

**MEETING OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**  
(ALL MEETINGS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC)

**Location:** Fresno County Farm Bureau  
1274 W. Hedges Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93728

**Contact:** Joshua Eddy, Executive Director  
**Phone:** (916) 654-0462

MEETING MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 25, 2009

Item  
No.

**(1) CALL TO ORDER**

- (a) The meeting was called to order Wednesday, February 25, 2009, at approximately 10:05 a.m. Al Montna, President of the State Board of Food and Agriculture presiding.
- (b) Welcoming remarks provided by Al Montna.
- (c) Pledge of Allegiance.

**(2) ROLL CALL**

Roll call taken by Joshua Eddy, Executive Director

**Present:**

Al Montna	Karen Ross	Arlan Van Leeuwen
Ashley Boren	Luawanna Hallstrom	Craig McNamara
Daniel Dooley	Adan Ortega, Jr.	Donald Valpredo
Donald Bransford	Thomas Deardorff II	
Marvin Meyers	Michael Darnell	

**Absent:**

David Wehner            Kerry Tucker

**(3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 21, 2009**

**MOTION:** Board member Don Bransford moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Board member Daniel Dooley seconded the motion and a unanimous vote carried the motion.

**(4) PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD**

The Board had four presentations which provided an overview of the impact of the statewide drought.

Speakers included:

- Wendy H. Martin, California Department of Water Resources
- Jeanette Ishii, Economic Development Coordinator for the County of Fresno
- Carol Hafner, Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer
- Dayatra Latin, Community Food Bank

**(5) COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Five individuals provided public comments following the presentations to the board.

Sofia Chavez, representing the farm worker community, stressed the economic effects of the drought on farm workers. Informed the board that the farm worker community wants to work and would like the return of water to valley farms.

Ramiro Lopez, farm contractor employee, stated that the drought is an important issue affecting everyone in the Central Valley. Informed the board that the farm worker community is not here to be a burden, but here to work – currently workers do not have jobs and are unable to pay their bills.

Phil Larson, Fresno County Supervisor, stressed the vital need for farm water in the community. The economic impact to Central Valley communities is devastating. Thanked the board for coming to Fresno and urged board members to listen to the comments presented at the meeting.

Eli Ayala, Ayala Corporation, informed the board on the lack of agricultural work available to farm workers in the valley and the social impacts that are resulting. Stressed the positive role agricultural work plays in communities.

Amarpreet Dhaliwal, Mayor of the City of San Joaquin, expressed concern about depending on other countries for our food supply. If we do not have water, we will not have food. It is very important that we keep the farming industry alive, so this situation will not occur.

**(6) PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

The Board conducted two panel discussions focusing on the impact of the statewide drought and water delivery limitations. Panel discussions included representatives from the farming, labor, military and environmental sector.

FIRST PANEL

The first panel discussion was conducted with farm and labor organizations concerning local impacts of the statewide drought and water delivery limitations.

Speakers included:

- Mario Santoyo, California Latino Water Coalition
- Piedad Ayala, Ayala Corporation
- Robert Silva, JC Young Company
- Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League

**(7) COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Three individuals provided public comment following the first panel discussion.

Kimberly Kaufman, field representative, Office of Congressman Radanovich (CA-19), informed the board on H.R. 856, the California Drought Alleviation Act of 2009, which is sponsored by Congressman Radanovich and was introduced on February 4, 2009.

Don Jackson, farmer, informed the board that his operation is dependent on water from the aqueduct and that he has been pulling fruit trees – 400 acres so far. This is a national emergency and action is needed.

Susan Good, District Director, Office of Senate Majority Leader Dean Florez (16<sup>th</sup> District), informed the board on SB 301, the Water Supply Reliability and Ecosystem Recovery and Restoration Act of 2009, which was introduced on February 25, 2009.

**(8) PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

The Board conducted two panel discussions focusing on the impact of the statewide drought and water delivery limitations. Panel discussions included representatives from the farming, labor, military and environmental sector. (Continued)

## SECOND PANEL

The second panel discussion was conducted with environmental and conservation groups and included a presentation by the United States Navy. The panel focused on the natural resource impacts of the statewide drought and water delivery limitations.

Speakers included:

- Glenn Olson, Audubon
- Doug Obegi, Natural Resources Defense Council
- Capt. Jim Knapp, Naval Air Station Lemoore
- Ed Burton, State Conservationist

Panel discussion concluded without formal action by the board.

### **(9) PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD**

The board had one presentation focusing on the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resource's Strategic Vision.

A presentation was given by:

- Daniel M. Dooley, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources

Presentation concluded without formal action by the board.

### **(10) COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Two individuals provided public comments:

Larry Easterling, Kettleman Pistachio Growers, informed the board that with the loss of water – control of their farming operation has been taken out of their hands. Easterling stated that before when water supplies were short, water could be purchased, but not now. Financial institutions will not provide loans if you do not have water. This is a national security issue and immediate action is needed.

Jim Walls, farmer, informed the board that this drought is affecting some farmers a lot worse than others. If everyone is cut back, everyone is concerned and action occurs. Currently, the entire burden is on one segment of one sector. If you let farmers farm, this problem goes away.

### **(11) OTHER BUSINESS**

Following presentations to the board and panel discussions on the drought, the board considered formal action.

**MOTION:** President Al Montna moved to entertain a motion to reaffirm the board's letter of February 5, 2009 to Secretary A.G. Kawamura on the mitigation of water cut-back impacts. Board member Daniel M. Dooley made the motion with a second by Board member Don Bransford. A unanimous vote carried the motion.

### **(12) CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.