



CFBF President Paul Wenger, First Vice President Kenny Watkins and Second Vice President Jamie Johansson at the state Capitol.

FARM BUREAU: Working for you

Farm Bureau is your organization. At the county, state and national levels, our volunteer leaders and dedicated staff work for you—and with you—to protect family farms and ranches.

During the past year, the California Farm Bureau Federation has addressed hundreds of issues, with elected officials, government agencies, in the courts and in the media. In these pages, you'll see a brief summary of some of the top issues that CFBF worked on during 2011.

Our success depends on your continued support and membership. Thank you for your membership. When you support Farm Bureau, you're part of the solution to keep agriculture viable, profitable and sustainable in California.

Paul Wenger
President
California Farm Bureau Federation

Conserving farmland

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Prevailed in a state Supreme Court case, upholding local protections for farmland against development pressures. The Stanislaus County case involved a farmland mitigation program that requires developers to permanently preserve farmland equal to acreage for new subdivisions on an acre-for-acre basis.

➤ Acted to prevent unintended harm to farmland in Humboldt County, by filing suit to require additional environmental review of a proposed habitat restoration project. The suit sought additional analysis of the impact of converting farmland to wildlife habitat, of the cumulative impact of other farmland-to-habitat conversions in the region, and of the true potential for improved drainage and reduced flooding in the Salt River watershed.

➤ Worked with landowners concerned about wetlands mitigation requirements for a new highway bypass near Willits, which would place grazing restrictions on farmland to be used as mitigation for the project.

➤ Maintained pressure on the California High-Speed Rail Authority to minimize the impact of the proposed rail line on farms and ranches in its path; filed

comments on the environmental report for Phase One of the project and reviewed the high-speed rail business plan.

➤ Sponsored a state law to reinstate a revised Williamson Act program that gives counties an option for maintaining the farmland-conservation program; Farm Bureau proposed the program as an alternative for counties that might otherwise abandon the Williamson Act because of state budget cuts.

➤ Won a court ruling that ordered the state Department of Transportation to undertake additional planning to minimize impacts on farmland and the environment from a proposed project to widen Highway 16 in Yolo County.

➤ Filed suit to protect prime farmland from a solar power "land rush." The suit seeks to halt cancellation of a Williamson Act contract on prime farmland in Fresno County to accommodate a utility-scale solar power plant.

➤ Took the lead in a successful effort to draft and gain passage of legislation to protect prime farmland from encroachment by large-scale solar projects.



Making your voice heard

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Continued to advocate for California priorities as Congress works on the 2012 Farm Bill. Priorities include programs to benefit specialty crops, to protect crops and livestock from invasive pests and diseases, to promote and market farm products, and to help farmers and ranchers meet air quality standards, protect habitat and undertake other conservation projects.

➤ Met with Gov. Jerry Brown early in his tenure to discuss state budget priorities during a 90-minute session with the CFBF Board of Directors; CFBF leaders and staff participated in many subsequent meetings with the governor, his staff, legislators and department officials to emphasize budget priorities.

➤ Coordinated an agricultural consortium that advised the Brown administration on how to achieve a two-year, \$31 million budget reduction for the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The consortium worked to protect the core mission of CDFA: protecting agriculture and the public from invasive plant and animal pests and diseases, and ensuring food safety. CFBF also opposed new water, timber-harvest and fire-prevention fees.

➤ Organized visits by farmers and ranchers to both the state and U.S.



Capitol to allow Farm Bureau members to present their concerns directly to elected representatives.

➤ Sponsored a seminar to help farmers and ranchers prepare to run for public office.

➤ Worked to ensure the state Department of Fish and Game recognizes the environmental values provided by farms and ranches by serving on a Stakeholder Advisory Group reviewing

DFG and Fish and Game Commission priorities.

➤ Generated more than 6,600 emails and letters to elected officials and government agencies via 24 FARM TEAM Action Alerts, which also provided members with background and talking points on key issues impacting agriculture; sent six general communications and updates to FARM TEAM members during the year.

Enhancing water supply and quality

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Worked with an agricultural coalition to submit a detailed plan governing water discharges from irrigated farmland on the Central Coast. The plan, submitted to the regional water quality control board, aims to improve water quality through on-farm practices tailored to local conditions while maintaining agricultural viability.

➤ Joined with water agencies and agricultural organizations in warning the Delta Stewardship Council that it appeared to be overstepping its authority. Farm Bureau and other organizations said the council might try to regulate activities outside the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, which would be beyond its legislative mandate.

➤ Provided input to state agencies crafting new rules for measurement of delivered agricultural water, as required by a 2009 state law, aiming to make the rules as workable as possible for those who must comply with them. The law requires water suppliers to install accurate measurement devices on nearly all irrigation laterals and turnouts.

➤ Petitioned the State Water Resources Control Board to review a regional board's actions in renewing a water-quality program for the Central Valley. The regional water quality program includes coalitions of agricultural water users that monitor and report on runoff. Its extension came with new "mitigation measures," based on what agricultural experts said was an inadequate environmental review.

➤ Continued a court challenge against "fees" charged to water rights holders on the basis that the fees form an unconstitutional tax, and advised water rights holders to continue to pay the fees under protest.

➤ Worked to secure major modifications of new rules governing septic systems by the State Water Resources Control Board, to make them more workable; a new draft policy reflects an attempt by the board to incorporate the comments it received from Farm Bureau and the public during workshops held three years ago. The current draft policy eliminates new requirements for those with properly functioning systems.



Standing up against onerous regulation

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Made clear to congressional leaders and members the impact a stand-alone E-Verify employment eligibility requirement would have on farmers and ranchers; pressed for an alternative measure that would provide a legal option for a foreign agricultural work force; Congress was convinced to stop consideration of E-Verify legislation without consideration of a means to provide a legal, stable agricultural work force.

➤ Urged the U.S. Department of Labor to revise proposed rules on youth employment in agriculture. The rules propose new restrictions on the type of activities that younger people would be allowed to perform on farms, and would also limit the ability of the Cooperative Extension service and vocational education programs to offer training to rural youth.

➤ Supported efforts by farmers in the Russian River watershed in opposing regulations purportedly intended to protect fish. Two lawsuits have been filed against the regulations, which could restrict water use required on occasion to protect crops from frost damage.

➤ Supported Siskiyou County Farm Bureau in its challenge to state Department of Fish and Game regulations that would broaden DFG authority to regulate water rights. The Siskiyou County Farm Bureau filed suit after the DFG notified farmers and

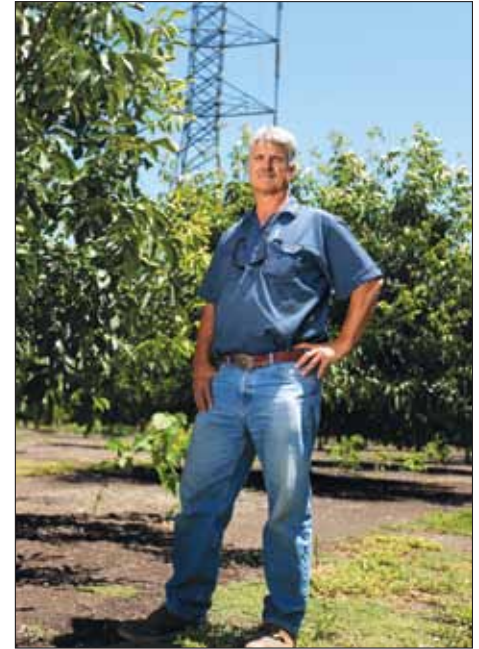
ranchers in the Scott and Shasta valleys that they would have to obtain Streambed Alteration Agreements in order to exercise their water rights.

➤ Urged the state Public Utilities Commission to revise a proposed rule that would allow a utility to shut off power to a landowner, during disputes about trimming trees or other vegetation near power lines.

➤ Advocated successfully for delay of proposed new rules to increase checking for protected spotted owls on the North Coast. Landowners with non-commercial timber management plans would have been required to check for spotted owls on their land two years in advance of harvest, delaying harvests and placing family farms in jeopardy.

➤ Conducted a survey of Farm Bureau members regarding duplicative, conflicting, misdirected and overly onerous regulations. Information from the survey was shared with the CDFA Ag Vision Subcommittee on Smarter Regulation as well as legislators and state budget decision makers, with the goal of devising regulatory relief proposals that would benefit farmers and ranchers.

➤ Worked with other stakeholders to defeat a bill that would have granted authority to the Coastal Commission to levy civil fines of up to \$50,000 for alleged land



use violations without appropriate judicial due process for accused violators.

➤ Supported legislation that now requires a uniform approach to be developed for economic analysis of major new regulations; this will support more transparent rulemaking, improve oversight of agencies, and encourage policymakers to implement the most cost-effective ways to achieve goals.

Helping you grow and market your products

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Led a coalition that advocated successfully for passage of trade agreements between the United States and South Korea, Colombia and Panama. The three agreements are expected to increase agricultural exports from California by \$239 million annually.

➤ Pressed for resolution of a trade dispute with Mexico that hampered exports of California crops. The dispute, involving access of Mexican trucks to U.S. roads, ended this summer when Mexico removed retaliatory trade taxes on commodities including table grapes, strawberries, lettuce, cherries, almonds, cheese, apricots and pistachios.

➤ Recommended improvements be made by CDFA direct-marketing programs, through service on a Direct Marketing Advisory Committee.

➤ Worked with other interested stakeholders to prevent passage of a bill that would have required the labeling of biotech fish sold in California.



➤ Continued working toward creation of a national marketing agreement for leafy greens, to help ensure food safety by following nationally the program adopted by California in 2007.

➤ Obtained significant amendments to legislation that would have seriously impeded and distorted the scientific process conducted by the Department of Pesticide Regulation and the California EPA Scientific

Review Panel with regard to pesticide reviews; without the amendments, the bill would have imposed new requirements and timelines for such reviews, jeopardizing continued registration of many crop-protection tools.

➤ Successfully worked for passage of a law that adds Career Technical Education classes as an option for pupils to fulfill existing high school graduation requirements.

Managing production costs

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Advocated successfully for the veto of the latest “card check” bill that would have replaced the current method of unionization with a “majority signup” or “card check” system. Gov. Jerry Brown’s veto upheld the right of agricultural employees to consider unionization by secret ballot.

➤ Supported successful legislation in Congress to repeal the 1099 tax form requirement in the health care law, which would have required businesses to file the form for all purchases made from a single vendor exceeding \$600 per year.

➤ Worked with a small team of agricultural representatives and the state Department of Food and Agriculture to secure roughly \$14 million in federal funding to supplement pest and disease eradication programs operated by CDFA.

➤ Sponsored successful legislation to legalize the use of carbon monoxide to control burrowing rodent pests, giving farmers and ranchers access to an additional crop-protection tool.

➤ Encouraged utility regulators from across the nation to pursue smart energy policy that balances renewable and conventional sources of energy



while stressing self-sufficiency. CFBF President Paul Wenger told a utilities organization that smart energy policy should place more emphasis on hydroelectricity.

➤ Supported successful legislation to expand renewable energy options, including power generated on California farms and ranches, by opening the California Net Energy Metering Program to all eligible forms of renewable energy. The new law will allow farmers with biomass energy plants, small hydro plants and others to benefit from a program already available for solar, wind and fuel-cell generation.

➤ Worked successfully for passage of a bill that classifies as grand theft the theft of copper and copper products with a value of \$950 or more, leading to penalties including imprisonment, a fine of up to \$2,500, or both.

➤ Urged the Federal Communications Commission to resolve a dispute regarding the satellite spectrum, which threatens to disrupt global positioning systems used on farms and ranches. The question involves whether a broadband company’s proposed new wireless network will interfere with GPS systems.

➤ Conducted a successful advocacy effort against legislation that would have expanded fire prevention “fees” on rural landowners by including new fees on all structures and imposing a per acre charge for unimproved land.

➤ Secured amendments to a bill that could have led to new fees being applied to on-farm petroleum-storage tanks; the final version of the bill, which was signed into law, removed reference to agricultural fuel storage.

➤ Successfully opposed a bill that would have created a new health-impact-mitigation tax through implementation of AB 32.

Reaching out

During 2011, Farm Bureau:

➤ Invited a new generation of members to join Farm Bureau by creating a new collegiate membership category, for students between the ages of 16 and 25 who are enrolled in a post-high school education program such as a community college, four-year university or trade school.

➤ Launched a new *Ag Alert* website, www.agalert.com, containing full online content of the newspaper available to Farm Bureau collegiate and agricultural members.

➤ Refocused and renamed the award-winning Farm Bureau magazine as *California Bountiful* and the television program, also now titled *California Bountiful*, to further the connections between rural and urban California, and created a new website at www.californiabountiful.com to provide both magazine and video content.

➤ Earned a grant to the California Bountiful Foundation to allow the California Bountiful television program to air year-round in San Francisco and to return to the airwaves in Los Angeles during 2012.

➤ Responded to more than 450 inquiries from reporters from California and throughout the nation.



➤ Expanded use of social media, posting more than 350 messages on CFBF Facebook pages and sending nearly 500 tweets via CFBF Twitter accounts.

➤ Joined the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance, a coalition formed



to boost consumer trust in U.S. food production.

➤ Made the case for new water storage in separate commentaries by Paul Wenger, published in the *San Jose Mercury News* and the *Contra Costa Times*.

➤ Joined the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom in celebrating its 25th anniversary by participating in San Francisco Farm Day 2011. The event brought the farm to more than 10,000 urban students.