

PUBLIC MEETING  
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

1                                   A P P E A R A N C E S

2   BOARD MEMBERS

3   Al Montna, President

4   Ann Bacchetti-Silva

5   Don Bransford

6   Thomas Deerdorff

7   Luawanna Hallstrom

8   Marvin Meyers

9   Adan Ortega

10  Karen Ross

11  Donald Valpredo

12  David Wehner

13

14  STAFF

15  A.G. Kawamura, Secretary

16  Joshua Eddy, Executive Director

17  Michael Smith

18  Nancy Lungren

19  Robert Tse

20  Allison Heers

21  Jonnalee Henderson

22  Ashley Stone

23

24  FACILITATOR

25  Carolyn Penny

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

2 INTERPRETERS

3 Gabriela Hussong

4 Juan Dario Mendez

5

6 PUBLIC SPEAKERS

7 Bob Gray, Duda Farm Fresh Foods

8 Ed Burton, National Resources Conservation Service

9 David Landecker, Environmental Defense Center

10 June Van Wingerden, Santa Barbara County Flower and  
Nursery Growers Association

11

Pete Overgaag, Hollandia Produce

12

Delaney Ellis, Food and Agriculture Committee of the Ojai

13 Valley Green Coalition, Ag Futures Alliance

14 Zoila Aguilar, People's Council

15 Belen Seara, Pueblo Education Fund

16 Aubrey Sloan, Cal Health Committee, Cattlemen's  
Association, Cattle Disease Task Force

17

Emily Ayala

18

Margie Bartels, California Women for Agriculture, Ventura  
County Chapter

19

20 Andy Calderwood, Ventura County Agriculture Commissioner's  
Office

21

Steve Barnard

22

Karen Schmidt, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance

23

Phil McGrath, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance

24

Sandy Curwood, Ventura County Ag Futures Alliance

25

Scott Deardorff, Deardorff Family Farms

- 1                   A P P E A R A N C E S (Continued)
- 2
- 3 Nancy Stehle, Habitat for Humanity, House Farm Workers  
Task Force
- 4 Chris Sayer
- 5 Sonia Flores, House Farm Workers
- 6 Lauro Barajas
- 7 Fred Klose
- 8 Gail Weller-Brown, Oxnard Farm Worker Housing Group
- 9 Moira Beery, California Farm to School Program, Center for  
Food and Justice
- 10 Jan Berk, San Miguel Produce
- 11 Jim Churchill, Churhill Orchard
- 12 Lisa Brenneis, Churchill Orchard
- 13 Marty Fujita, Food for Thought
- 14 Maricela Morales, CAUSE
- 15 Robert Roy, Ventura County Agriculture Association
- 16 Eric Lomeli, United Farm Workers Foundation
- 17 Darcey Lober, Ventura Unified School Distric
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25

	INDEX	
		PAGE
1		
2		
3	I. Call to Order	1
4	II. Board Introduction	1
5	III. Opening Remarks	2
6	a. Secretary A.G. Kawamura	
	b. Al Montna, President	
7	IV. California Agriculture Vision Listening Session	
	Carolyn Penny, Facilitator	
8	a. Public Comments	
9	Bob Gray	7
10	Ed Burton	12
11	David Landecker	15
12	June Van Wingerden	20
13	Pete Overgaag	23
14	Delaney Ellis	26
15	Zoila Aguilar	30
16	Belen Seara	31
17	Aubrey Sloan	33
18	Emily Ayala	37
19	Margie Bartels	40
20	Andy Calderwood	43
21	Steve Barnard	45
22	Karen Schmidt	47
23	Phil McGrath	48
24	Sandy Curwood	48
25	Scott Deardorff	52

	INDEX (Continued)	
		PAGE
1		
2		
3	Nancy Stehle	57
4	Chris Sayer	58
5	Sonia Flores	62
6	Lauro Barajas	64
7	Fred Klose	66
8	Gail Weller-Brown	70
9	Maira Beery	72
10	Jan Berk	75
11	Jim Churchill	78
12	Lisa Brenneis	82
13	Marty Fujita	85
14	Maricela Morales	89
15	Robert Roy	92
16	Eric Lomeli	96
17	Darcey Lober	98
18		
19	V. Closing Remarks	101
20	a. Secretary A.G. Kawamura	
21	b. Al Montna, President	
22		
23	Adjournment	113
24	Reporter's Certificate	114
25		

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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

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

12 Marvin Meyers, please.

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

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

25 BOARD MEMBER HALLSTROM: Good afternoon.

1           Luawanna Hallstrom. I'm from the San Diego  
2 area. I come from a family of, I guess, fresh farm  
3 tomatoes, kind of a hot topic these days. And glad to be  
4 here.

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

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

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

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

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

24           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Again, welcome, everyone.  
25 It's good to see some familiar faces in the room as we



1 start on this journey to document, govern agriculture's  
2 future through 2030.

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

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

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

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

1 itself.

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

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

13           Carolyn, please.

14           FACILITATOR PENNY: Thank you, President Montna.

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

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

23           We have a microphone here at the front of the  
24 room. Each speaker will have up to five minutes to offer  
25 comments. Our timekeeper over here, Ashley Stone, will

1 hold up a sign when you have one minute remaining, and if  
2 you go to five minutes, she'll hold up a sign that says,  
3 "Time," and she'll stand up. We do ask you to go ahead  
4 and wrap up your thoughts if you get to that time sign, go  
5 ahead and finish the sentence you're in so that we can  
6 continue to run on time and allow everyone a chance to  
7 speak.

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

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

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

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

25           We also ask that you turn off or to vibrate cell

1 phones and pagers; and now is a great time to do that if  
2 you didn't think of it before this moment.

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

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

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

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

16           Now I'm about to brief the Board.

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

25           Does that work for all of you?

1           Thank you all very much. And with that, Al has  
2 just got one more thing to say and then soon we'll start  
3 with speaker one.

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

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

13           FACILITATOR PENNY: Thank you, President Montna.

14           And that reminds me of something I forgot.

15           Our two translators over here, interpreters over  
16 here are Gabriela Hussong and J.D. Mendez.

17           You guys can wave so folks know where you are.

18           So if you have use of the services, that's where  
19 the voices are coming from.

20           And with that, we'll start with speaker 1.

21 Speaker 1 is Bob Gray. After Bob, speaker 2 will be Ed  
22 Burton.

23           MR. GRAY: Thank you very much. My name is Bob  
24 Gray. My professional affiliation is I am CEO of Duda  
25 Farm Fresh Foods, which is a grower, packer, processor,

1 shipper of fresh vegetables. We have had a production  
2 operation in Ventura County since 1981. And in my  
3 volunteer capacity, I'm the current Chairman of the Board  
4 of Western Growers Association, headquartered in Irvine.

5           And I did not time my speech, so I will try to  
6 read this quickly and meet the requirements.

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

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

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

22           California agriculture has been a remarkable  
23 success story. Our farm gate value contribution to the  
24 state's economy is now about \$34 billion. Historically,  
25 our economic contribution to California has always gone

1 up, even though the amount of farmland has steadily  
2 declined. It is a testament to the innovation and energy  
3 of California farmers that they have been able to increase  
4 yields and crop values to keep pace with higher costs of  
5 operation and in spite of reduced acreage upon which to do  
6 it.

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

14           Agriculture by its very success stands as the  
15 chief protector of our open space and conservator of  
16 natural resources. A farmer who cannot or will not  
17 protect his land from environmental degradation will soon  
18 be out of business; and that is not the story of  
19 California's farmer, yet too many in our society fail to  
20 see the truth of that statement, thus some call for  
21 sustainability in food production with the explicit  
22 expectation that such a standard will mandate specific  
23 environmental and even labor practices that may be in  
24 serious conflict with the first mandate of sustainability  
25 in any business endeavor, which is profitability.

1           A vision for California agriculture in 2030 must  
2 clearly ascertain the reasons for lost agricultural  
3 production over time. Do public policies in the state  
4 specifically and unambiguously enhance, advance or promote  
5 the agricultural sector? Stated differently, is  
6 agriculture genuinely accepted as a major pillar of  
7 California's economy now and in the future in principle,  
8 practice and policy? Will essential natural resources be  
9 available in the future to the ag economy, especially  
10 water supplies and comprehensive land use policies that  
11 promote alternatives to development?

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



1 industry will not be what it is today.

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

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

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

16           BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: Al.

17           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Don?

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

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

23           BOARD MEMBER VALPREDO: I'm sorry you ran out of  
24 time because I would like to see all of it, so thank you  
25 very much.

1           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Bob, stick around, and if we  
2 do run out of speakers, then maybe you could sum up if we  
3 have time left over.

4           MR. GRAY: Sure.

5           FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker number 2, Ed Burton.  
6 And after those comments, we'll be moving to speaker 3,  
7 David Landecker.

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

15           But as you know, I'm not a Californian, and  
16 that's neither a plus or a minus, it's just the fact that  
17 I had the opportunity to have worked here in the State of  
18 California in natural resource conservation for the last  
19 three years. I've worked 44 years in my career, and I  
20 have to say that California in all of its families and  
21 individuals that own and operate land to produce food and  
22 fiber for this great state and for our country, that this  
23 is a very, very special place in California. And what  
24 you're about here is critical to the future not only of  
25 California but I believe America, this way of life.

1           And let me just boil my comments down to some  
2 heartfelt things related to conservation. I know for  
3 agriculture to survive, you've got to be economically  
4 profitable, you've got to have all of those markets and  
5 everything that fits in with that; but a piece of that  
6 needs to be conservation of those natural resources. And  
7 that's basically our mission, is a productive landscape of  
8 a healthy environment. We believe those two are  
9 compatible and need to be handled together. And we've  
10 dedicated our entire careers and our vision as an agency  
11 to do that.

12           So as I look at California and if I think 30  
13 years or 20 years out, I'm looking backwards and saying,  
14 where are we at? What I see is we've recognized that the  
15 ethic of voluntary conservation that we espouse was  
16 critical to the survival of agriculture.

17           We recognize the regulatory, the complexity of  
18 the regulatory environment we live in, it's there, but  
19 somehow we figured out how to keep voluntary decision  
20 making by land owners at the core of getting conservation  
21 on the land; and the reason is if conservation or any  
22 other decision for that matter is owned by the heart and  
23 soul of the individual that owns and operates that place,  
24 it's perpetuated from generation to generation. If we  
25 force or regulate or make, it only lasts as long as the

1 watch dog's not looking over the fence.

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

10 And conservation was a cornerstone of our future,  
11 because I see California as a preeminent producer of not  
12 only commodity and produce and food, but also  
13 environmental sustainability. You already are setting  
14 that example, and we've gone a long ways down the road by  
15 2030.

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

24 And we figured out how to come together. You  
25 know, the rangeland coalition was formed back in 2005;

1 they set a real example of how people from the  
2 environmental, regulatory agency and land owners' side  
3 could come together and talk about what they hold in  
4 common in terms of getting conservation on the land and  
5 then worked together to go make that happen. And we used  
6 that process to take on this regulatory issue, not to  
7 eliminate the regulations, but to streamline and simplify  
8 the process to achieve the environmental sustainability to  
9 get the conservation of the land in a timely manner.

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

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

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

24           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

25           FACILITATOR PENNY: All right. Speaker 3, David

1 Landecker. Next will be speaker 4, June Van Wingerden.

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

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

21 As policy makers, rather than as individual  
22 farmers, your challenge is to respect and build upon the  
23 reality of a system driven by personal economic priorities  
24 that also assures that other public policy goals are being  
25 achieved, including the collective economic good, health

1 and safety. Short-term personal savings often end up  
2 having long-term costs to our society. The role of public  
3 policy is to incentivize and sometimes even mandate  
4 decisions that are in our collective best interest.

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

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

24           We need to use our schools to give our children  
25 healthy choices that because of cost or culture they may

1 not have at home. Just as we don't allow our children to  
2 watch television instead of going to class during school  
3 hours, we can't give them a choice to eat food that will  
4 not nourish their bodies.

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

18           Today farmland near urban areas is continually  
19 cannibalized to provide room for urban sprawl. This  
20 removes prime soils from use for food production, converts  
21 carbon-consuming areas into carbon producers, and  
22 localizes food production farther and farther away from  
23 the centers of consumption. Urban development policy must  
24 get beyond short-term economics and penciling out  
25 conversion costs and must begin to be driven by



1 longer-term economic and public needs. Protecting  
2 farmland has to be part of urban planning.

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

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

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

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

24           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Carolyn, before you start the  
25 next speaker, I'd like to introduce Dr. Dave Wehner, who

1 is Dean of Agriculture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and  
2 Adan Ortega, one of our public Members of the Board who  
3 just entered the meeting for your information. Thank you.

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

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

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

17 I grew up on a cotton and corn farm outside of  
18 Tulare, California. It is still being farmed by the now  
19 fifth generation and still owned by my family. It is  
20 becoming much more difficult. There's a lot of  
21 agriculture in California, some of it will remain by 2030,  
22 but market conditions and our own government continue to  
23 make our survival very difficult. I would like to see  
24 greenhouse agriculture survive into those years; we like  
25 what we do.

1 Coastal greenhouse agriculture provides a safe  
2 way to have agriculture close to the urban line. As  
3 population increases, it becomes more and more difficult  
4 to farm next to the non-farm population.

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

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

25 The Coastal Commission staff, and I was there,

1 actually spoke about how the walls and paths of a  
2 greenhouse cover prime soils, while ignoring the fact that  
3 a greenhouse can produce three to six times the quantity  
4 of product that is grown in the same open field space. At  
5 a time greenhouse ag should be encouraged, two government  
6 bodies who know almost nothing about farming decide that  
7 to protect agriculture in the coastal zone, they must  
8 restrict greenhouses.

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

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

1 encourages farm viability.

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

10           Thank you.

11           FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 5, Pete Overgaag.  
12 And next will be speaker 6, Dwayne Ellis. And let me say  
13 now that I am trying to pronounce names correctly, but I  
14 don't have 100 percent accuracy. I invite everybody, when  
15 you start your comments, please restate your name and  
16 accept my apologies if I got it wrong.

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

22           Speaking as a greenhouse grower as well, our  
23 vision for agriculture in 2030 is a lot more greenhouse  
24 production. There are many positive aspects of greenhouse  
25 growing. I have eight examples. Efficient use of water.

1 Most modern greenhouses are hydroponic, continuously  
2 recycling the water. Efficient use of fertilizer. Due to  
3 hydroponic methods, only the fertilizer that's needed is  
4 circulated in the water. The groundwater is protected.  
5 Again, due to the hydroponic systems, there's no water or  
6 nutrients soaking into the ground.

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

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

21 Greenhouse growing does have support from the  
22 USDA. They have recognized the importance of greenhouses  
23 to produce efficiently, to offset continual urbanization  
24 of farmland and population growth. We also appreciate the  
25 support from our State, Governor Schwarzenegger and

1 Secretary Kawamura. In '05 the Governor signed the  
2 amendment to AB365. This amendment to the Food and  
3 Agriculture Code clarified that greenhouses are, in fact,  
4 a positive agricultural method to be included in the  
5 Williamson Act laws pertaining to agricultural preserves.

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

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

22           In addition to all of the challenges facing the  
23 rest of agriculture in our state, many greenhouse growers  
24 also have to deal with the little or no support from our  
25 local government. This is our biggest challenge facing

1 the greenhouse growers. We need support at all levels to  
2 make sure our agricultural production is not shifted to  
3 other countries.

4 Again, thank you for having these listening  
5 sessions.

6 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 6, Dwayne Ellis.

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

8 FACILITATOR PENNY: Oh, see, there we go, all  
9 about the name thing. I was just in time. Delaney Ellis.  
10 Up next will be speaker 7, Zoila Aguilar.

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

17 As I produced three documentary films for the AFA  
18 about different aspects of the agriculture, three themes  
19 kept surfacing. First, how do we craft policies and  
20 practices for our local farmers and ag industry in a  
21 market controlled by global forces? Second, how do we  
22 link consumers and producers so that the public values and  
23 supports and protects our agricultural assets? And third,  
24 how can we prepare for the extreme changes in agriculture  
25 that rising oil prices and climate change are going to



1 require? All three of these issues are rooted in an  
2 international food system that has gotten too big, too  
3 unwieldy, less responsive, and ultimately unsustainable if  
4 oil prices keep escalating.

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

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

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

1 from a neighboring farm.

2           When consumers take the risk of investing, both  
3 the risks and the profits, benefits in a farmers' CSA,  
4 they're immediately reconnected with their food source and  
5 have a reason to preserve that prime farmland and to pay a  
6 fair price for the labor. As they come to remember what  
7 fresh, seasonal food really tastes like, they can do  
8 without the gassed fruit picked too early from foreign  
9 locales, which reduces the global competition. All this  
10 takes time, but it is happening even as we sit here today.

11           Place-specific agriculture is not the only  
12 answer. In a state as bountiful as California, exports  
13 will always play a significant role, but building a  
14 diversified regional food shed and increasing our local  
15 food security is the answer that an energized group of  
16 people in the Ojai valley is committed to. Our vision is  
17 to begin greening our neighborhoods block by block with  
18 edible landscaping. We're planning to launch a modern  
19 victory garden campaign throughout the valley. We're  
20 organizing a group of volunteers who will come to  
21 someone's home and install a kitchen garden in one fell  
22 swoop with music and a meal and a lot of fun, just like an  
23 old-fashioned barn raising.

24           The commercial beekeeper is going to stock our  
25 gardens and farms with hives and tend them for us rather

1 than trucking them all to the central valley. The local  
2 horse stables are delivering aged horse manure for our  
3 fertilizer. Courses in permaculture, biointensive and  
4 eco-farming are sprouting up all over the valley.

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

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

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

25           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Delaney.

1 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

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

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

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

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

24 So I'm here present, and thank you very much  
25 because I also support my farming colleagues. Thank you.

1 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 8, Belen Seara. And  
2 then we'll go to speaker 9, Aubrey Sloan.

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

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

21 Number two, my point is public transportation.  
22 As Zoila said before, this industry, agriculture uses  
23 undocumented workers as a workforce, and most of them do  
24 not have a valid driver's license. So they have to drive  
25 to get to work because there is no public transportation

1 available. And that represents, of course, a threat to  
2 the safety of our community.

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

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

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

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

25           But I want to thank you today for being here, and

1 thank you so much for your time.

2 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

3 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 9, Aubrey Sloan.

4 Next up will be speaker 10, Emily Ayala.

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

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

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

25 Looking to the future, it can be difficult,

1 and as we've seen for generations, the only thing that  
2 remains constant in agriculture is that things always  
3 continually change. The state's cattle industry is no  
4 exception. Since the arriving of Portola and the Spanish,  
5 ranches and cattle herds have been a huge part of the  
6 dynamic agriculture industry we know today. The only  
7 certainty has been change itself. We've all grown  
8 accustomed to change.

9           What is my vision for agriculture by 2030?  
10 Cattle ranchers own or manage nearly 30 million acres in  
11 California, a fact that demonstrates the prevalence of the  
12 industry and underscores the importance of maintaining  
13 ranching families to provide stewardship and economic  
14 support for our state's land and water resources, wildlife  
15 and the communities. 22 years from now, I hope California  
16 agriculture and California's beef industry in particular  
17 will remain world leaders in innovation and production of  
18 safe and healthy products.

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

25           A positive vision for the future includes a



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

11 Part of a vision for a successful industry in  
12 2030, however, includes more certainty in the production  
13 environment, more economically and regulatory-wise. This  
14 will allow producers to focus on the business at hand  
15 rather than concerns about decisions made in government  
16 that limit the availability of land and water resources  
17 upon which food production demands.

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

24 What is the biggest challenge in achieving that  
25 vision? The biggest hurdle to achieving this vision is

1 the lack of understanding by the average person of the  
2 challenges of agriculture and the value of our safe,  
3 stable and affordable food supply. Improved awareness  
4 from the general public will be the only thing that stems  
5 attacks from interest groups on family farms and ranches  
6 that make it significantly more difficult to operate a  
7 successful business here in comparison to neighboring  
8 states or other countries.

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

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

20           Another significant challenge is the current  
21 trend in California relative to land and water use and  
22 conversion. Most of the emphasis appears to be towards  
23 development and municipal uses as well as production of  
24 high-value crops. Livestock production ceases to be the  
25 highest value use of many parcels of lands throughout the

1 state. Livestock production is pushed to the fringes in  
2 lieu of grapes, grains and other high-value crops and  
3 houses now occupying historic rangeland. California's  
4 beef cattle industry is working now with a broad group of  
5 stakeholders through the California Range Conservation  
6 Coalition.

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

13 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Bud.

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

16 MR. SLOAN: You bet.

17 PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

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

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

22 I'm a fifth-generation farmer in the Ojai valley.  
23 My family grows over 30 varieties of citrus; we're very  
24 diversified on a small amount of land. I often, when I  
25 got your message about this meeting, I wondered if my

1 grandfather had as many doubts and fears about the future  
2 as I do now.

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

19           Some other issues that I think we really need to  
20 focus on, exotic pest exclusion and detection is just key  
21 right now. We've got the Citrus Psyllid down in Tijuana,  
22 and the Citrus Research Board is really focusing on trying  
23 to keep that out. That will really be a nail in the  
24 coffin for California citrus, especially small growers  
25 such as myself.

1 I'd like to see the state really encourage  
2 entities such as the University of California and Citrus  
3 Research Board. They do great work, and we really need to  
4 keep working with them.

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

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

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

1 feed and clothe ourselves as a nation.

2 So thank you for having us.

3 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

4 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 11, Margie Bartels.

5 Up next will be speaker 12, Andy Calderwood.

6 MS. BARTELS: Hi. My name is Margie Bartels, and  
7 my sister Sally and I farm about 75 acres of mostly  
8 Valencia oranges in Bardsdale, and we custom farm another  
9 70 acres for family and neighbors there who are  
10 third-generation farmers.

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

14 Here are some things we hope to see happening in  
15 California agriculture in 2030: Widespread consumer and  
16 government support of family farms. A majority of  
17 consumers buying and eating locally. More farmers'  
18 markets and CSAs, community supported agriculture.  
19 Gardens and salad bars will be standard in schools,  
20 hospitals, and other institutions. Less burdensome  
21 government regulation of farms. Industry-wide practices  
22 implemented by the farming community to ensure food  
23 safety. A stable, steady labor supply. Preservation of  
24 prime agricultural land by conservation easements and  
25 local development restrictions. Availability of water at

1 a reasonable price. An improved and more consistent  
2 invasive pest detection and exclusion system. No one in  
3 California going hungry, ever.

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

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

22           Government must see that water sources and  
23 supplies are protected and preserved for agriculture in  
24 California. Local governments must strictly limit  
25 development of prime farmland. Government must stand up

1 to minority groups with their own agenda and counter their  
2 anti-agriculture theories with sound science. Government  
3 must make protection and promotion of agriculture a  
4 priority.

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

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

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

25           California must balance support of large



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

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

14 Thank you.

15 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

16 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 12, Andy Calderwood.

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

18 MR. CALDERWOOD: Thanks for allowing me to speak.

19 I'm Andy Calderwood. I'm with the Ag Commissioner's  
20 office here in Ventura County, but don't take any of my  
21 comments as representing the ag commission.

22 First of all, I would like to imagine that we  
23 have an honest farm worker policy, one which doesn't  
24 exploit a flood of desperate labor from foreign nations.  
25 Anything which requires a flood of economically-displaced

1 refugees, essentially, is in itself not sustainable. We  
2 have to work toward developing a policy which fairly  
3 compensates workers for the work that they do.

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

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

23           So I think -- I like the themes in your  
24 agricultural vision, and I'm not addressing a lot of the  
25 things that are ably covered there or covered by people

1 who have spoken already.

2           I think we do kind of need to address the  
3 400-pound gorilla in the room, which didn't seem to be  
4 addressed in the visioning statement, and that is  
5 overpopulation. Anything that we do in increasing  
6 efficiencies and improving the cleanliness, reducing  
7 pollution of any of the activities we take will be swamped  
8 by unfettered population growth. At some point we have to  
9 say what is the population that the planet can manage and  
10 then work toward achieving that. We could never have  
11 sustainability with the unsustained population growth.  
12 I'll leave my comments there.

13           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you very much.

14           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

15           FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 13, Steve Barnard.

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

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

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

1 dominated the early 1900s, then came vegetables and  
2 citrus. Now we have thousands of acres of strawberries,  
3 avocados, sod, raspberries, and hot houses with citrus and  
4 vegetables on the decline. Why is this? Well, it has to  
5 do with cost, revenue, and competition. Unless revenues  
6 exceed costs, most of the time we are not sustainable. So  
7 things change.

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

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

21           Today California is a leader in the world food  
22 production; but at least in products with which I am  
23 familiar, avocados and asparagus, there are a lot of  
24 highly-educated, well-financed, aggressive, state-of-the-  
25 art competition coming out of South America. Their

1 production has higher yields, lower costs, and most of all  
2 they have a government that actually wants them to  
3 flourish, very unlike here.

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

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

22           Thank you for your time and good luck.

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

25           MS. SCHMIDT: Good afternoon, and thank you for

1 the opportunity to speak to you today. I am Karen  
2 Schmidt, Executive Director of an environmental  
3 organization here in Ventura County called Save Open Space  
4 and Agricultural Resources, or SOAR. With me are Sandy  
5 Curwood, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at the  
6 Ventura Unified School District, and Phil McGrath of  
7 McGrath Family Farms.

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

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

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

20 One, all people across generations are linked to  
21 each other and interdependent through our social,  
22 ecological and economic systems and are accountable for  
23 the effects of our actions on each other and our future  
24 generations. We must ensure that our actions today do not  
25 degrade the earth's resources, including soil, air and

1 water and we do not impede the ability of the future  
2 generations to thrive.

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

11           MR. McGRATH: Our goals are echoed in the Roots  
12 of Change goals that have already been presented to you  
13 with some of our current and former members participating  
14 and formulating. We particularly share a belief in the  
15 importance of collaborative partnerships to achieve  
16 sustainability in agriculture and field systems, to  
17 protect and restore strategic farmland, and reward farmers  
18 for their conservation services, to develop regional  
19 supply, purchasing, and distribution infrastructure, and  
20 build regional identity systems for food to support new  
21 and existing Farm To School programs, to re-link urban and  
22 rural communities, to make healthy food available and  
23 accessible to low-income populations, and to provide basic  
24 security, health care, housing and meaningful livelihoods  
25 for all food and farm workers.

1 MS. CURWOOD: AFA members believe that  
2 responsibility for maintaining the vitality of our  
3 agriculture and our food systems is shared by farmers,  
4 policy makers and consumers alike. Acting on this belief,  
5 we developed a set of guidelines and goals for each of  
6 these community partners.

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

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

23 Farmers can steward their resources and the  
24 environment and forge stronger links with their urban  
25 neighbors by taking these other actions; reducing or



1 eliminating the use of potentially harmful materials,  
2 using renewable energy sources whenever possible,  
3 maximizing efficiency of water, providing labeling  
4 information about where and under what conditions products  
5 were grown, ensuring safe and equitable working conditions  
6 for farm workers.

7           MS. CURWOOD: Elected representatives who set  
8 public policy affect farming through their decisions  
9 regarding urban boundaries, development, and  
10 transportation projects, zoning and other regulations.  
11 Some of the policies that can reinforce agriculture's  
12 viability and sustainability include confining development  
13 within designated urban boundaries, supporting farm worker  
14 housing, requiring developers to create buffer zones  
15 between urban use and neighboring farms, avoiding prime  
16 farmland when sitting schools, jails, and other public  
17 facilities, and not extending or expanding transportation  
18 corridors across agricultural land.

19           MS. SCHMIDT: We believe that our community,  
20 business, and state leaders need to map out a bold and  
21 inspiring vision for the future of agriculture and food  
22 systems and to develop market-based strategies to achieve  
23 that vision that have been honed against a range of  
24 what-if scenarios that examine the possibility. Many  
25 would argue the inevitability that our society and economy

1 in 2030 will look significantly different from today as a  
2 result of climate change, water scarcity and rising energy  
3 costs.

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

7 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 MR. SCOTT DEARDORFF: Hi. My name is Scott  
25 Deardorff, fourth-generation family farm here in Oxnard.

1 And it's no coincidence that my name is spelled the same  
2 as Tom's.

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

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

24           In our company, in our family farm we look at  
25 sustainability as a journey, it's a never-ending journey,

1 there's no defined definition for it. We're always  
2 striving to be more sustainable every day.

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

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

18           And there are also three, I believe, responsible  
19 parties to create a sustainable agriculture or sustainable  
20 industry. Number one being, of course, the farmer or the  
21 producer has a responsibility to balance those three Ps  
22 and keep them in balance and be profitable so that we can  
23 be sustainable in the future. But I also think the  
24 consumer has a huge responsibility in creating a  
25 sustainable industry. They need the support of education

1 to make intelligent choices at the supermarket about  
2 buying sustainable products, and I think CDFA can help  
3 with that education. And also, and more importantly  
4 today, and that's your role, being the government, I think  
5 that's the third leg of creating sustainable agriculture  
6 and the third responsible party.

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

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

24           Also, land use. I can't think of a more  
25 high-pressure land use, high-cost land use area than

1 California. With the increased pressure to develop our  
2 land, we need fair and comprehensive land use policies,  
3 and to that extent, to what extent CDFA can do on that,  
4 well, maybe helping create incentives.

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

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

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

1 inaccuracies that happen can be detrimental to an  
2 industry, let alone the state.

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

6           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Scott.

7           PRESIDENT MONTANA: Thanks.

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

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

15           My concern is adequate housing for farm workers,  
16 an issue which has been raised by a number of the other  
17 speakers before me. Habitat for Humanity of Ventura  
18 County has been building homes here in Ventura County for  
19 25 years with low-income families. Many of our 44  
20 homeowners are farm workers. Before moving into a Habitat  
21 home, many of our families were living in garages, six  
22 family members to a one-bedroom apartment, and even in  
23 cars. We had one family with a young child who was living  
24 in a car for six months. Many more families still live in  
25 such situations, and I believe this is unacceptable.

1 I believe a must-have for agriculture is adequate  
2 farm worker housing. Some of the hurdles to providing  
3 housing are zoning restrictions, density restrictions,  
4 inadequate funding, lengthy permit processing, burdensome  
5 site improvement requirements, and of course, the ever  
6 with us NIMBY attitude.

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

10 Thank you for this opportunity.

11 PRESIDENT MONTANA: Thank you, Nancy.

12 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

13 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 18, Chris Sayer. And  
14 then next will be speaker 19, Sonia Flores.

15 MR. SAYER: Mr. Secretary, Members of the Board,  
16 thank you for coming down to Oxnard this afternoon. I'm  
17 proud to be a fifth-generation farmer in Ventura County.  
18 We grow avocados and citrus today, but our family  
19 operation dates back to when dry farmed lima beans were a  
20 staple of the Ventura economy. We've seen many changes  
21 and many crops, but we've continued to evolve. To my  
22 mind, this is the essence of sustainable agriculture.

23 Much will be said today about the need for  
24 supporting small farms. In no area is a small farm at a  
25 greater disadvantage to large competitors than in



1 regulatory compliance. When a single set of shoulders has  
2 to bear the weight, the burden gets heavy. If it is the  
3 goal of our policies not to have small farmers choose to  
4 lay that burden down, we must examine the load.

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

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

23           With Ventura county's diversity of crops, there's  
24 not a day in the year that something isn't being harvested  
25 and sent to market. Our large operations are essential to

1 maintain a healthy population of equipment dealers and  
2 service providers. Mid-size family farmers often provide  
3 much of the leadership, and local co-ops and associations.  
4 Small farms help to sustain the agricultural service  
5 economy and often pioneer specialty crops while feeding  
6 local markets. There's room for them all. We need them  
7 all. Our vision should embrace them all.

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

23           To look at the broader view for a moment, there  
24 is a nutritional crisis all over our country, and  
25 California agriculture has the ability to deliver

1 nutritional produce throughout the year. It is  
2 appropriate both ethically and economically that we do so.  
3 Changes in policy should recognize that agriculture is a  
4 source of economic strength for California and a resource  
5 for our nation.

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

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

23           I often hear it said that we must have a common  
24 vision of the future and creativity and innovation will be  
25 necessary for success. But if innovation and creativity

1 are the solution to the problems of our food system, then  
2 is a common vision the meaningful goal? Has genuine  
3 innovation ever emerged from within a broadly-held common  
4 vision, or has it been the fringe view, the uncommon  
5 vision that's been the origin of innovation? History is  
6 filled with the creative souls who have found new ways to  
7 accomplish what was thought to be impossible.

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

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

19           I'm pleased that CDFA's recognizing these issues.  
20 Again, Mr. Secretary, I thank you for your time.

21           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Chris.

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

25           MS. FLORES: Hello. My name is Sonia Flores.

1 I'm the coordinator of House Farm Workers, a project of  
2 the Ag Futures Alliance Farm Worker Housing Task Force  
3 that was founded in 2004. Our organization includes  
4 broad-based representation from growers, leaders in ag,  
5 civic groups such as the League of Women Voters, and  
6 faith-based groups such as VC Clue as well as concerned  
7 citizens.

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

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

25           We are a community that prides itself on being an

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

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

12 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

13 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 20, Lauro Barajas.

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

15 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Just keep going.

16 FACILITATOR PENNY: Keep going?

17 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Just keep going.

18 PRESIDENT MONTNA: Yeah.

19 FACILITATOR PENNY: All right. So after speaker

20 20 we'll have speaker 21, Fred Klose.

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

25 And my vision for 2030, it's hopefully we can eat

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

9           I was pretty upset with Mexican government  
10 because just to give you an example, five, ten years ago  
11 they was importing more than 60 percent of corn to feed  
12 the people. That's a shame, isn't it? So the problem is  
13 every year we have kind of the same. Because we can see  
14 more people -- more things that more fruit, vegetables,  
15 whatever, we consume coming from other parts of the world.

16           So in April I went to Michoacan, Mexico. You  
17 know, when I started going to the fields and I start  
18 looking at a lot of strawberries and blueberries, so I  
19 thought I was in Oxnard, not in Michoacan. So I went to a  
20 place where they were filling up these big trucks. They  
21 use the labor, cheap labor, indigenous there, bring it  
22 here. That's the problem we have.

23           And that when I said that it's pretty difficult  
24 to continue surviving in agriculture, the government don't  
25 really step on it and put some clear rules

1 (unintelligible) local agriculture.

2           So basically we need growers and farm workers.  
3 Without two of them, we're in trouble. We need to depend  
4 on what China wants to do with the food we wanted to  
5 consume. And just compare when you eat Chilean peach and  
6 California peach; it's nothing to compare.

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

18           Thank you.

19           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

20           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

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

23           MR. KLOSE: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen  
24 of the Board, A.G., good to see you. I'm very glad to be  
25 here today, particularly since I was in Sacramento



1 yesterday and was given a great reason to come down here  
2 and get out of the smoke up there.

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

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

22 There's also a world market out there that agrees  
23 with them, in that the world believes that French products  
24 are the best in the world. And France is recognized  
25 worldwide for its cuisine and also as a desirable tourist

1 destination for people that want to go hang out in the  
2 south of France and drink wine and eat nice cheese.  
3 That's where you go. So I thought, you know, France may  
4 have some other things going against it, but as a model  
5 for California agriculture, I think we have -- we could do  
6 worse.

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

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

17           As we all know, the bulwark of California ag  
18 products are what we call the specialty crops. These  
19 specialty crops developed in California in what I would  
20 call a closed system, where California supplied the nation  
21 with fresh fruits and vegetables in somewhat of a vacuum.  
22 There was not a lot of competition coming from overseas.  
23 In fact, we haven't really, except for bananas, we haven't  
24 seen much in the way of fresh product competition up until  
25 the early nineties.

1           Now, most of the world operated at a subsistence  
2 level. You know, all of these Chile -- we heard the  
3 previous gentleman talking about Chilean nectarines; in  
4 the eighties it was running at a subsistence level. They  
5 were not producing fruits and vegetables to export, they  
6 were trying to kind of grow a little bit of corn to feed  
7 themselves. Today that's all changed, we're in a  
8 completely different environment.

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

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

1 California Avocado Commission built the market and brought  
2 into it cheap, cheap product.

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

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

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

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

20           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Fred.

21           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks, Fred.

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

24           MS. WELLER-BROWN: Hi. My name is Gail  
25 Weller-Brown. I'm the convener of the Oxnard Farm Worker

1 Housing Group. We support and promote the provision of  
2 safe, decent, affordable housing for farm workers in  
3 Oxnard, including the building of new housing and  
4 upgrading or preserving of existing housing. We do this  
5 through community education, advocacy, and linking groups  
6 that address farm worker issues, housing issues.

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

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

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

24 And I know Delaney mentioned this film that she's  
25 produced, and if you would be willing to watch it, I would

1 be willing to buy it. It's short and it's very much to  
2 the point. So if you have the time to watch it, I'd be  
3 very happy to buy a copy for you.

4 Thank you.

5 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

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

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

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

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

1 Farm To School become part of the mission of CDFA.

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

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

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

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

24 Farm To School presents really good opportunities  
25 to teach people about where their food comes from and why

1 that's important. Farm To School has been shown to  
2 increase fruit and vegetable consumption among students.  
3 It's also a great opportunity for farmers to participate  
4 in direct marketing opportunities. And at the root of it,  
5 it just really makes sense for California food to go to  
6 California's kids.

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

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

24 Thank you.

25 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.



1 FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up we have Jan Berk,  
2 speaker 24. And then we have speaker 25, Jim Churchill.

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

5 FACILITATOR PENNY: Sorry.

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

8 I'm with San Miguel Produce. I'm wearing a few  
9 hats here actually today. My partner, Roy Ishimori, is a  
10 third-generation farmer here in southern California. San  
11 Miguel's been here in Ventura County, Oxnard, for about  
12 30-some years. I'm also wearing a hat of the Leafy Greens  
13 Marketing Agreement Board. I serve on that board as well  
14 as the 31st DAA. And I'm on the Ventura County Fair  
15 Board. So I'm just going to kind of talk about a couple  
16 of different things.

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

24 Over the next decade California agriculture will  
25 continue to face many challenges. You've heard a lot of

1 them today; sustainability has been mentioned many times,  
2 globalization has been mentioned many times, labor has  
3 been mentioned many times. There's a lot of different  
4 issues that we face, and obviously you're going to play a  
5 role, and we're all going to play a role in addressing  
6 those issues and how we get the right resources to get our  
7 arms around those is very critical.

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

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

23           One of the challenges that I see is that as an  
24 industry, agriculture is the number one industry here in  
25 California. You've heard the globalization and there's a

1 lot of outsourcing, how many farmers are either continuing  
2 to shut or move their operations either in part or in  
3 total outside of the -- outside of the United States even,  
4 or outside of these states. That's a challenge that we  
5 face. We face that as an industry as well as as a state  
6 with other businesses. We're always seeking and chasing  
7 after businesses to come, we spend billions of dollars  
8 recruiting businesses from all over the world. A lot of  
9 money goes into that.

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

23           The 31st DAA encourages the CDFA to continue to  
24 support county fairs as it looks to the future of the ag  
25 industry in developing this new vision. We hope that the

1 CDFA will look to the county fairs and support and enhance  
2 this new vision that you come up with to utilize that  
3 asset going forward.

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

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

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

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

16           A couple of things. My first point is that I  
17 hope that there still is agriculture in California in  
18 2030. A lot of economists and other people get all  
19 excited about the transition to the information economy  
20 and the service economy, but you can't eat or wear  
21 information or services. Agriculture is a complicated  
22 team effort requiring many skills, and as there are fewer  
23 and fewer of us farmers, I fear that the necessary skills  
24 might not survive. So looking to the future, I hope that  
25 we will institute or re-institute classroom instruction in

1 the wide subjects that support production.

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

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

20           And then just on a personal note as an eater, the  
21 next thing, with respect to energy costs, speaking as an  
22 eater and as a consumer who doesn't know about other  
23 facets of agriculture, I would really like to see  
24 state-licensed packing houses, slaughter houses, meat  
25 slaughter houses, regional, locally, so that I could eat

1 meat that didn't get raised in Coalinga and shipped to  
2 Iowa and shipped back to me.

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

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

22 As an independent grower and shipper, I seek to  
23 establish a contract of sorts between myself and my  
24 customers. I want to produce and sell fruit that really  
25 tastes good and that people will recognize as such. I am

1 not willing to try to make my living by selling at  
2 farmers' markets. They are fun, we do our local Ojai  
3 farmers' market, and we like the cash, but they're a huge  
4 time sink for us.

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

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

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

22           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thanks, Jim.

23           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

24           FACILITATOR PENNY: Next up we speaker 26, Lisa  
25 Brenneis. And then Marty Fujita, speaker 27.

1 MS. BRENNEIS: Hello. Thank you for doing this.  
2 I know how hard it is to sit hour to hour just listening  
3 and listening and listening, so I salute you. I hope  
4 these remarks which have been very moving to me to see so  
5 many people who have given so much thought and goodwill to  
6 this topic, I hope that the remarks will be made generally  
7 available on the website, because it's just agriculture  
8 really is big, isn't it, here in California.

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

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

17 Thank you for inviting me. My name is Lisa  
18 Brenneis. My husband Jim and I operate Churchill Orchard  
19 up in Ojai. And so I'm going to concentrate on a specific  
20 vision today. A rejuvenated regional distribution system  
21 for California's agricultural products that supports  
22 growers, wholesalers, retailers, and customers of all  
23 sizes by recognizing that a vibrant food system requires  
24 opportunities and efficiencies at every scale. Scale  
25 comes up over and over and over again in the food



1 production and distribution business, and as many of you  
2 know because of your experience, scale changes everything  
3 over and over again.

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

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

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

1 it possible for us to take the next step.

2           Still too small to supply a grocery chain, we  
3 connected with Melissa's World Variety down in Vernon,  
4 energetic wholesalers who developed a national business by  
5 serving as a bridge between smaller specialty growers and  
6 mid-size to large grocery chains. So Melissa's goes  
7 through a lot of exertions to connect and aggregate small  
8 growers so that they can collect enough product to be able  
9 to even knock on the door of a mid-size grocery chain.  
10 This is where we're at. This is where the scale has  
11 gotten us.

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

23           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Lisa.

24           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

25           FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 27, Marty Fujita.

1 And then will be speaker 28, Maricela Morales.

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

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

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

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

22 Today I'd like to advocate on behalf of keeping  
23 agricultural life alive in California as a resident of  
24 this county, as an eater, a kind of successful gardener,  
25 and an evolutionary ecologist and environmentalist. I

1 generally agree with the comments of the Roots of Change  
2 campaign for a new mainstream developed to provide a new  
3 vision for 2030. And as a member of the Ventura Ag  
4 Futures Alliance stewardship committee, I also am very  
5 supportive of their recommendations.

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

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

23 Secondary effects that are just as damaging to  
24 agriculture include such things as increases in the number  
25 and in the voracity of the kinds of alien species and

1 pests that are coming across and invading our agricultural  
2 fields, and shifts in growing zones and growing seasons.

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

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

24           I'd like to offer a couple of suggestions for  
25 consideration to allow agriculture to survive in the face

1 of climate change. Number one, plan and conduct modeling  
2 research to determine optimal growing areas in California  
3 using predicted changes in factors such as water  
4 availability, weather pattern, soil types, migration of  
5 pests, et cetera; develop these adaptive scenarios to  
6 secure high-priority areas for the future; think about and  
7 encourage cooperatives of farmers, retail, distribution,  
8 land trusts in these areas; identify ag for easements;  
9 promote regionalization of food and distribution systems  
10 that would support family farms and smaller distributions  
11 in retailers, which would also provide greater food  
12 security and healthier foods; increase diversification of  
13 crops to minimize impacts of pests and meet food needs of  
14 the regions, and this also goes along with maintaining the  
15 genetic diversity of a lot of crops so that we have the  
16 ability to respond to drought and climate change.

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

22           Here's my comments. Thank you.

23           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

24           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

25           FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 28, Maricela Morales.

1 And then we'll be at speaker 29, Rob Roy.

2           You have a total of 31 speakers on my list, just  
3 to let you know where you are.

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

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

18           My name is Maricela Morales. And in Redding -- I  
19 read the transcripts from Redding and Sacramento, thank  
20 you for those; you spoke, Secretary Kawamura, and you  
21 said, in our state, in agriculture, you've got all kinds  
22 of leaders trying to move us forward in all the different  
23 counties, parallel efforts to move the state forward in an  
24 agricultural direction. The parallel lines don't meet.  
25 What we need to do is have converging lines and a vision

1 where we're all headed.

2           And I want to speak from my own experience of  
3 converging lines. I'm California born but born of  
4 immigrant parents. And I grew up in Los Angeles and at  
5 four years old moved to Ventura County. And at that age I  
6 remember, I remember moving from a place where there was  
7 only concrete and asphalt to a place where I was  
8 surrounded by agriculture. And I grew up working in a  
9 grocery store where farm workers and their children came  
10 to buy their food. And for as much as our family  
11 struggled, being small business owners, for as much as we  
12 struggled and lived on hand-me-downs, even at a young age  
13 I was aware that I was better off than the farm worker  
14 children that I went to school with and whose parents came  
15 to our store.

16           Today, working as Associate Executive Director of  
17 CAUSE, our mission is to promote economic, social and  
18 environmental justice, as a member of the Ventura Ag  
19 Futures Alliance, as a council member of the City of Port  
20 Hueneme, as a Stewardship Councilmember of the Roots of  
21 Change fund, what is a must-have is for us to truly work  
22 collaboratively to engage the diverse sectors of our  
23 community from the grass roots to the grass tops. We need  
24 farm workers at the table at all levels. This is a real  
25 challenge.



1           The other thing that we need is to raise the  
2 focus on social equity. Having read the transcripts, the  
3 triple bottom line or the three Es keep coming up. The  
4 need to look at the environment, to look at the economy or  
5 profitability for all scale of farmers and food producers,  
6 and the third E of equity comes up as well. Equity is the  
7 one that, given my personal history, I am most familiar  
8 with.

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

24           And just to end, that we are at a time of  
25 transition and we have examples of working together as

1 opposed to against one another. And as an example, CAUSE,  
2 Roots of Change, Ag Futures Alliance and many others stand  
3 with you to work towards these goals. Thank you.

4 PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

5 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you.

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

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

17 Unfortunately, as an attorney most of my efforts  
18 towards viability of agriculture have been at the cost of  
19 lawsuits. That's been my preferred method of maintaining  
20 the viability of our farmers, and it's worked quite  
21 effectively, but I'm really glad that you're here today,  
22 because I feel like Don Quixote out there twisting from  
23 windmills. It's nice to see that there might be an  
24 alternative way of exploring the viability of maintaining  
25 this precious industry.

1           I'm just going to basically respond to some of  
2 the interrogatories that you posed today for the meeting.  
3 And in terms of what's my vision for agriculture for 2030,  
4 there are a number of things I'd like to see. I'd like to  
5 see regulatory laws that are based upon sound science and  
6 not scare tactics regulated by the media. I would like to  
7 see international competition that has less restrictions  
8 and less trade barriers in them for our farmers. I would  
9 like to see a skilled and dependable workforce that won't  
10 be displaced by mechanization, which means that some  
11 people in Congress have to get off their duff and do their  
12 job.

13           I would like to see more availability of water  
14 and good quality water for our farmers. I would like to  
15 see less environmental cost and burdens that are  
16 confronting our farmers both from the California  
17 Environmental Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act.  
18 I would like to see more public support for the plight of  
19 farmers. I think that, you know, Ventura County is not  
20 your typical county; I think we have a lot of public  
21 support here for our farming industry, and it's nice to  
22 see that.

23           I would like to see more uniform and consistent  
24 laws that don't change with administrations. I think it's  
25 important that once we set laws in place, that growers

1 like to know that they have a long-term investment and  
2 they have laws that they can depend upon. And I would  
3 like to see more funding for conservancies to purchase the  
4 farmers' development rights so that those farmers who want  
5 to stay in farming but are pressured by the high cost of  
6 developing their property, whether it be for family  
7 reasons or state purposes, have the ability to sell those  
8 to conservancies and maintain their properties in farming.

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

16           I would also like to educate the public on the  
17 challenges that confront our farmers day to day and what  
18 are the benefit of the environmental and air quality  
19 benefits. A lot of people never consider what the  
20 contribution of agriculture is to air quality in making  
21 any regulatory laws. Purdue did a study in 2004 that said  
22 that they took all of the acreage that was in Williamson  
23 Act contracts in '93 and they found out that production  
24 agriculture sequesters carbon at a certain amount per ton  
25 per acre. And I think their estimate was 13 or 15 tons of

1 carbon are sequestered every year in California because of  
2 ag production, yet no one seems to want to talk about that  
3 in the public discourse.

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

16 What is the must-have in the vision? Well, first  
17 of all we need strong laws and regulations enabling the  
18 CDFA to protect the agricultural industry. We're losing  
19 ground on the pest exclusion and pest eradication effort.  
20 We have laws in place that are being eradicated by private  
21 citizens seeking temporary restraining orders and  
22 preliminary injunctions. That power has to be reinstated  
23 in order to protect the industry. We need to have more  
24 regulatory control of the retail organizations that are  
25 essentially monopolizing our industry. Growers have

1 become price takers, not price makers. We need to develop  
2 more funding for mechanization. Mechanization will have a  
3 role in this century with regard to the agricultural  
4 industry.

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

20           So thank you for your time.

21           SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thanks, Rob.

22           PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you, Rob.

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

25           MS. LOMELI: Good afternoon. My name is Erica

1 Lomeli. Thank you for being here. I'm with the United  
2 Farm Workers Foundation, and much of our work is aligned  
3 with the efforts of the UFW.

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

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

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

23 And I guess one of the must-haves that I would  
24 like to share is that this is the meaningful participation  
25 of the hundreds of thousands of farm workers that are part

1 of the industry; we ask the CDFA to broaden their  
2 constituents to include farm workers and perhaps designate  
3 a seat on the CDFA for a farm worker to be part of or an  
4 ag worker organization to be a participant.

5 And that's it. Thank you.

6 FACILITATOR PENNY: Speaker 31, Darcey Lober.

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

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

23 At the risk of sounding like a luddite, I think  
24 farming will go back to not only being a business  
25 concerned with profits and its own bottom line, but will



1 be scientists exploring how to figure out new ways to  
2 maximize the yields and the resources they have site  
3 specific, ecologically-sustainable environments. I want  
4 this because my 17-year-old son has a desire to go into  
5 farming.

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

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

23 My hope is that the idea of manifest destiny will  
24 finally be put to rest and it will no longer be acceptable  
25 that only a few profit from the fruits of the earth at the

1 expense of the many who toil. Factory farms will become,  
2 once again, family farms. In order to do this, farmers  
3 will diversify, crops will diversify, there will be an  
4 emphasis on cooperation with the natural world, water  
5 conservation, and a redistribution of the wealth generated  
6 by the farm business.

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

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

1 Thank you.

2 PRESIDENT MONTNA: Thank you.

3 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you very much.

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

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

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

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EDDY: 150.

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

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

23 SECRETARY KAWAMURA: Thank you, Al.

24 Good afternoon, everybody. Thanks for your time,  
25 your thoughts, your commitment to agriculture. I know

1 there were a couple questions really quickly and I have  
2 for some of the speakers, and also a comment that please  
3 make sure if you have comments or you want to rephrase  
4 your comments or re-put them together, to submit them  
5 online at our website, because that is very important for  
6 us.

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

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

1 going to have to deal with a food supply that gets  
2 challenged.

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

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

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

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

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

21           I know here in Ventura and Oxnard and this area  
22 the challenges are not that different, but there certainly  
23 seems to be a little more thought in where your future  
24 lies. Recognizing then that a county with no plan or a  
25 state with no plan for that matter, a country with no

1 plan, that -- for agriculture, no plan for agriculture,  
2 boy, we're in a very tough spot as we recognize that we've  
3 got some very big challenges. And I think the very simple  
4 thing that all of us that are growers in the room  
5 recognize is that unpredictable weather means  
6 unpredictable harvests; it's that simple. So there's a  
7 lot of things out there that we're going to be able to do  
8 well in the future.

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

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

25 This process will continue; it's not a one-year

1 process by the way, it's a dynamic that will continue.  
2 We'll try and always have a plan for the state that can be  
3 revamped, revitalized. It can lead to many things  
4 including, whether it's farm worker housing, whether it's  
5 more pressure on this state to create or on this country  
6 to have a legal workforce, whether it means a reliable  
7 water supply, whether it means a stronger, much tougher  
8 system for keeping out invasive species, for example.

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

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

22           The work that the ag commissioners do in each  
23 county is just an amazing, enormous-responsibility job.  
24 They don't get the thanks I think often enough that they  
25 deserve, but without this amazing system that we have in

1 the State of California -- we're the only state in the  
2 nation that has a system of ag commissioners appointed by  
3 the county supervisors to help work in partnership with  
4 our Department and the USDA and with the cities and  
5 counties. It's a very important system. And I want to  
6 thank you for all the great work you guys do and your  
7 departments.

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

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

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

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



1 appreciated too. Thanks.

2 Ed Burton is -- is he here today?

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

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

13 Robert Jones is with Labor and Workforce Agency.  
14 Robert, are you here? Thank you for your assistance  
15 there.

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

1 understanding what our needs will be for the future.

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

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

25           Jeanette Lombardo, California Ag for Women, if

1 you're here, thank you so much for all the work you folks  
2 do in every county, the enormous amount of volunteers you  
3 have, we really appreciate the work you do. Barbara  
4 Boester, Barbara Boester-Quaid, hi, Barbara, and thank you  
5 for all the great work at the county fair. The county  
6 fairs are a very, very important part of our Department,  
7 very important part of the State of California, and we  
8 really appreciate all the work you do out there.

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

20           And lastly, I also wanted to say that part of the  
21 reason we're able to do these listening sessions around  
22 the state is we've asked and many people have been  
23 interested in helping to fund the effort to have these ag  
24 listening sessions. So the Clarence E. Heller Charitable  
25 Foundation and the Colombia Foundation both have been

1 contributors in grants to this process of making sure that  
2 we're able to have things like translation. And a very  
3 good thanks to Gabriela and J.D. over there; you guys have  
4 done a great job in translating. That's the -- and Troy  
5 Ray back here is the transcriber. Troy, thanks for your  
6 help. I'm getting to the end here. And Carolyn Penny,  
7 who's been with us for many of these sessions, she does a  
8 great job of facilitating.

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

22           So, Al, back to you.

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

25           I just wanted you to know that we had to go out

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

6 The Secretary wants to say one more thing.

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

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

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

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

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

23 BOARD MEMBER BACCHETTI-SILVA: I was sitting on a  
24 other plane the other day next to a woman from the island  
25 of Oahu, and her husband was flying home to sell the rest

1 of his cows to close the last dairy on Oahu. And I didn't  
2 tell her anything about the ag vision process, I just let  
3 her do the speaking to start. And she said the island of  
4 Hawaii does not value a safe food supply. And I then went  
5 to explain the ag vision process and what we were trying  
6 to do here.

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

14           PRESIDENT MONTANA: Thank you, Ann.

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

22           It's interesting though how so many of you  
23 remarked, you know, the Board's been focusing on getting  
24 agriculture better understood and what it provides for the  
25 environment, nation, the overall security of the nation,

1 and we've been trying to discuss for some time now a  
2 paradigm shift for agriculture and the security of this  
3 nation. It's amazing to us how you really complain what  
4 it costs you to fill up your tank up at the gas station  
5 every day, but you fill another tank three times a day  
6 minimum, and how that discussion is now elevated. So many  
7 of you discussed that.

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

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

20           This meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

21                           (Thereupon, the July 7, 2008,  
22                           California Department of  
23                           Food and Agriculture  
24                           Vision Listening Session  
25                           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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