



Ag Vision Buzz...What We're Hearing

AIR QUALITY

“We must ensure that our actions today do not degrade the earth’s resources, including soil, air and water.”

Karen Schmidt and Sandy Curwood, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance

“Our universities have done a lot of research that is science based, not politically based. There has been a lot of money spent on research, let’s not waste it.”

David Sharp, Financial Consultant, A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc.

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

“Where we’re going to be 30 years from now is with the blue coats, the FFA.”

Rick Gurrola, Agricultural Commissioner, Tehama County

“Common themes I’ve heard so far; an equitable food system, a profitable food system, an environmentally friendly food system, and education, education, education.”

Shawn Harrison, Owner, Soil Born Farms

“We have to get agricultural education away from being something you go over to the back of the schoolyard to learn about. It needs to be within the web of life of every student, in every single discipline, at every single level.”

Rob Rutherford, Animal Science Professor, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

CLIMATE CHANGE

“Examine inter-relationships with other sectors (energy, water, business, health) of California government to promote ways to work together to generate adaptive strategies that mitigate climate change factors while maximizing agricultural productivity and economic returns for agriculture.”

Marty Fujita, Ph.D.

CONSERVATION

“There must be incentives, such as the Williamson Act and other conservation easement programs, to encourage landowners to keep their land in agricultural production, and not be enticed by development.”

Mary Mutz, Agricultural Commissioner, Calaveras County



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FOOD SAFETY

"The public perception of California agriculture will be that our food is the safest and cleanest in the world."

David Visher, Program Director, Food Alliance

"I see a consistent level of food safety standards from farm to fork being an important component of California agriculture in the year 2030."

Bob Martin, General Manager, Rio Farms

LABOR

"Labor is a big issue for all of us. Without the right labor force, we can't produce the crops that we grow and we cherish in this state."

Michael Babineau, NGA

"Farm labor issues will continue to be of high importance, but the current reforms will have the kinks worked out and the Band-Aids removed. No longer protecting from scarring, the Band-Aids of labor reform will have served their purpose to develop a permanent and reasonable process to document and staff California's farm labor."

Megan Brownell, Chair, San Luis Obispo County Young Farmers and Ranchers

LAND USE

"...a statewide vision and plan for agriculture must help assure that the best farmland remains available for agriculture and that urban development doesn't convert any more land than is truly necessary to accommodate our expanding population and the continued economic growth we all desire."

Mike Darnell, California Policy Director, American Farmland Trust

"The vision for 2030 is ecological balance, but much more so acting in accordance to our knowledge that we are our soil."

Helge Hellberg, Executive Director, Marin Organics

"People working on the land, living on the land, owning the land, and running the business; that is a recipe for better stewardship."

Robert Ramming, Owner, Pacific Star Gardeners

NUTRITION

"Encourage home-cooking. Instant food is not teaching kids to eat healthy."

Johanna Trenerry, Trenerry Berry Farms



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“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.”

David Landecker, Executive Director, Environmental Defense Center

ORGANICS

“We need to welcome an agriculture that is both large, medium, small, organic, and also traditional.”

Jim Sullins, County Director, UC Cooperative Extension, Tulare County

PESTS

“Clearly we have a lot of problems with detecting, monitoring, preventing pests at points of entry in California. Some of these are within the purview of the state agency and some at the federal level, but clearly that’s a problem in California.

Paul Schramski, State Director, California Pesticide Watch

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

“If we do not shape the general consumer perception of ag, it will be shaped for us by individuals and organizations that may not be attuned to the realities of our industry.”

Maile Shanahan Geis, Marketing Director, Buy California Marketing Agreement

“If society doesn’t understand the value of agriculture, they’re not going to support us. If they don’t support us they’re going to continue putting suburbs on top of our farmland.”

Dan Best, General Council, California Federation of Certified Farmers Markets

“The consumer needs to be more invested in their food. It means more time, more money...and more education into foods’ benefits.”

Jack Rice, Associate Council, California Farm Bureau

REGULATIONS

“The technological and regulatory treadmill that growers face will not go away, therefore it is critical to cultivate an active, forward-looking approach that embraces the involvement of stakeholders.”

Neal MacDougall, Agribusiness Professor, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

“Agriculture needs to have a seat at the table with regard to all government decision making that impacts agriculture.”

Patricia Stever, Executive Director, Tulare County Farm Bureau



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“We will not have agriculture in California if the individuals writing the rules and regulations don't wake up. There will be no roses to smell or food to eat.”

Ken Deaver, Owner and Partner, Deaver Ranch

TRADE/MARKETING

“My vision for California agriculture by 2030 is to expand the array of marketing venues to provide more opportunities for smaller producers to sell their products. We need to go beyond farmers' markets to such offerings as permanent public markets and also CSA-like deliveries at workplaces.”

Shermain Hardesty, Director, University of California Small Farm Center

“The biggest challenge will be managing the public-private interaction while at the same time creating an operating environment that allows California agriculture to remain globally competitive.”

James C. Christie, Bryant Christie, Inc.

WATER

“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.”

Stephen J. Barnard, President/CEO, Mission Produce

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

Carol Steed, Vice Chair, California Avocado Commission

OTHER

“Ag should be viewed as a bank for alternative energy solutions: wind, solar, water and natural gas.”

Lisa Bodrogi, Santa Maria Chapter President, California Women for Agriculture

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

Frank Tamborello, Director, Hunger Action Los Angeles