

YUBA-SUTTER FARM BUREAU

croptalk

VOLUME 19 NO 10

PRODUCER FOCUS:
VAN DYKE'S RICE DRYER

INTRODUCING YUBA-SUTTER'S
NEW UCCE LIVESTOCK ADVISOR

A TASTE OF TRADITION:
CHEF YIA VANG TO HEADLINE
FARM TO FORK FEAST IN
DOWNTOWN MARYSVILLE



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YUBA-SUTTER FARM BUREAU CROP TALK

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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.

Introducing Yuba-Sutter's New UCCE Livestock Advisor

Written by Andrea Warner, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and Nevada Counties

Andrea Warner joined UCCE as the Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and Nevada counties on October 1, 2024.

Although Andrea recently started as an advisor, her journey with UC started over nine years ago. While attending Sierra College, she was employed as a student research associate at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center. At the center, Andrea assisted with several beef cattle research projects including field testing of the Foothill Abortion vaccine, feeding of rice straw, mineral supplementation for stocker cattle, and assisted with calving out the UC cow herd.

After Sierra College, Andrea attended California State University, Chico to complete her bachelor's degree in animal science. There, she analyzed data for a project that assessed feed efficiency and fertility traits of commercial and Lowline Angus heifers at the Chico State Farm. Following graduation, Andrea moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma to attend Oklahoma State University and earn her master's degree in animal science.

A change of pace from pasture cattle, Andrea spent two years at the Willard Sparks Beef Research Center, studying the effects of feeding cotton byproducts to feedlot steers. Her research aided in developing the Beef Advisory Council within the cotton commodity board, creating connections and



partnerships between crop and livestock producers in the southern region of the United States.

Following the completion of her M.S in 2020, Andrea accepted a position at Langston University as the Research Farm Manager at the American Institute for Goat Research. At Langston, Andrea managed a large herd of dairy and meat goats, and hair sheep which were used for nutrition, health, and management research at the facility. She was also responsible for the oversight of farm employees and training undergraduate students interested in small

ruminant production.


Ready to return to California, Andrea was excited to accept a full-time position at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center as the Staff Research Associate in 2023. There, she assisted with research projects related to beef cattle production, natural resources, climate change, and rangeland management.

This spring, Andrea worked with the Tahoe Cattlemen's Association to bring back the Beef Field Day event at Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center. Over 30 local producers attended the field day and enjoyed a program full of engaging discussions around pinkeye, pasture management, and disaster preparedness. In addition to workshops, Andrea has been involved with several new research projects focusing on topics such as barbed goat grass control, fertilizing annual rangeland, and managing pinkeye in cattle.


Since starting her journey with UC, becoming a livestock advisor has been Andrea's long term career goal. A Nevada County native, she is most excited about building relationships with local producers and community members in the industry while continuing to address challenges with a research-based approach in the place she calls home.

You can find information on upcoming events and workshops by following the "Foothill Livestock Network" page on Facebook, or emailing her at alnwarnar@ucanr.edu to be added to her email newsletter list. 📧






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Meet Our New Director

With Mat Conant

Mat Conant is a lifelong resident of Sutter County and has been involved in representing the interests of local residents through various leadership roles and community initiatives.

Mat is a third-generation walnut farmer in Rio Oso. His great-great-grandparents began farming in San Jose in 1847, and in the early 1920s, his grandparents relocated to Rio Oso, where they were among the first orchardists to plant peaches, prunes, and walnuts.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Business from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in 1981. Mat became the sole Manager and Senior Vice President of Conant Orchards, Inc., following the passing of his father in 1987, continuing the family farming tradition.

Conant Orchards Inc. is a diversified farming operation that manages approximately 720 acres of walnuts and offers custom farming, hulling, drying, and fabrication of specialized machinery. In 2013, Conant Orchards, Inc. was recognized by the California Agricultural Heritage Club for more than 125 years

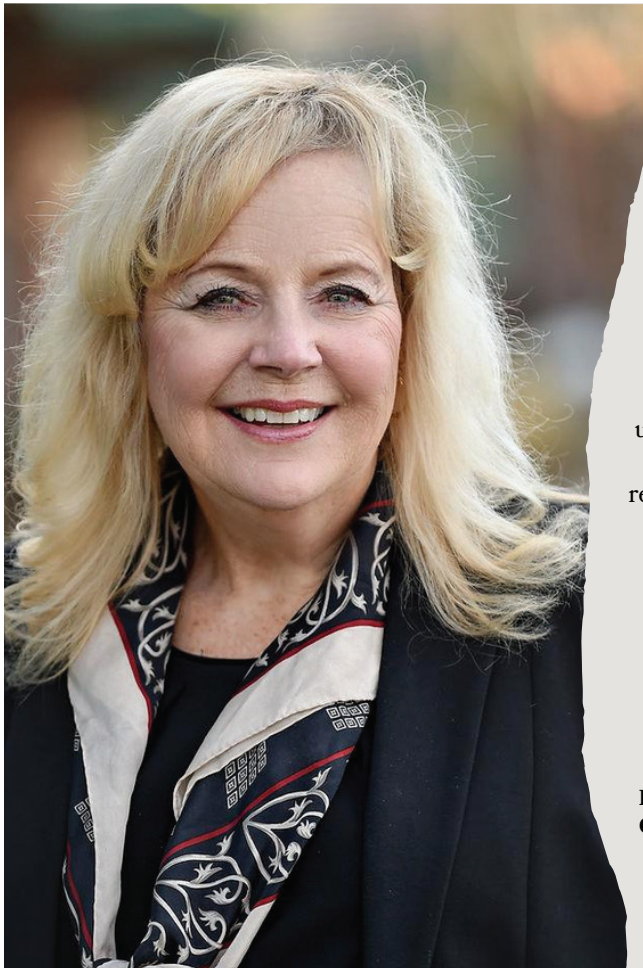


of continuous agricultural operation. Mat has contributed to the development of walnut moisture meters, electronic sorter machines, and established two clonal rootstock test plots.

Throughout his career, Mat has remained active in agricultural and community leadership. Through Farm Bureau he has served on the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau Board and represented the region on the California State Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He has also served on various water coalitions and has held numerous leadership positions including President of the East Nicolaus High School District Board of Trustees and a member of the Diamond Walnut Advisory Council. Mat is a long-time

supporter of local 4-H and FFA programs. He is also a proud graduate of the California Agricultural Leadership Program, Class 31.

Mat and his wife, Lorene, have two sons, Matt and Greg. Mat believes that strong local support is essential to the continued success of agriculture, a way of life that has sustained his family for over 150 years. 🌱



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VAN DYKE'S RICE DRYER

Written by Ciera Mannan, YSFB Program Coordinator



Van Dyke's Rice Dryer, Inc. is located in the heart of rice country, Pleasant Grove. With roots dating back to 1930, this family-owned operation has grown alongside the region's agricultural landscape and remains just as dedicated to supporting local growers today as it was nearly a century ago.

Farming has always been part of the Van Dyke family's heritage. After moving from Iowa to Pleasant Grove in 1898, they continued their agricultural traditions in California. In 1930, Clark Van Dyke saw a need for a storage facility so he built four grain bins on his property. Within a decade, he added a dryer and opened the site as a storage facility. After World War II, his sons joined the family business, helping it grow through the postwar farming boom.

In 1952, Clarke passed the reins to his son Harlan Van Dyke Sr., who brought a new wave of growth. He expanded capacity by adding more silos, dryers, and a seed cleaner. Van Dyke's Rice Dryer, Inc. was officially incorporated in 1955.

When Harlan retired in 1978, his son James (Jim) Van Dyke took over and began modernizing the operation. Jim introduced new infrastructure, solar power, another seed cleaning facility, and expanded storage with additional bins and warehouses. In 1987, Jim's daughter, Connie Jerome, joined the family business, working her way through a variety of roles before being named President and CEO in 2010. Today, she continues to lead



Jim Van Dyke with the solar he had installed.



Original bins at Van Dyke's Rice Dryer.

the operation with the same pride and dedication as the generations before her.

Van Dyke's Rice Dryer is a full-service hub for local growers, serving around 45 producers and receiving approximately 16,000 acres, or 1.5 million hundredweight, of rice each season. Their services include rice drying and storage, seed cleaning, and seed soaking. The facility handles multiple rice varieties including medium-grain, Cal Mochi sweet rice, and popular varieties of both medium and short-grain seed rice.

The facility is praised for its cleanliness, efficiency, and commitment to helping

farmers succeed. However, Van Dyke's is set apart by more than just equipment or services, it's the people. Being family owned and operated doesn't stop with the Van Dyke name, their employees are considered part of the family. Many of the growers they serve are multi-generational. "Their grandparents did business with our grandparents," Connie shares. "That's pretty unique." This closeness fosters trust, loyalty, and a shared commitment to the success of the California rice industry.

Harvest season puts those relationships to the test in the best way. No two years are ever the same, and challenges can shift daily. The team works hard to keep trucks moving quickly so growers can get back to the field, all while finding ways to keep morale high during the long hours. From delivering donuts to truck drivers on October 4th ("10-4") to hosting food trucks for employees, riding bikes around the plant, betting on daily load counts, or making a custom latte for a tired grower, these traditions reflect the camaraderie that keeps the operation running smoothly.

As a fixture in the community for more than 75 years, the Van Dyke's support local schools, 4-H and FFA programs, the California Waterfowl Association, the California Warehouse Association, and events like the Yuba-Sutter Fair Junior Livestock Auction and Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau's Spring Fling dinner. Their involvement with the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau also plays an important

role in their success. Membership provides them with valuable updates on regulations, opportunities to network with others in agriculture, and access to meetings and events that keep them informed and connected. For Van Dyke's, it is another way to strengthen ties within the industry and advocate for the future of farming in the region.

Van Dyke's Rice Dryer remains grounded in the same principles that built its reputation: hard work, quality service, and a

commitment to relationships. The family's roots in Pleasant Grove, their dedication to supporting local agriculture, and their willingness to adapt with the times have ensured the facility's success for nearly a century. With strong foundations and future generations ready to carry the torch, the Van Dyke family is confident their dryer will continue serving the community, preserving traditions, and helping California's rice industry thrive for years to come. 🌾



Connie Jerome, Katie Moos, Leslie Lauppe and Kristen Jerome with our hole sponsor sign at the CWA golf tournament.



Soaked seed being loaded into a truck to be during spring planting.



Connie Jerome and Katie Moos visiting the Port of Stockton to observe an export vessel headed to Turkey be loaded with California Medium Grain Rice.



Van Dyke's Rice Dryer employees enjoying a birthday BBQ.



Trucks from the fields weighing in during harvest.

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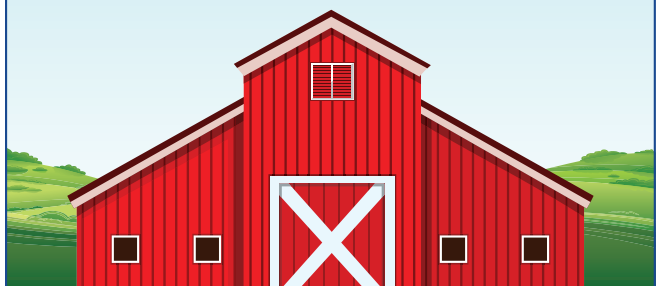
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Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as part of the California Climate Investments Program, through the California Fire Safe Council.



SAFETY TRAINING FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

NUT HARVEST SAFETY

With harvest season near, now is a good time to think about getting through the season safely and successfully. Safety is important for employees and for the health of the trees during harvest operations.

Rapid, quick actions without thinking first are unsafe. Look, think, and act carefully.



Before starting harvest, inspect the orchard to determine the location of hazards such as electrical lines, irrigation pipes, deep trenches, or other obstacles that could cause an accident. Remove all trash from the orchard floor before harvesting, as debris can clog equipment and cause injuries.

Dry soil in the orchard during harvest can cause serious dust problems. Wear proper eye and breathing protection to prevent injuries or problems from breathing dust. Machine-related farm injuries, including injuries to children, often occur during harvest time.

Make sure that guards and shields are in place according to safety guidelines for power take-off equipment and that harvesting machines have been serviced so they will run properly during long hours of operation.

Other Important Safety Precautions

- Clear clogged equipment only when the power is turned off.
- Wear comfortable but close-fitting clothing, including sturdy, protective shoes.
- Keep children away from machinery. Many children who were near machinery have been tragically injured or killed because the drivers or operators could not see them.
- Make sure someone knows where you are. Check in regularly.
- When you are tired, stop working. Before resuming work, take a rest break; if you think it would help you renew your energy, have something to eat and drink.
- To help you be alert and to work effectively and safely, get plenty of sleep during harvest time.
- Avoid drinking alcohol and taking any drug you don't need for a medical reason.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist if any medications you are taking could affect your ability to work safely. If due to the use of a medication you would pose a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of yourself or others, you must avoid that risk by taking appropriate action such as calling in sick, using leave, requesting a change of duty, or notifying your supervisor or the company doctor.

Harvesting Machine Safety

- Inspect equipment before operating it. **Report any hazard or other problem with the equipment to your supervisor immediately.**
- Attach the grip pad squarely to the tree trunk. If large branches are low on the trunk, a higher grip might be needed.
- Stay clear of power lines; look for power lines that might be hidden by branches.
- Do not release the grip until the tree has stopped shaking. Releasing the grip before shaking has stopped is the most common cause of tree damage. Damaged trees can become diseased and die.
- All chains, rotating shafts, gears and belts on shakers, tractors, and trailers must have guards. Drive shafts should also be guarded.
- Do not wear loose clothing around moving parts.



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A Taste of Tradition: Chef Yia Vang to Headline Farm to Fork Feast in Downtown Marysville

Written by Marni Sanders, Executive Director of Blue Zones Project Yuba-Sutter

We are thrilled to announce that acclaimed chef and storyteller Yia Vang will join us in Downtown Marysville on September 27 for a truly special Farm to Fork Dinner, hosted by Blue Zones Project Yuba Sutter, Yuba Sutter Farm 2 Fork and the Marysville Business Alliance as part of the Terra Madre Americas celebration.

Chef Vang, founder of Vinai—named after the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp in Thailand where he was born—offers more than just cuisine. He brings a deeply personal and powerful narrative rooted in the Hmong refugee experience. Vinai is a tribute to his family, his heritage, and his community, a space of restoration and reflection that uses food as a vehicle for storytelling and cultural connection.

As part of the evening, Chef Vang will prepare a traditional Hmong feast, weaving together flavors, history, and identity in a way that honors both his roots and the shared humanity found around the table. His presence marks a profound opportunity to explore food as a tool for resilience, belonging, and cross-cultural understanding.

This dinner is one of several events taking place as part of Terra Madre Americas, a regional gathering of the international Terra Madre network founded by Slow Food, which is being hosted this year in Sacramento. Terra Madre brings together farmers, chefs, food producers, and advocates from across the Americas to advance good, clean, and fair food systems. It uplifts food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and grassroots, community-driven solutions. Happening right here in Yuba-Sutter, this dinner is a unique



opportunity to spotlight our region's rich agricultural heritage, vibrant cultural diversity, and emerging culinary identity. It represents a step toward cultivating a food culture that is proudly local, inclusive, and deeply rooted in place. Events like this have the power to spark lasting change, creating momentum around food access, supporting local farmers and artisans, and fostering community pride.

This dinner also holds special meaning for Blue Zones Project Yuba Sutter as we continue our work to build a healthier, more connected region through food systems transformation. It is a powerful reflection of our belief that food is not only nourishment, but also culture, health, and community.

This event is a proud partnership of Blue Zones Project Yuba Sutter, the Marysville Business Alliance, the City of Marysville, the Yuba Sutter Farm Bureau, and other community leaders and organizations committed to advancing food, culture, and community well-being.

If you would like to attend or sponsor the event, please see our website at yubasutterfarm2fork.com.

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What Every Farmer in Yuba & Sutter Counties Should Know About Fire Insurance in 2025

Brought to you by Farm West Insurance Services—Your Agribusiness Insurance Partner

As wildfire risk surges, traditional insurers are pulling back from high-risk areas—leaving many in Yuba and Sutter Counties turning to the California FAIR Plan. Here's what growers and ranchers must know this year:

Private Market Pullback & New CA Regulations

Major carriers like State Farm and Allstate are non-renewing or excluding fire coverage in wildfire-prone ZIP codes—often referencing inadequate “hardening” measures.

To counteract this, Insurance Commissioner Lara recently mandated that private insurers must rebuild their market share in high-risk zones (up to 85%) or risk losing licensing.

The FAIR Plan: Last Resort = Higher Cost, Lower Coverage

What it covers: Basic fire, lightning, and explosion for residential and commercial structures—including barns and equipment sheds.

What it excludes: Crops (covered by federal crop insurance), water/chemical damage, theft, liability, and business interruption. You'll need a "Difference in Conditions" (DIC) policy for full protection.

Limits & price: Coverage caps at \$3 million for farms and \$20 million for commercial properties. Premiums vary—from a few hundred dollars to over \$20,000/year—depending on fire risk.

Recent improvements:

- Discounts for wildfire-hardened structures
- Monthly payments and credit-card options
- Inclusion of farm buildings (not crops or vehicles)

Warning: A June 2025 court found the FAIR Plan underpaid non-visible or particulate smoke damage claims—leading to reforms and potential compensation for affected policyholders



Crop damage from smoke and fire are not covered under the FAIR plan. A separate federal policy is needed.

The FAIR Plan: Last Resort = Higher Cost, Lower Coverage

Tip #1 - Hardening your property - Defensible space, ember-resistant vents, and Class-A roofing can qualify you for discounts.

Tip #2 - Know your ISO and fire-risk score - Your district's rating directly influences premiums—check & correct errors

Tip #3 - Shop diligently - Compare FAIR Plan + DIC quotes versus surplus/private carriers

Tip #4 - Document everything - Logs of mitigation work, photos, fire-district inspections, and receipts help during underwriting and claims

Tip #5 - Stay informed on state rules - New regulations may force carriers to increase coverage in distressed areas—watch for filings this summer

Don't Forget Federal Crop & Smoke Protection

- Smoke Index (FIP-SI) Endorsement: New in 2025, this add-on protects harvestable crops (like walnuts) from smoke damage under federal policies
- Crop Insurance: Federal programs cover losses to crops, not structures—don't skip them



Key Next Steps

- Review insurance renewals; ask if fire coverage is being excluded.
- Contact Farm West for quotes combining FAIR Plan + DIC coverage.
- Invest in risk-reducing improvements—both for safety and savings.
- Track FAIR Plan developments—especially lawsuits and statewide reforms could lead to broader coverage.

The FAIR Plan remains a critical option for farm structures in Yuba and Sutter Counties—but it's expensive and limited, especially for orchard and ranch properties..

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(209) 948-9412
rob.goodman@vpps.net

HULLING & DRYING

Fedora Farms
2551 Farmlan Rd., Meridian, CA
(530) 682-2940

INSURANCE

Denney Insurance Services
856 Richland Rd., Suite B, Yuba City, CA
(530) 671-5813

Farm West Insurance Services, Inc.
475 N Palora Ave., Suite B, Yuba City, CA
(530) 741-0441

Galligan & Associates
440 Palora Ave., Yuba City, CA
(530) 671-4841

Huntley Bravos Zall Insurance Brokers
520 Olive St., Marysville, CA
(530) 743-9264

Oakview Insurance Services, Inc.
1670 Sierra Ave., Ste 303, Yuba City, CA
(530) 674-5054
megan@yourfavoriteagent.net

Roberson & Sons Insurance Services Inc.
Eric Roberson
(530) 365-1009

Sutter Buttes Insurance
1527 Starr Dr, #M, Yuba City, CA
(530) 216-1067

LEGAL SERVICES

Hyatt-McIntyre & Associates
950 Tharp Rd., Suite 701, Yuba City, CA
(530) 674-9761

The Law Offices of Robin C. Bevier PC
2479 Sunrise Blvd., Gold River, CA
(916) 858-0904

NURSERY

Guillaume Grapevine Nursery
21208 State Highway 113, Knights Landing, CA
(530) 735-6821

Sierra Gold Nurseries
5320 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA
(530) 674-1145

PROCESSING & DRYING

Catlett Warehouse
2138 Catlett Rd., Pleasant Grove, CA
(530) 674-2380

District 10 Dryers, LLC
9000 Mathews Ln., Marysville, CA
(530) 742-3116

Grower Direct Nut Company
2288 Geer Rd., Hughson, CA
(209) 448-6133

Miki Orchard, Inc.
803 Boyer Rd., Marysville, CA
(530) 743-4402

Sacramento Packing, Inc.
833 Tudor Rd., Yuba City, CA
(530) 671-4488

ShoEi Foods
1900 Feather River Blvd., Olivehurst, CA
(530) 742-7866

Sunsweet Growers
901 Walton Ave., Yuba City, CA
(530) 751-5379

SunWest Foods, Inc.
Yuba City, CA
(530) 671-8888

Taylor Brothers Farms
182 Wilkie Ave., Yuba City, CA
(530) 671-1505

Van Dykes Rice Dryer
4036 Pleasant Grove Rd., Pleasant Grove, CA
(916) 655-3171

PUMP SERVICES

Nor-Cal Pump & Well Drilling
1325 Berry Rd., Yuba City, CA
(530) 674-5861

North Valley Pump
8737 S. Butte Rd., Yuba City, CA
(530) 300-8059

REAL ESTATE

Coldwell Banker Commercial
Valley Brokers
1307 Franklin Rd., Yuba City, CA
(530) 673-6614

Edwards, Lien & Toso
Randy Edwards
(209) 634-9484
randaledwards19@hotmail.com

Farm & Ranch Realty
P.O. Box 564, Woodland, CA
(530) 908-4689

SERVICES - OTHER

Country Butcher
5860 Feather River Blvd., Olivehurst, CA
(530) 742-0284

MPV Safety Professionals LLC
201 East St., Woodland, CA
(530)848-0998

Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust
P.O. Box 3359, Yuba City, CA
(530) 755-3568

Yuba-Sutter Fairgrounds
442 Franklin Ave., Yuba City, CA
(530) 674-1280

SUPPLY

Bearing Belt Chain Company
829 5th St., Marysville, CA
(530) 743-9256

California Industrial Rubber Co., Inc
1690 Sierra Ave., Yuba City, CA
(530) 485-1487

Derco Supply
2920 A Colusa Hwy., Yuba City, CA
(530) 673-0481

Grange CoOp & Nursery Supply
1264 Stabler Ln., Yuba City, CA
(530) 777-3551

Hust Brothers, Inc.
710 3rd St., Marysville, CA
(530) 743-1561

Sutter Orchard Supply
573 Bridge St., Yuba City, CA
(530) 673-8068

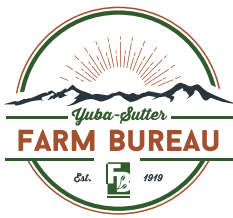
TRUCKING

Gee Agri Transport Inc.
Yuba City, CA
(530) 682-1182 (Direct
(530) 415-0504 (Text/Data)

UTILITIES

Chico Electric
36 W Eaton Rd., Chico, CA
(530) 891-1933

Meridian Farms Water Co.
1138 4th St., Meridian, CA
(530) 696-2456



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Free Cover Crop Seed!



Project Apis m.'s Seeds for Bees program - supported by the Almond Board of California - is now open. Growers can receive \$2,500 in free seed for first-year participants and \$1,500 in free seed for second-year participants. Cover crops and resident vegetation can provide enhanced agronomic and ecosystem benefits to California almond orchards.

170,000+ acres of almond orchards are recognized bee-friendly, representing 86% of all bee-friendly certified U.S. farms.

Potential Cover Crop Benefits:

- Improved soil quality
- Enhanced natural pest management
- Increased pollinator forage
- Improved water holding capacity

The application period for the 2025 Seeds for Bees program will be open from April 1 to August 31, 2025. Don't miss this opportunity to support honey bee and soil health. Scan the QR code and apply today!

