I&C Hosts Workshops, Begins FSMA Inspections, Hires Staff, Sees Late Rain Crack Cherries

CALIFORNIA STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM

As part of our commitment toward outreach and education, the CDFA State Organic Program (SOP) co-hosted with the California State University, Chico (CSU Chico), Organic Dairy Unit an Organic Dairy Pasture Workshop on May 22 at the CSU Chico Paul L. Byrne Memorial University Farm.

Inspectors and staff from several county agricultural commissioner offices attended the workshop. The intent of the workshop was to provide an overview of organic dairy production and training on best practices for enforcing requirements of the USDA Organic Pasture Rule. Additionally, on June 11, representatives from the SOP attended and presented enforcement updates at the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) regional meeting held at the Spring Hill Estates Elk Ranch in Tomales, California.

PRODUCE SAFETY PROGRAM

The Produce Safety Program began inspections under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule in April. To date, we have conducted approximately 20 inspections. Our goal is to educate before and while we regulate, and the farmers have been appreciative of this.

See I&C, Page 2

See NATALIE, Page 8
The Produce Safety Program hired one additional environmental scientist/inspector for the Central Valley Region. Julian Potier began on May 13 and will cover the southern portion of the Central Valley. He will be inspecting produce farms under FSMA’s Produce Safety Rule. Julian has a bachelor’s degree in geography and comes to us from San Bernardino County, where he was an agricultural standards officer inspecting for invasive species.

SHIPPING POINT INSPECTION

Mitch Randhawa has been hired by Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) as an agriculture program supervisor I based in the Turlock area. Mitch had been working for Cooperative Agriculture Support Services (CASS) for a number of years and was most recently the district supervisor for the Lodi office. Mitch has more than 13 years of experience working in agriculture and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge with him. He will be overseeing the training and implementation related to a new inspection database that will hopefully replace the current USDA, tablet-based system.

Laurel Rudolph accepted a position with SPI as an agriculture program supervisor I in Sacramento on June 1. Laurel was previously working in the Produce Safety Program and will now supervise SPI support staff at the Gateway Oaks location. Her role will also be to assist with the updating of the current accounting database and monitoring SPI contracts and MOUs.

CHERRY SEASON

SPI was prepared for the 2019 cherry season, which was expected to be the largest projected crop ever (more than 13 million boxes). As is often the case with cherry season, weather did not cooperate, and large amounts of rain in early May nearly destroyed one-third of the crop. Cherries grown in the San Joaquin County-area were the most affected with many farmers reporting near total losses. The season ended early and it is expected that the season totals will be less than 8 million boxes packed.

STANDARDIZATION PROGRAM

The Inspection and Compliance Branch Standardization Program staff have been conducting ongoing regional commodity trainings to county agricultural commissioner inspectors throughout California. Commencing with cherries in early April, and given the forecast of inclement weather, the Standardization team emphasized the importance of the enforcement of California minimum standards. The cherries pictured above, while still hanging on the tree, were adversely affected by the rain that California experienced in early May. Cherries, when they have reached a certain stage of maturity, are extremely susceptible to rain, and will crack as the surface of the cherry is porous. Cherries, once picked, which do not meet the minimum standards set forth in the California Code of Regulations, can either be disposed of, sent to a processing facility, or donated to a charitable organization. Also pictured above is a carton of Honeydew melons used for a Standardization training class that was held at the Fresno County agricultural commissioner’s office on June 25. Not only do melons grown in California have minimum quality standards, but some melons, depending on the type, must meet minimum maturity standards as well.
CDFA-F2F Works to Increase Access to CA-Grown Produce, Conducts Statewide Listening Tour

CALIFORNIA NUTRITION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The California Department of Food and Agriculture Office of Farm to Fork (CDFA-F2F) California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) released a request for proposal (RFP) for partners to join its federal application to the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program.

CDFA-F2F hopes to partner with farmers markets, small stores and nonprofits to offer nutrition incentives to CalFresh shoppers using their benefits to purchase fresh, California-grown fruits and vegetables.

Final decisions are expected this fall.

HEALTHY STORES REFRIGERATION GRANT PROGRAM

CDFA-F2F’s Healthy Stores Refrigeration Grant Program also released an RFP this spring to fund energy-efficient refrigeration units in corner stores and small businesses located in low-income, low-access areas of the state. The refrigeration units are to stock California-grown, fresh produce, nuts and minimally processed foods.

This pilot program aims to improve access to fresh, healthy foods in the small retail environment for underserved communities, while promoting California-grown agriculture.

Eligible applicants included corner stores, small businesses, cities, counties and nonprofits.

Awards should be announced by the end of July. A second-round RFP is planned for the fall.

FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

And finally, CDFA-F2F’s farm to school program conducted a statewide listening tour, meeting with more than 100 farm to school practitioners from across the state.

The listening tour helped identify key obstacles facing farm to school practitioners, and will help CDFA-F2F support its California Farm to School Network more effectively moving forward.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, or if you are interested in collaborating on the farm to school initiative, please contact the office at nicholas.anicich@cdfa.ca.gov.
CAC Participates in State Scientist Day, Receives Equipment Training, Renews A2LA Accreditation

31ST ANNUAL CAPS STATE SCIENTIST DAY

MAY 8, 2019

State Scientist Day is conducted each year on the west steps of the state Capitol. This event is designated by the California Association of Professional Scientists (CAPS) to showcase the important work all state scientists do to protect public health, the environment and California’s natural resources.

Approximately 20 staff members, including CAC managers, participated in the event. Staff demonstrated a “chemistry magic show,” including how to make slime, bubbles and a snow shower. Also demonstrated was the sublimation of carbon dioxide.

Thousands of students from third to sixth grade experienced some of the real work that scientists do in the laboratory. It is an important part of promoting state scientists to the legislature, the general public and future scientists in a fun, informational and exciting environment.

AGILENT 7010 TRAINING

The Agilent 7010 Triple Quadrupole Mass Spectrometer is a top-of-the-line instrument at CAC that is used for reliable separation, detection, quantitation and confirmation of many volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds. A senior application specialist from Agilent Technologies recently visited CAC to provide training for several of our environmental scientists and specialists on the Agilent 7010 mass...
spectrometer. Training covered all gas chromatograph and mass spectrometer functions, as well as instrument optimization for very low-level detection limits and analysis of pyrethroid pesticides, which the Agilent 7010 can detect at 1 part per trillion.

QUALITY ASSURANCE


This standard requires high-level performance in five key areas: normative references, terms, definitions, management requirements and technical requirements. Management requirements are primarily related to the effective operation and efficiency of the quality management system within the laboratory. Technical requirements include factors that determine the precision and reliability of tests and calibrations performed in the laboratory.

CAC began its journey in 2004 and has since maintained this highly respected accreditation while continuously working toward expanding the scope of accreditation. CAC’s objective is to evolve from conformance to a performance-driven laboratory.

RETIREMENTS

Eddie Zhou, senior environmental scientist, supervisor for the Anaheim Pesticide Residue Chemistry Laboratory, has retired after 21 years working for CDFA.

Eddie began his career as QA officer for Amgen, a pharmaceutical company. He was offered a chemist position at the Anaheim lab in 1998 and worked his way up to become a supervisor for the Pesticide Residue Lab there.

Eddie has no firm plans after retirement, but he and his wife will do a lot of traveling, starting with an Alaskan cruise in July. After his cruise he will probably help oversee his son’s company. His son graduated from UCLA with a degree in applied mathematics and, with a group of friends, started a software support company.
FERTILIZING MATERIALS INSPECTION PROGRAM

OIM PROGRAM RENEWS ISO 17065 ACCREDITATION

Fertilizing Materials Inspection Program’s (FMIP) Organic Input Material (OIM) Program received confirmation that it has met the requirements of ISO 17065 and accreditation has been renewed for the next four years, through Jan. 29, 2023. The audit performed to reach this accreditation entails an extensive review of internal paperwork and documents used in decision-making of one’s OIM approval, along with the shadowing of an inspection. This is very critical to the operations and acceptance of the OIM program in the industry. The program will continue to make efforts in maintaining its ISO 17065 accreditation.

FMIP ATTENDS WESTERN FERTILIZING MATERIAL REGULATORS CONFERENCE

Martin Burger, senior environmental scientist (supervisory), and Nick Young, supervising special investigator II, attended the Western States Fertilizing Material Regulators Annual Meeting on April 18, in Portland, OR. Representatives from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and California discussed topics such as warnings on phosphite labels, the rapid expansion of the hemp industry, requirements of lime and gypsum guarantees on fertilizer labels, and investigational allowances, or analytical variance, of fertilizer guarantees. The participants also had a chance to obtain clarifications on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Draft Guidance document for Plant Regulator Label Claims, including Plant Biostimulants in a conference call with EPA’s Chad Schultz. He confirmed that currently the EPA considers seaweed extracts, foliar-applied humic acid, corn gluten meal and potassium silicate, which all are components in many CDFA registered products, as plant regulator pesticides. Comments on the draft guidance can be made before the end of July 2019.

FERTILIZER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

WELCOME, EMAD!

Emad Jahanzad joined the Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP) as a senior environmental scientist in March 2019. He recently worked as an environmental scientist in the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation with the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program.
Prior to joining CDFA, he was a postdoctoral scholar at the Department of Plant Sciences, University of California, Davis, studying soil health in almond orchards. He was also a postdoctoral research associate at Pennsylvania State University in the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program Dairy Cropping Systems team, studying nutrient losses from dairy farms. He holds a Ph.D. in plant and soil sciences from University of Massachusetts, Amherst, as well as an M.S. in agronomy and a B.S. in agronomy and plant breeding.

GRANT OUTREACH DAYS

Every year, FREP grantees are required to host at least three outreach events to disseminate information gleaned from their FREP-funded project. Additionally, FREP funds outreach and education projects aimed at providing technical trainings for growers, industry and farm workers at all levels. These outreach days and trainings are featured on the FREP Events Calendar. Over the next few months, the following trainings will be held for growers, consultants and farm workers:

- **Fertigation Short Course**
  
  Aug. 12, 2019
  
  Target Specialty Products
  
  431 Daisy Lane
  
  San Marcos, CA 92078
  

- **Irrigation Training & Research Center (ITRC)**

  1 Grand Ave
  
  San Luis Obispo, CA 93405.
  
  [http://www.itrc.org/classes/fertigation.htm](http://www.itrc.org/classes/fertigation.htm)

- **Fertilizers: Plant Nutrition and the Nursery Infrastructure**

  Aug. 21, 2019
  
  Target Specialty Products
  
  431 Daisy Lane
  
  San Marcos, CA 92078
  

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT UPDATE

Beginning in fall 2016, FREP, in collaboration with University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Monterey and Monterey Resource Conservation District, extended outreach and education for growers and irrigators on the Central Coast under the award of a Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG). With this funding, FREP’s partners on the Central Coast held more than 50 outreach events in the last three years. These included field days, irrigation efficiency trainings (in Spanish and English), technical trainings on the value of nitrogen in irrigation water, and CropManage. Over the course of this project, cooperators presented educational materials to more than 1,000 growers and farm workers in the Central Coast.

Through this grant, FREP staff also published the Nitrate Quick Test guide ([https://blogs.cdfa.ca.gov/FREP/index.php/nitrate-quick-test/](https://blogs.cdfa.ca.gov/FREP/index.php/nitrate-quick-test/)), which assists growers and field workers with measuring available soil-nitrogen using the in-field nitrate quick test.

ANTIMICROBIAL USE AND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

We hosted our fourth, in-person, “qualified individual” training for facilities wanting to sell California prescription drugs for livestock. California prescription drugs for livestock may only be sold by a qualified individual with the necessary training to understand prescriptions and product labels. A retailer must employ at least one qualified individual and must provide proof of the qualified individual’s credentials to CDFA. Before selling a California prescription drug, a qualified individual must:

- Verify the purchaser has a prescription
- Verify the prescription describes a use in accordance with the product label
- Verify that the sale date is within six (6) months of the prescription issue date
- Record the sale in the retailer’s drug sale log

This training certifies that a person is a qualified individual (QI) and meets the requirements set forth by Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship (AUS) regulations. There were seven QI candidates from industry and two from CDFA.
EMPLOYEE UPDATES

CENTER FOR ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY

NEW HIRES
Jose Salazar, Scientific Aide

RETIREES
After 21 Years of Service –
Eddie Zhou,
Senior Environmental Scientist,
Supervisor for Anaheim Pesticide Residue Chemistry Laboratory

SUMMER INTERNS
Andrea Levinson,
Agricultural Technician

PROMOTIONS
Vanessa Jivan, Office Technician
Jamie Mack, Agricultural Aide I

SUMMER INTERNS
Brent Oge,
Agricultural Technician

CENTER FOR FEED, FERTILIZER AND LIVESTOCK DRUGS REGULATORY SERVICES

NEW HIRES
Emad Jahanzad, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) - FREP
Ashley James,
Associate Governmental Program Analyst - BOSS
Elizabeth Moseby,
Staff Services Analyst (Part-Time) - BOSS

INSPECTION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

NEW HIRES
Joshua Bingham,
Public Information Officer II

SUMMER INTERNS
Brent Oge,
Agricultural Technician

PROMOTIONS
Laurel Rudolph,
Agriculture Program Supervisor I - Shipping Point Inspection

INSPECTION & COMPLIANCE

NEW HIRES
Julian Potier,
Environmental Scientist,
PSP Central Valley Region (Region 4) Inspector

NATALIE, from Page 1

collaboration are key! In government, the more we know about what other agencies do, the more we can learn, as well as come together to be stronger and proactive in our efforts.

Just as important in Inspection Services is being aware of what other branches do, so that we can share joy in each other’s triumphs and know who the experts are when action is needed. For this reason, thank you for your continued participation in Quarterly Quips. This quarter, we also launched new communication tools thanks to our new PIO, Joshua. Join us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for continual updates.

Quarterly Quote: “Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.” — Michael Jordan

Podcast Resource: Capitol Farm Connection by the Agricultural Council of California. It discusses Sacramento agricultural policy facing our diverse state.