be taught.
I'd like to see the schools become living laboratories as
well as the place to go for actual nourishment of both
mind and body.

I would like farmers to start noting what changes
need to be made and then to have the courage and the
willingness to suffer the pain of making those changes to
support themselves and the environment, which means
Ventura County may go back to dry farming. I think people
will start to participate more and more in the years to
come in neighborhood community gardens as the community
garden movement grows. I think local agriculture will be
supported locally and abundance will be shared farther
afield.

My hope is that the idea of manifest destiny will
finally be put to rest and it will no longer be acceptable
that only a few profit from the fruits of the earth at the
expense of the many who toil. Factory farms will become, once again, family farms. In order to do this, farmers will diversify, crops will diversify, there will be an emphasis on cooperation with the natural world, water conservation, and a redistribution of the wealth generated by the farm business.

In October I attended an ag literacy conference in Asilomar, and I was shocked and appalled by the presentations there, which said that environmentalists and others alerting us to the dangers of our dependence on chemical pesticides and fertilizers were addleheaded, dangerous, non-scientific people, extremists who needed to be stopped.

I would like us to reflect on our belief and to really hold that belief in the inherent dignity and worth of every human being so that we know all people should have a voice in the things that concern them and treated with fairness and kindness, that we must all turn our most brilliant minds to working out, teasing out that complex interrelation of things knowing that ultimately our very survival not on a scorched earth policy, not on killing everything that we're afraid stands between us and our precious food supply, but on figuring out how to best care for the land we now inhabit and that we share with all other living things.
Thank you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

FACILITATOR PENNY: So with that, that takes you through the 31 speakers. So I'm about to turn it back to Secretary Kawamura and President Montna to give us a sense of where you want to go next with the session.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: We're going to let Secretary Kawamura say a few closing remarks, and I'll sum up after that.

The Board wants to thank you all for attending and enlightening us once more. We probably have heard over -- Josh, how many?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: 150.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: -- 150 comments. We have also written requests out to 75 ag leaders and organizations throughout California to give more written testimony. So many of you are probably members of those organizations, so you'll be testifying twice whether you know it or not, duplicating some of these comments.

Mr. Secretary, we've had a busy morning. Your comments, please.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Al.

Good afternoon, everybody. Thanks for your time, your thoughts, your commitment to agriculture. I know
there were a couple questions really quickly and I have
for some of the speakers, and also a comment that please
make sure if you have comments or you want to rephrase
your comments or re-put them together, to submit them
online at our website, because that is very important for
us.

I wanted to just as a follow up very quickly,
Emily Ayala had mentioned in her remarks that there was a
request for more oversight on the farmers' markets and
they're slipping from being farmers' markets to swap
meets, I think is what the comment was. So I would sure
like, if you could put that into a more concrete statement
or concrete description of what's going on there, our
Department does manage the farmers' markets, and it's
important then to capture that.

I know that there was a couple other descriptions
that I thought were important that I'd like to follow up
on. Even the last speaker had mentioned something about,
I believe it was a quote about permaculture could be the
lens through which you teach all the other courses in a
school. And I just -- there's a wonderful book out there,
"Last Child in the Woods," which talks about how far
removed people are these days away from natural things and
things that grow and that very tangible relationship with
how we're going to have to deal with adaptation, how we're
going to have to deal with a food supply that gets
challenged.

Growing food is not that easy, is it? And
someone else, I think the quote about the quickest way to
gain respect --

MS. ELLIS: Nothing garners respect for farmers
faster than trying to grow your own food.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Nothing garners respect for
farmers faster than having someone grow their own food and
be successful, we hope, right?

But I wanted to say thank you. This is really
very important.

I come from Orange County, I'm a third-generation
grower there, but moving from an L.A. system in the early
fifties when I was born when my parents came down to
Orange County because of the encroachment of urbanization
in Los Angeles, and in my lifetime then, I've seen
basically what amounts to not a complete collapse, but
certainly a complete change of what agriculture is for
Orange County.

I know here in Ventura and Oxnard and this area
the challenges are not that different, but there certainly
seems to be a little more thought in where your future
lies. Recognizing then that a county with no plan or a
state with no plan for that matter, a country with no
plan, that -- for agriculture, no plan for agriculture, 
boy, we're in a very tough spot as we recognize that we've 
got some very big challenges. And I think the very simple 
thing that all of us that are growers in the room 
recognize is that unpredictable weather means 
unpredictable harvests; it's that simple. So there's a 
lot of things out there that we're going to be able to do 
well in the future.

I also would say that we also live today, not 
tomorrow necessarily, but today in a wonderful luxury of 
abundance. And in that luxury of abundance, because 
there's so many different ways to produce food and deliver 
it and put it on someone's table, that it becomes very 
comfortable and easy for people to say, oh, well, then it 
must come this way all the time, or it must be this way 
all the time; and that's not necessarily the easiest thing 
for a nation to have or a state to have. That being said, 
this process is all about asking and finding out what kind 
of a food supply, what kind of a food system, what kind of 
a state we can have knowing that we've got some very 
predictable challenges up ahead of us.

So that being said, I just wanted to say thank 
you for being here, thank you for staying focused on this 
process. 

This process will continue; it's not a one-year
process by the way, it's a dynamic that will continue.

We'll try and always have a plan for the state that can be
revamped, revitalized. It can lead to many things
including, whether it's farm worker housing, whether it's
more pressure on this state to create or on this country
to have a legal workforce, whether it means a reliable
water supply, whether it means a stronger, much tougher
system for keeping out invasive species, for example.

In saying that then, let me close by saying that
I know there's a lot of leaders in this room throughout
your communities, throughout your regions, throughout this
state and nation that are really working hard in this
arena of culture of agriculture, and I appreciate the work
you've done.

I'd like to make a special hello and thanks to
some of the ag commissioners who are in the room. I know
I see Earl McPhail over here, our ag commission from
Ventura County and his deputy, Kenny Dugrain; and Susan
Johnson also is here; Andy Calderwood is also from Ventura
as well as Richard's over here, Richard Ilzuka from L.A.
County working as a deputy ag commissioner as well.

The work that the ag commissioners do in each
county is just an amazing, enormous-responsibility job.

They don't get the thanks I think often enough that they
deserve, but without this amazing system that we have in
the State of California -- we're the only state in the nation that has a system of ag commissioners appointed by the county supervisors to help work in partnership with our Department and the USDA and with the cities and counties. It's a very important system. And I want to thank you for all the great work you guys do and your departments.

Also, I'd like to have a special thanks for the Farm Bureau, who is always helping us setting set up and arrange these meetings. So Teri Bontrager, I don't know if you're here or not today, from Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau; John Krist from Ventura County Farm Bureau; John, are you here in the room? And, Scott, I know you're here somewhere, Scott Deardorff, who is the current president, thanks for your assistance in putting these programs together. Larry Yee was here. I don't see him anymore. He's an extension --

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: Yeah, he retired so he can leave the lake.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Yeah, so as a retired but still very active extension advisor.

Rob, thanks so much for all the work you do. Rob Roy has just been in the trenches defending agriculture in many ways and advancing agriculture throughout the state and throughout the country, and you're just spectacularly
appreciated too. Thanks.

Ed Burton is -- is he here today?

BOARD MEMBER ROSS: Yeah, he spoke, he was the number 2 speaker.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: See, I missed Ed. And he has been one of the greatest assets for our state as the state conservationist work through NRCS, the National Resource Conservation Services out of USDA, and he's been truly helpful and whether we have extreme freezes or heat waves or this drought that we're working on right now in trying to create creative programs within the system that is within the farm bill.

Robert Jones is with Labor and Workforce Agency.

Robert, are you here? Thank you for your assistance there.

I wanted to tell you though that the labor agency under Vicki Bradshaw did an amazing report called, "The Food Chain," and was able to identify that the amount of people that work within the food chain, whether it's to 20 percent of people that are actively actually on a farm and that 80 percent of people that do everything within the food chain from researching it to trucking it to all things, the welders, every aspect, it's a huge amount of work that gets done in our state. And they've done some great work that helps us with this farm vision of
understanding what our needs will be for the future.

And that goes back to the other E that doesn't get mentioned very often. You talked about the three Es or the three Ps, equity -- social equity, environment, and economics that make a stool. Many people talk about sustainability as a stool, the three-legged stool. Stools are kind of wobbly. The fourth leg of that should be a need for education. And in that education comes research, comes technical education for kids like FFA, and I know some of the FFA kids that are here, there's one here, great amazing program, the number one youth organization in the nation helping kids really lock in with some great skills. So when you put four legs together, that gives you a very sound foundation, a table to stand on, and that's kind of what we're trying to make sure we have here.

I wanted, it also talked about Brooks Englehart from USDA, I think I believe Brooks is here as well. Daniel Kramer, Roots of Change, are you here? Daniel, thanks for all the great work you and Michael Dimmock and the rest of the gang have done over these last several years in trying to tee up if you will a conversation and a willingness to look at what agriculture must be as we move into this very, very precarious future.

Jeanette Lombardo, California Ag for Women, if
you're here, thank you so much for all the work you folks
do in every county, the enormous amount of volunteers you
have, we really appreciate the work you do. Barbara
Boester, Barbara Boester-Quaid, hi, Barbara, and thank you
for all the great work at the county fair. The county
fairs are a very, very important part of our Department,
very important part of the State of California, and we
really appreciate all the work you do out there.

Ken Hess also, you here today? Ken, thanks for
the great work that you do as an appointee of that fair
and the current president, I appreciate it. It's not an
easy job sometimes, but it's also a very rewarding job.
Robert Levin is the health officer from Ventura County. I
don't know if Roberts' here. But when we're dealing with
all kinds of things, whether it's in the realm of
pesticides, whether it's in the realm of invasive
diseases, the Health Department is the other one, one of
those others agencies that we have a great handhold with,
and I want to say thank you.

And lastly, I also wanted to say that part of the
reason we're able to do these listening sessions around
the state is we've asked and many people have been
interested in helping to fund the effort to have these ag
listening sessions. So the Clarence E. Heller Charitable
Foundation and the Colombia Foundation both have been
contributors in grants to this process of making sure that we're able to have things like translation. And a very good thanks to Gabriela and J.D. over there; you guys have done a great job in translating. That's the -- and Troy Ray back here is the transcriber. Troy, thanks for your help. I'm getting to the end here. And Carolyn Penny, who's been with us for many of these sessions, she does a great job of facilitating.

In closing, and the last thing I'd like to say is please stay tuned. Please stay engaged. Please create that revolution if you will in your own counties because you do -- this is a grassroots effort. We've seen the fact that we've been able to change a farm bill when everybody said it couldn't be done. Now, that doesn't mean it's not going to continue to change in the future, and believe me, I think California recognizes that we see that we have a huge stake in the way the nation looks at agriculture, and we want to be at that table as well. So thank you for being at this table. We will continue to all be looking at that bigger table as well as we try and set it and make sure we have a future.

So, Al, back to you.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks, Mr. Secretary. Well said.

I just wanted you to know that we had to go out
and seek funds to pay for these. The Board was going to
pay for it out of their salary, but we don't get a salary,
so, you know, we had to go out and ask a few folks. We
want to thank those folks for their contributions to put
on these sessions.

The Secretary wants to say one more thing.

I'd like to ask any Board Members if they have
any comments before I make my final comments.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: And that is to acknowledge
this amazing Board that we have here. This Board has been
willing, able, and more than engaged in trying to put
together this whole concept of putting together the
thoughts of the state so that we can have an ag vision,
and I want to thank you for all the time and effort,
because it is not done with any compensation, but because
of your own investment personally in agriculture, I
appreciate it.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Well, we get to hang out with
you though.

SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Oh, yeah, that's a big deal.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: It's interesting -- any Board
comments? Ann Silva, our dairy representative.

BOARD MEMBER BACCHETTI-SILVA: I was sitting on a
other plane the other day next to a woman from the island
of Oahu, and her husband was flying home to sell the rest
of his cows to close the last dairy on Oahu. And I didn't
tell her anything about the ag vision process, I just let
her do the speaking to start. And she said the island of
Hawaii does not value a safe food supply. And I then went
to explain the ag vision process and what we were trying
to do here.

She wishes us all the success that Hawaii should
have taken on 20 years ago. She said if we get shut down
by air or water with no transportation, we will not be
able to feed ourselves. And it just broke my heart. They
were in their mid-sixties and they'd lasted till the end.
And that made me realize how important this undertaking is
for us, that we don't become the next Hawaii.

PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Ann.

I do want to, Josh, recognize the staff, because
without Josh Eddy and Robert, and Jonnalee, and Sara,
Allison, and Nancy Lungren, Mike in the back, our photo op
guy, he gets the good shots on us, they're all in the back
there. Let's give them a big hand, because without them
none of this -- we get all the credit and they do all the
work as usual.

It's interesting though how so many of you
remarked, you know, the Board's been focusing on getting
agriculture better understood and what it provides for the
environment, nation, the overall security of the nation,
and we've been trying to discuss for some time now a paradigm shift for agriculture and the security of this nation. It's amazing to us how you really complain what it costs you to fill up your tank up at the gas station every day, but you fill another tank three times a day minimum, and how that discussion is now elevated. So many of you discussed that.

If you look at 36 million people, three meals a day, and the amount that our products fill people's lives, the importance of us in their lives, there is a paradigm shift going on, and people understand food, and we're trying to elevate that where it becomes policy not only for this state but for the nation.

We want to thank you again taking time away from your operations, your businesses, and your organizations to come and enlighten us. And please watch the website. Again, please, get Josh's information or any of the staffs' information if you have further comments. And we thank you for coming.

This meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much. (Thereupon, the July 7, 2008, California Department of Food and Agriculture Vision Listening Session was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.)
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 21st day of July, 2008.

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