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croptalk

VOLUME 16 NO 7

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YUBA-SUTTER FARM BUREAU CROP TALK

is published monthly by the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau, a non-profit trade organization whose mission is to represent Yuba-Sutter agriculture through public relations, education

and public policy advocacy in order to promote the economic viability of agriculture balanced with appropriate management of natural resources. This magazine and the activities sponsored by the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau are paid for by the annual dues of its membership.

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Article suggestions are encouraged, and we also encourage our members to submit their own articles for review. These should be mailed to our office. Use of articles is at the sole discretion of the Crop Talk Editor.

2022 Rice Season: Strategies to Reduce Water Usage

With Whitney Brim-DeForest



As we head into the 2022 season, water is on everyone's mind. What are some of our strategies for utilizing water in the most efficient way? We know from our research that we use about 4 to 7.7 acre-ft of water per season in a normal year (Linquist et al 2015), losing it mostly to seepage and evapotranspiration (from the crop and from water on the field). The minimum amount of water is 3.5 acre-ft, with an average of about 5 acre-ft across the region. Typical rice field soil has little percolation (movement downwards) because we have a hardpan under most of our fields.

In a dry year, where many fields are not planted, we can assume that seepage rates might be higher, especially if there are no irrigated fields around our fields, leading to higher water usage. Likewise, since the water table is likely lower, usage might also increase.

So what can we do to best utilize the amount of water we are allocated (adapted from Linquist and LaHue, 2020)?

- 1. Avoid fields with high percolation rates.** Fallow fields with sandy soils, as usage rates will be much higher in these fields.
- 2. Avoid drainage during the season for any reason (“no-spill”).** While this may be difficult, allow water to subside instead of pulling boards. This can reduce the amount of water needed to relood after drainage. Fields are often drained for herbicide applications, sometimes for stand establishment at the beginning of the season. If possible, avoid pulling boards. No spill can be done in any field where salinity levels are low in the irrigation water (<0.6 dS/m) and the soil is not high in salinity.

- 3. Utilize continuous flooding, instead of drill or dry-seeding.** While it may not make a lot of sense, drill or dry-seeding does not use less water than continuous flooding, as the field must be flooded, then drained, then flooded/flushed again.
- 4. Plant later.** Although it can be tempting to plant as early as possible, fields that are planted earlier actually take more days to mature, due to the cooler temperatures early in the season. The additional days mean more water usage.
- 5. Don't drain at the end of the season.** Turn water off before normal drainage timing, and allow water to subside naturally into the soil, instead of draining. Fields can have no standing water at about 21 to 24 days after 50% heading, without losing yields or quality.
- 6. Plant early-maturing varieties.** Some of our varieties can safely be drained at about 99-102 days after planting (M-105, CM-101, S-102), and would be the best to plant in a water-restricted year. The dates will vary slightly based on planting date, temperature, etc.

If you have any questions regarding water-conserving strategies and how to best implement the practices, please contact Whitney at wbrimdeforest@ucanr.edu.

For More Information:

Linquist, B.A. et al. (2015) Water balances and evapotranspiration in water- and dry-seeded rice systems. *Irrigation Science* 33:375-385

Linquist, B.A. and LaHue G. (2020) Managing Rice with Limited Water. *Agronomy Fact Sheet #6*. <https://rice.ucanr.edu/FactSheets/Rice/>



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Yuba-Sutter Young Farmers & Ranchers



In February, the Young Farmers and Ranchers had the pleasure of visiting Country Butcher in Olivehurst for our monthly meeting. Adam Knapp, owner of Country Butcher, gave us a tour of the production and cutting floor where all of the butchers work in a choreographed manner to process and package the beef, pork, lamb, chicken, and plenty of wild game that comes in the door. We also got to peek inside the coolers! Country Butcher is famous for their marinated meats as well as their smoked products, especially their high quality ham, bacon, and sausages, and we were able to see their smokehouse. While the smokehouse has been doing a wonderful job for the past 40 years, Adam has recently received a grant from the government in support of smaller meat processing facilities that will aid them in purchasing updated equipment, such as a new smokehouse. In hearing more about the origins of Country Butcher we learned that it used to include a deli! Nowadays at the front of the retail store customers are greeted by several cases filled with many



varieties of tasty meats. During the pandemic, when meat was hard to find at the grocery store, Country Butcher had people lined up outside every morning waiting to buy their goods, and fortunately a majority of those folks have remained customers! This is a trend that small and medium-sized butchers are seeing across the country, and one that we hope to continue to see grow. Adam got his start in the meat industry by working at the Chico State meats lab as a college student. From there he was able to take over Country Butcher from the original owners. He now employs some college and high school students himself, and encourages young people to consider learning the meat cutting trade, as demand for butchers is very high across the nation. Country Butcher does much to support the local community and we are extremely grateful to have had them as the provider of our delicious tri-tips for our drive-thru BBQ fundraiser! Thank you again to Adam and all the staff at Country Butcher!



At Spring Fling in March, YF&R members manned the lemon drop bar and raffled off a big prize package including a whole lamb and a Traeger BBQ. We all enjoyed our time there and had a blast getting to see everyone in person again! We also had three of our members- Jas Bains, Allie Honig, and Lillian Smith serve as members on the planning committee for this important event. Stay tuned for news of our upcoming meeting and for a report on our Drive-Thru dinner! 🍷



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The Latest on Monopoly Pricing Power and Fertilizer Prices

As seen in *Ag Daily*



Public discussion of fertilizer prices has become more intense and frequent, due in large part to the sharp increase in fertilizer prices since last year. A common theme is the potential role of monopoly pricing power.

Few firms produce fertilizer. For example, North American production largely rests with **four firms**. The basic concern is that a firm with a large individual market share may be able to raise price to garner above average, also called abnormal or monopoly, profits. Monopoly pricing power has a long history in U.S. public policy and in **economics, according to economists from University of Illinois and Ohio State University**.

Role of Substitutes and Entry Barriers

Availability of substitutes is a critical issue. In this use, substitutes are not different forms of the same product, such as different car models, but a distinctly different product. A prime example is the emergence of gasoline powered trucks as competition for the railroads in the early 1900s. History repeatedly underscores the importance of substitute options.

A second critical issue is market entry. If entry is easy, an attempt to raise price and create abnormal profit will bring the entry of other producers which in turn will eliminate the abnormal profit. Sustained abnormal profits requires an entry barrier(s) that prevent new firms from entering the market.

Types of Entry Barriers

Entry barriers come in many forms. One classification involves 3 types.

- Government-enacted barriers include patents, trademarks, public expert standards, and international trade restrictions. Patents and trademarks encourage creative work by insuring income can be earned from it. Qualifying standards are minimum competency standards for doctors, beauticians, etc. They increase the likelihood of competent service. International trade restrictions can be on imports, thus affecting supply, or exports, thus affecting demand. Trade restrictions often result in a trade-off: they can mitigate unfair international competition, thus benefiting the domestic industry, but reduce domestic supply, thus increasing prices and making domestic users worse off.
- **Production barriers** are attributes of a firm's technology or marketing function. They include:
 - an input with no close substitute (Madagascar produces 80% or so of the world's natural vanilla due to its unique agro-climate),
 - high startup cost (high initial investment, including specialized knowledge, deters entry), and
 - private qualifying standards (examples are franchises, such as McDonald's,

and private expert standards, such as American Medical Association standards for doctors).

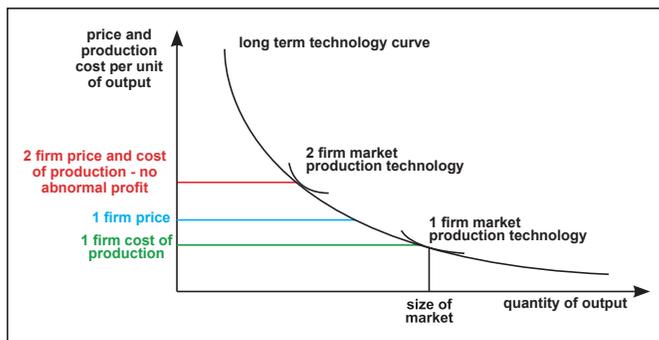
Firm behavior barriers are intentional manipulation of a market. They include collusion, an agreement by firms to set price by restricting supply or partitioning demand, and actions of a firm that enhance a government-enacted or production barrier.

Public discussions of monopoly pricing power often focus on the collusion barrier. However, entry barriers are broader than collusion. The other two types of barriers may enhance social welfare or not pose societal welfare concerns. In fact, society may create them via government action. Stated alternatively, abnormal profits are not necessarily inconsistent with increases in societal welfare.

An Important Last Consideration

Even if monopoly pricing power and abnormal profit exists, it is possible that price could be higher with more competition and no abnormal profit. This can occur if substantial economies of size exist, resulting in cost of production declining sharply as output of a firm increases. This situation is illustrated in figure below. The long run technology curve has a steep enough decline that having a single firm results in users paying a lower price than if 2 firms exist (i.e. more competition). The single firm earns an abnormal profit as it has set price above its cost of production (area

bounded by blue and green horizontal lines). However, users pay a lower price than if the market has 2 firms that earn no abnormal profit (red line where price equals average cost of production). The reason is substantial economies of size from having production by 1 as opposed to 2 firms. Dividing the market into more than 2 firms will further increase price as a firm produces a smaller amount and thus attains smaller production economies. To summarize, it is possible that forcing competition to eliminate abnormal profits can result in users paying higher prices.



Fertilizer plants appear to have a high startup cost but formal analysis is needed to quantify if startup costs, including the acquisition of specialized knowledge, are in fact an entry barrier. Analysis would likely also involve comparing rates of return with companies in similar types of markets. If analyses find that abnormal profits exist, then a closing question needs to be addressed: “What role does economies of size play in the US fertilizer industry and in the public policy response?” Without knowing the role of economies of size, it is difficult to assess if users are better or worse by eliminating monopoly pricing power and abnormal profits.

An interrelated public policy issue is petitions filed with the US Department

of Commerce and US International Trade Commission by CF Industries Holdings, Inc. The petitions requested the agencies to initiate investigations on whether UAN (urea ammonium nitrate solutions) exports from Russia and Trinidad and Tobago were creating unfair trade conditions. USDC issued affirmative preliminary determinations

in November 2021 and January 2022. As a result, USDC will impose cash deposit requirements on US UAN imports from Russia and Trinidad and Tobago, based on preliminary rates of dumping. Under US law, both USDC and ITC must make a final affirmative determination. Countervailing duties could then be imposed for at least 5 years. Final determination could occur in the summer of 2022. How this international trade issue interplays with the concern over monopoly pricing power in the US fertilizer industry will bear watching going forward.

In closing, it is far easier to raise issues of monopoly pricing power than to document its existence and its negative impact on users and consumers. 🇺🇸

US Fertilizer Market

After looking at the above information, questions may arise like, “What is the role of substitutes?,” and “Are entry costs for a new fertilizer producer high enough to create an entry barrier?” Substitutes, such as livestock manure, exist for some commercial synthetic fertilizers, but their supply is currently smaller or have environmental restrictions on their use.

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Learning with a Purpose

By Ryleigh Webb

The two biggest constraints on agricultural production globally, are climate changes and world population growth. It is estimated by 2050, that the world population will hit 9 billion. Lack of rainfall, flash floods, and forest fires have greatly affected farmers and ranchers in Northern California. Although we are living in discouraging circumstances, these issues have helped bring awareness to the importance agriculture holds on our communities and economy. The rise in agriculture education, at the college level, brings hope to a future of innovative solutions and resilience to this industry and lifestyle. There has been a huge a growth to agriculture departments of two-year and four-year colleges across America. Degrees in areas such as Sustainable Agriculture, Environmental Resource Management, and Agricultural Engineering are expanding the horizons of agriculture education in California colleges. Through the year 2030, it is projected that careers in ag science will increase 9%. With the expansion of degrees and growth in opportunity, students in high school and college are rising to the occasion.

The students who are pursuing a degree in agriculture are all doing it for the right reasons. After holding a survey of students in the Yuba Sutter area and asking them their thoughts on the future of agriculture, the responses



warmed my heart. I got responses from an array of students going to school at Chico State, Feather River College, Butte College, Yuba College, and more. A student from Sierra College said that her role in agriculture was to “understand every aspect of agriculture and apply it to daily life.” She then goes on to say that “teaching others that same meaning is just as important.” Another student said, “I believe my role is to be involved in ag because not as many kids my age are interested, and we need farmers, producers, etc. in

the ag side of things.” There were many more responses just like these expressing how young adults today feel responsible for being proactive players in the agriculture industry. 90% of the students that took the survey felt that their education and career path was very important to combatting issues and increasing sustainability. There were students that responded on behalf of farming, crop science, ranching, education, and even rodeo.

Although it is easy to look at the negative, the future of this lifestyle is going to advance and become more resilient with the surge of students going to school to be the problem solvers. One of the students in the survey could be the next greatest engineer and design a new way to conserve water. It is inspiring to think of the possibilities that lie ahead for agriculture students. Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau is hosting our annual Farm Day at the Yuba Sutter Fair grounds this fall to begin teaching students as young as 8 years old about animal and crop production, as well as other sides of the industry. Education is one of the biggest tools the community can use to foster passion and change for the future in any aspect of this world. Despite the grim realities of agriculture in California right now, we should stay hopeful knowing that better days are still to come. ☺

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COUNTRY VET CLINIC

With Ryleigh Webb, Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau Intern

In the countryside of the Sutter Buttes, Country Vet Clinic cares for animals of all shapes and sizes. Dr. Jerry Long founded his practice in 1977 in Live Oak, California and has successfully grown his business to what it is today. He started his educational journey at Cal Poly where he obtained his bachelors and masters degree. He then went on to get his DVM at Washington State University in 1976. His patients were, at first, mainly livestock, but as the years have passed, he has expanded his work to small animals. He even works on exotic animals because he loves a challenge. Dr. Long's step-daughter Holley works alongside him every day and his son, Craig, is also a veterinarian who will help out. All hands on deck!

When asked about what a typical day looks like, he responded with, "nothing is ever typical." He never knows for sure what might walk through his clinic doors.



From being involved in the Flying U Rodeo company to supporting the Yuba College Vet Tech program, Dr. Long has heavy involvement in his community. One of his favorite community projects was helping start up the emergency vet clinic in Chico, California. Dr. Long emphasizes innovation and thinking of new ideas.

Dr. Long and Country Vet Clinic joined the Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau because he believes in supporting youth agriculture organizations. He and his team do what they can to support the local 4H and FFA chapters because of the life lessons and skills learned within

those programs. He wants to have a positive influence on students involved in agriculture and share his love of livestock with them. His biggest piece of advice is to have a good team, be open to change, and have fun while working hard. When he is not in the clinic, Dr. Long has a herd of Simmental cattle and grandchildren to keep him busy. 🐾

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Meet Our New Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau



Amanda Pedrett

Amanda was born and raised in Southern Oregon, a grassroots, diverse agricultural community. She grew up participating in

the 4H and FFA. Amanda competed on the Linn Benton Community College and CSU-Chico collegiate livestock judging teams. She graduated from CSU-Chico with a B.A. in Political Science — Option in Legal Studies, Law and Environment Pattern, and a Minor in Agricultural Business. She then obtained her Masters Degree and Juris Doctorate Degree and now is pursuing a legal career as an associate attorney at Hyatt McIntire and Associates. As an attorney she assists the local community with estate and business succession planning, carrying on her aspirations of assisting and advocating for the local agriculture community. Amanda is married to Russell Pedrett, the herdsman of

Ottenwalter Showpigs, one of the largest show pig suppliers in the United States. They have two young daughters, Sadie and Henley Pedrett.

Balbir Bains

I moved to the Yuba-Sutter region in 1973 from Punjab, India following in the footsteps of the generations before me. My great grandfather came to the United States in the mid 1920's which set the stage for the rest of the family to follow. As a 7 year old, I was fortunate to work alongside my father, and witness the meaning of "The American Dream". Watching the elders in my family I quickly realized that along with hard work comes community service, as giving back to the community was always a priority. After a long week of work, there was always time to discuss community matters and how to stay unified and make our voices heard on any issues that may have arisen. After attending Yuba City High School and Yuba Community College I turned to working on



the farm full time. After years of hard work and dedication and learning the trade, I eventually became responsible for farming different commodities in 6 different counties up and down the state of California. Today along with my family, we have expanded beyond farming to include custom services tailored

for growers. We offer custom harvesting solutions, large brush shredding, and farm management through Diamond B Ag, Co. I am grateful to have learned the ropes through trial and error and experience, and came across many issues that we still face today as a farming community. In addition to environmental challenges, we have also been more commonly being faced with legislative challenges as well. I look forward to serving my community and peers through being a director of the Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau and I hope we can solve some of these issues that we in the agricultural community find all too common. ☺

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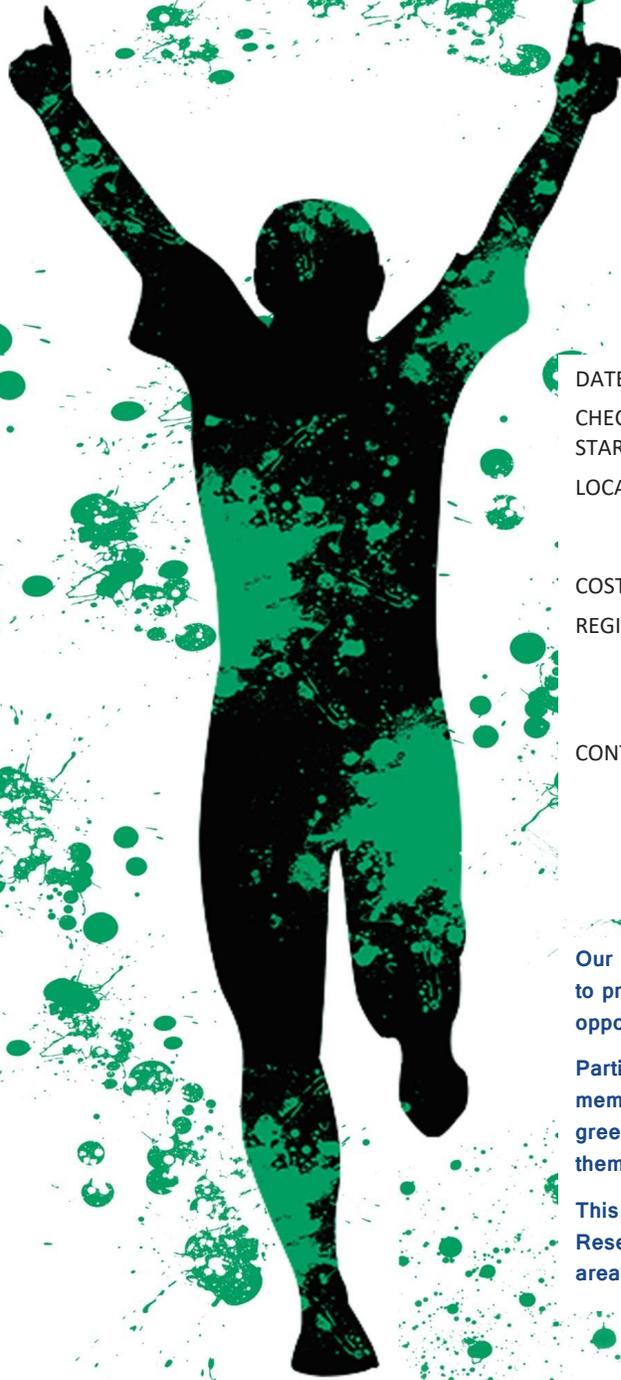
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 June 23-26, 2022 - Yuba-Sutter Fair
 June 27, 2022 – YSFB Board Meeting
 June 30, 2022 – CHP Truck Inspections

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River Valley Community Bank 1629 Colusa Ave., Yuba City • (530) 821-2460
Brackett & Associates, Inc.
Suncrest Bank 700 Plumas Street., Yuba City • (530) 674-6207
Tenney & Company, CPA 1528 Starr Drive, Ste A, Yuba City, CA 95993 • (530) 674-4211
Umpqua Bank 777 Colusa Ave. Yuba City • (530) 790-2136

CHEMICAL & FERTILIZER COMPANIES
Grow West 2100 Everglade Rd Yuba City • (530) 671-3571
Helena Agri Business Colusa Hwy Yuba City • (530) 674-3718
Wilbur Ellis 900 North George Washington Blvd, Yuba City 95993 (530) 673-0921
CONSTRUCTION
Gary Smith Yuba City • (530) 701-6731
Hilbers Inc 770 N. Walton, Yuba City • (530) 673-2947
CUSTOM FARMING
John Behrend Custom Logging Dobbins CA • (530) 632-3528
Diamond B Ag Company Yuba City • (530) 237-7238 harpaul@diamondbco.net or (530) 751-6285 jaz@diamondbco.net
Fiveway Farming Bruce Peacock • Sutter • (530) 671-9519
EQUIPMENT/VEHICLES
Beeler Tractor Co. 887 E. Onstott Rd., Yuba City • (530) 673-3555
Holt Ag Solutions 2950 Colusa Hwy Yuba City • (530) 755-3363
N&S Tractor Yuba City • (530) 923-7675
Valley Truck & Tractor 1549 Colusa Hwy., Yuba City • (530) 673-8283
FARM LABOR CONTRACTORS
Sunrise Ag Labor 436 Colusa Ave., Yuba City • (530) 822-7777
FARM MANAGEMENT
JS Johal & Sons, Inc. 5020 Garden Hwy, Yuba City • (530) 682-3600
PR Ag Services, Paul Takhar (530) 682-6900 • treeshakes@gmail.com
FARMS, RANCHES & INDIVIDUALS
BGH LP 6394 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953
Butte Packhouse LLC Live Oak nicole@buttepackhouse.com • (530) 370-5533
Fair Share Farms Yuba City • kellyhoppin@gmail.com
Just Farms LP Gridley • (530) 846-3958
K & S Orchards Yuba City elijahsingh17@gmail.com • (530) 671-3434
Laurel Ag
Lundberg Family Farms Mike Denny • (530) 538-3500
Premier Walnut Company Yuba City, Sarb Kandola • (530) 870-7906
Red Maple Ranch; Yuba City, Melanie Munro redmapleranchflowers@gmail.com • (530) 218-7980
Samara Ranches Yuba City bobby@newlegendinc.com • (530) 788-3838

Shaeffer Ranch LLC Clovis CA
Tamita Farms S Butte Rd Sutter • (530) 674-9378
Trent Meyers Farming
Triple H Ranches Robbins • (530) 666-1500
FARM SAFETY
MVP Safety Professionals, LLC 1000 N. East St., Woodland (530) 665-4422 imuzio@mypsafety.org
FUEL
Lakeview Petroleum 1528 Colusa Hwy, YC 95993 • (530) 742-7614
Valley Pacific Petroleum Stockton CA rob.goodman@vpps.net (209) 948-9412
HULLING & DRYING
Fedora Farms 2551 Farmlan Rd., Meridian • (530) 696-2230
INSURANCE
Denny Insurance Services 856 Richland Rd., Suite B, Yuba City • 671-5813
Far Horizon Insurance 1130 Bridge St., Yuba City • (530) 674-1340
Fletcher & Associates 300 4th St. Marysville • (530) 741-0441
Huntley Bravos Zall Insurance Brokers 520 Olive St., Marysville, CA 95901 • (530) 743-9264
Oakview Insurance Services, Inc. Yuba City • (530) 674-5054
Roberson & Sons Insurance Services Inc. Eric Roberson • (530) 365-1009
Robert M. Galligan & Associates 419 6th St., Marysville • (530) 742-3243
Rose Insurance Agency 855 Harter Prkwy # 350A, Yuba City dselland@roseinsurance.com • (530) 673-8862
Sanchez Insurance Inc. 440 N. Palora Ave, Yuba City • (530) 673-6277
Zenith Agribusiness Solutions Craig Thomson cthompson@thezenith.com • (916) 781-2110
LEGAL SERVICES
Paula Hyatt-McIntyre & Associates 950 Tharp Rd., Ste. 701, Yuba City • (530) 674-9761
The Law Offices of Robin C. Bevier PC 2479 Sunrise Blvd., Gold River CA • (916) 858-0904
NURSERY
Sierra Gold Nurseries 5320 Garden Hwy., Yuba City • (530) 674-1145
PROCESSING & DRYING
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District 10 Dryers LLC 9000 Mathews Lane, Marysville • (530) 742-3116
Miki Orchard, Inc. 803 Boyer Rd., Marysville • (530) 743-4402
Mitchell Dryers, LLC 10139 Garden Hwy, Yuba City • (530) 671-3397
Sacramento Packing Inc. 833 Tudor Rd., Yuba City, CA 95991 • 530-671-4488
Van Dykes Rice Dryer 4036 Pleasant Grove Rd., Pleasant Grove • (916) 655-3171
Shoei Foods 1900 Feather River Blvd., Olivehurst • (530) 742-7866

SunWest Foods, Inc. Yuba City • (530) 671-8888
Sunsweet Growers 901 Walton Ave, Yuba City • (530) 751-5379
Taylor Brothers Farms 182 Wilkie Ave., Yuba City • (530) 671-1505
PUMP & WELL
Nor Cal Pump & Well Service 1325 Barry Rd., Yuba City • (530) 674-5861
REAL ESTATE
Coldwell Banker Commercial Valley Brokers 1307 Franklin Road, Yuba City • (530) 673-6614
Edwards, Lien & Toso • Randy Edwards randaledwards19@hotmail.com • (209) 634-9484
Farm & Ranch Realty P.O. Box 564, Woodland • (530) 908-4689
Stromer Realty Company 591 Colusa Ave., Yuba City • (530) 671-2770
SERVICES - OTHER
Bridge Coffee Co. LLC 101 Clark Ave YC • (530) 673-6001
Country Butcher Adam & Katie Knapp • (530) 742-0284
Global Ag Communications
Joel Giusti Yuba City • (530) 237-6951
Legacy By Design www.legacy-by-design.com • (530) 671-2100
Pride Employment & Staffing Paul Basi • (530) 661-3405
Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust, Lisa Lindman Yuba City • (530) 755-3568
SOLAR & ENERGY
ACIP ENERGY, LLC David Vincent Yuba City • (530) 777-2247
SUPPLY
Bearing Belt Chain Company 829 5Th St Marysville • (530) 743-9256
California Industrial Rubber Co., Inc 1690 Sierra Ave.,Yuba City • (530) 485-1487
Derco Supply 2920 A Colusa Hwy. YC • (530) 673-0481
Grange CoOp & Nursery Supply 1264 Stabler Ln. Yuba City • (530) 777-3551
Hust Brothers Inc. 710 3rd St., Marysville • (530) 743-1561
Sutter Orchard Supply 573 Bridge St., Yuba City • (530) 673-8068
TRUCKING
Gee Agri Transport Inc. Yuba City • (530) 674-7443
UTILITIES
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Chico Electric 36 W Eaton Rd, Chico • (530) 891-1933
Meridian Farms Water Co. 1138 4th St., Meridian • (530) 696-2456
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**FRIDAY
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KIDS DAY - CHILDREN 11
AND UNDER ADMITTED FREE

**SATURDAY
JUNE 25**
SENIOR'S DAY*
MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY**

**SUNDAY
JUNE 26**
FIRST RESPONDER'S
APPRECIATION DAY***

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