



March 23, 2018

Legislative Recess

The California State Legislature will be on Spring Break the week of March 26th and return to Sacramento on April 2nd.

Commodities

Last year, the Legislature passed, and the Governor approved, a Farm Bureau sponsored bill, [AB 822](#) (Caballero, D-Salinas) which requires state agencies (except for school districts and public universities) to give a purchase preference to California-grown produce over out-of-state produce, even if the California bid is 5% higher than the out-of-state bid. Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella) has introduced [AB 2106](#) which increase the maximum bid preference from 5% to 10%. The Assembly Accountability and Administrative Review Committee recently approved this measure on a 6-0 vote. Farm Bureau testified in support of this measure at committee. *Staff contact: Jim Houston at jhouston@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

Education

Several bills, including [AB 1743](#) (O'Donnell, D-Long Beach), serve as an alternative to the Governor's proposed Budget, to support CTE by providing \$500 million (rather than \$200 million) per year, for the next three years for Career Technical Education (CTE), with a dollar-for-dollar match provided by grant recipients. AB 1743 passed the Assembly Education Committee and has now moved to be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The Farm Bureau is actively involved with CTE-dependent industries to discuss adequate funding for CTE programs. *Staff contact: Taylor Roschen at troschen@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

Land Use

In response to concerns from coastal farmers, ranchers and dairymen, about the application of the California Coastal Act, Assembly member Levine (D-Marin) has introduced [AB 2754](#) which would clarify that ongoing and routine agricultural activities are not deemed development and are therefore, not subject to oversight by the California Coastal Commission. The bill has been referred to the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and will be heard in April. The Farm Bureau is sponsoring this important piece of legislation. *Staff contact: Taylor Roschen at troschen@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

Nutrition

Currently, CalFresh recipients utilize Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards to purchase approved food items at retail and direct marketing outlets, such as certified farmers' markets. Local jurisdictions and non-profit organizations offer additional benefits (such as Market Match® or "double-up" bucks) to help low-

income individuals and families increase their purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, the current EBT system cannot account for these additional benefits, meaning consumers and retailers must use more traditional means, like tokens, coupons or checks, to redeem benefits. These disparate systems frustrate retailers, many of whom cannot accept these benefits due to accounting burden, and reduces the utilization of these supplemental benefits by food insecure families. Acknowledging these service gaps, [SB 900](#) (Weiner, D-San Francisco) would require the Department of Social Services to update the EBT technology platform to accept supplemental benefits and establish a pilot grant program to test this new capacity at various retail settings. Farm Bureau supports. *Staff contact: Taylor Roschen at troschen@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

With commentary to respond to rising childhood obesity, Senator Monning (D-Carmel) has introduced [SB 1192](#), which would require restaurants in California to offer water, nonfat or 1% milk or nondairy alternatives as the default beverage in children's meals. Violation of this mandate would result in a \$50-\$500 fine. Concern has been expressed that the exclusion of 2% and Whole Milk (3.5%) from these meals does not reflect modern nutritional science which shows these drinks reduce obesity in children and improve cognitive performance. Farm Bureau is actively engaged in discussions regarding this bill. *Staff contact: Jim Houston at jhouston@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

Forestry

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) created a "Bill of Rights" for Environmental Permit Applicants in an effort to make environmental permitting more efficient, less costly, and to ensure that those seeking permits receive timely responses. In an effort to balance environmental protections and streamline commercial forest practices, Assembly Member Anna Caballero (D-Salinas) introduced [AB 2889](#), which would create the Timber Harvest Plan (THP) submitters' "Bill of Rights."

Prior to conducting any timber operations, a THP must be submitted for approval. A THP is CEQA-equivalent document submitted to Cal Fire, while other departments including Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Control Board and Conservation serve as a part of the review team. The *2017 Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund Program Report* noted that the length of the review periods for a THP averaged 127 days, and had increased from 107 days a year earlier. In most cases, even after THP approval, THP submitters must then seek additional permits such as a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (known as 1600 permits) and permits associated with non-point source discharges which extends the review time well past 127 days.

Regulatory reform and permit streamlining are an integral component to restoring our forests in a timely manner. Long term management means utilizing not only prescribed fire, but also the removal of drought and beetle-killed trees, and the mechanical thinning of California's forests. A combination of these treatment methods can be conducted in a manner that makes trees more resilient to pests, and can improve the overall diversity and health of our forests. There are major challenges to a new management approach for healthy forests, but as the fires of last year taught us, doing nothing will endanger more lives, threaten additional property, and compromise the environment. *Staff contact: Robert Spiegel at rspiegel@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.*

Climate

The Air Resources Board (ARB) adopted the guidelines for the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emissions Reductions (FARMER) program today. The adoption of these guidelines will allow ARB to distribute \$135 million to air districts throughout the state to fund the replacement of diesel trucks and equipment. \$108 million will go to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District with the remaining \$27 million being divided amongst the remaining air districts based primarily on the amount

of emissions from agricultural equipment in each air district. Farm Bureau testified in support of the adoption of the funding guidelines and will continue to work with ARB to ensure this money is distributed quickly as funds must be committed by June 30, 2019. Staff contact: *Noelle Cremers* (ncremers@cfbf.com or 916/446-4647).

Antibiotics

Retailers selling antibiotics that under new state law require a prescription will have to either employ or have a consulting relationship with a pharmacist in order to sell these drugs. Farm Bureau submitted comments jointly with the California Cattlemen's Association expressing concern with this new requirement. When the legislature passed SB 27, which required prescriptions for all medically important antibiotics used to treat livestock and poultry, a provision was included to allow stores that were selling non-prescription antibiotics to continue to sell them without needing to be licensed as a pharmacy. Despite this provision the regulations still require a relationship with a pharmacist, which makes it unlikely that local stores will continue to carry these drugs. *Staff contact: Noelle Cremers* (ncremers@cfbf.com or 916/446-4647).

San Francisco will require grocery stores to report the amount of antibiotics used in the production of the meat and poultry products sold in their stores. Farm Bureau testified before San Francisco's Department of the Environment this week to explain the high costs of trying to comply with this regulation as well as the near impossibility of gathering some of the data being demanded under the ordinance. Farm Bureau will be submitting written comments by the April 5th deadline to further point out the specific challenges created by this ordinance and the unlikelihood that gathering this data will do anything to reduce antibiotic resistance in humans. *Staff contact: Noelle Cremers* (ncremers@cfbf.com or 916/446-4647).

Heat Illness Prevention

The California Legislature passed SB 1167 (Mendoza) in 2016, which requires Cal/OSHA to propose to the Cal/OSHA Standards Board an indoor heat illness regulation by Jan. 1, 2019. The proposal for an indoor heat illness regulation grew from concerns about workers in at intermodal transshipping warehouses in southern California being exposed to excessive heat in cargo trailers and loading docks during hot weather. CFBF has been working with Cal/OSHA to show the need for a proposal of limited scope focusing on indoor employees who are exposed to significant heat illness risk and to provide clear delineation between indoor and outdoor workplaces. CFBF has also advocated for a separate regulation from the existing outdoor Heat Illness Prevention (HIP) standard to avoid revisions to that regulation, preventing confusion for agricultural employers who have demonstrated a high degree of HIP standard compliance. Early drafts of the indoor standard inserted indoor heat illness requirements in the existing HIP standard. *Staff contact Bryan Little*, blittle@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.