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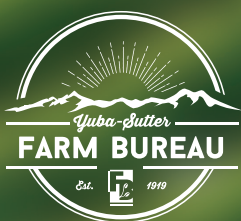
VOLUME 18 NO 3

Spray Safe 2024

NEW WEED IN CA RICE

ALMOND ACREAGE DROPS
AGAIN IN 2023

EMERGENCY FUNDING
FROM USDA TO
ADDRESS FRUIT FLY
OUTBREAKS



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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.

Emergency Funding from USDA to Address Fruit Fly Outbreaks

Courtesy of Brian German- Ag News Director, AgNet West



Photo Courtesy of Fresh Fruit Portal - Fruit Fly

California is receiving federal support for efforts to address exotic fruit fly outbreaks. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is taking action against the growing threats posed by damaging pests. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has greenlit the transfer of \$213.3 million from the Commodity Credit Corporation to APHIS. The funding is to provide crucial support for emergency response efforts for exotic fruit flies as well as New World screwworm. This funding aims to shield the fruit, vegetable, and livestock industries, as well as the producers who contribute to these vital sectors.

Addressing the urgency of the situation, USDA Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Jenny Lester Moffitt emphasized the critical nature of bolstering response efforts. The

allocated funds will empower APHIS to swiftly contain and prevent the further spread of exotic fruit flies, minimizing potential impacts on agriculture and trade.

Exotic fruit flies are known to be among the most destructive pests globally. With \$103.5 million allocated specifically for addressing fruit flies, APHIS plans to tackle known outbreaks in California and intensify preventive measures in susceptible areas across the country. Additionally, funds will be directed towards addressing rising fruit fly outbreaks in Guatemala and Mexico, where APHIS and collaborators maintain a critical buffer against the northward spread of the Mediterranean fruit fly.

Acknowledging the collaboration, CDFA Secretary Karen Ross expressed gratitude for the USDA's support during

a challenging year with invasive fruit flies in California. The funding not only strengthens the state's position to eradicate infestations promptly but also enables a comprehensive evaluation of factors contributing to the surge in detections.

President Daniel Hartwig of the California Fresh Fruit Association (CFFA) commended APHIS for taking the lead in addressing the issue. The funding, according to Hartwig, will enhance preventive activities in California and other regions, crucially curbing the spread of outbreaks. As exotic fruit flies pose a severe threat to California's fresh fruit industry and international trade relationships, this investment marks a vital step toward safeguarding production. 🍌

Spray Safe 2024

By Ciera Mannan – YSFB Program Coordinator

Our annual Spray Safe event was held on January 17th, 2024, at the Yuba-Sutter Fairgrounds. For those of you that may not be familiar with Spray Safe, it is an opportunity for farmers, applicators, and pest control advisors to learn about the practices and technologies used to reduce pesticide drift and ensure employee and public safety. This event is free of charge and usually earns 3 to 3.5 Continuing Education units for licensed advisors and applicators (pending DPR approval).

This year, we held the largest Spray Safe event for Yuba and Sutter counties with about 475 community members, growers, and employees in attendance. Coffee and donuts were provided during registration to kick off the event. There were several topics discussed at this year's event including: Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) updates, Butte-Yuba-Sutter Water Quality Coalition updates and an introduction to the Placer-Nevada-South Sutter-North Sacramento Subwatershed Group, Control Methods for Gophers and Squirrels, Herbicide

Application review in Orchards, Top 10 Violations for 2022 Season, CACASA updates, and Drift Mitigation in the agriculture industry were also topics of discussion. Concluding the 2024 Spray Safe event was a delicious tri tip barbecue courtesy of Country Butcher and prepared by Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau board members, Sat Dallar and Frank Hall. Sat really spiced things up with sixty pounds of grilled jalapeños that were a hit at lunch! Along with the jalapeños, they prepared a giant pot of chili, salad, and dinner rolls.

The 2024 Spray Safe event was a success, and we could not have accomplished it without the help of our volunteers, and the Yuba and Sutter County Ag Commissioners and their staff. We also would like to thank Matt Bozzo, the Spray Safe chair, without all of his hard work, this event would not have ran as smoothly as it did! Of course, our sponsors also played a huge role in making this event happen and we would like to recognize and thank them for their generosity this year!



Thank you to California Department of Pesticide Regulation for their Platinum Sponsorship and support of the 2024 Yuba-Sutter Spray Safe event!

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Picture: Ciera Mannan



Picture: Madison Eschman



Picture: Lindsay Hyde
2024 Spray Safe



YSFB Staff at Spray Safe



Picture: Laurie Johnson
Jalapeño Prep with Sat Dallar, Sha Harris, and AJ Anderson



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**Reports and Payments
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BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Using alternative pest control materials (i.e., using non-pyrethroid pesticides).
- Reducing the quantity of pesticides applied by monitoring pest and beneficial populations to determine the need for pesticides and the best timing for maximum control.
- Reducing the quantity of pesticides applied with spray buffers at field edges and near ditches.
- Reducing drift by regular calibration of sprayers for pesticide applications.
- Reducing drift by using electrostatic sprayer equipment.
- Reducing drift by using effective drift control mechanisms.
- Maximizing time between application and planned irrigation runoff and/or predicted storm runoff events in order to reduce loss of applied pesticides from foliage, transport on soils, and transport of pesticides bound to particles in tailwater.
- Changing to more efficient application methods (e.g., ground vs. aerial applications and/or equipment that provides more precise applications).
- Installation of vegetated filters between application areas and ditches or waterbodies and/or allowing vegetation to grow in drainage ditches to reduce movement of pesticides bound to organic and soil particles and contamination from aerial overpray (Note: vegetated BMPs may be less effective for very fine-textured clay soils).
- Reducing irrigation tailwater through conversion from flood or furrow irrigation to buried drip, sprinkler, or micro-irrigation where applicable.
- Reducing irrigation tailwater with tailwater return systems.
- Reducing or delaying irrigation tailwater through irrigation water management.
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New Weed in California Rice: White Water Fire (*Bergia capensis*)

Written by Whitney Brim-DeForest, UCCE Rice and Wild Rice Advisor

Background

White water fire (*Bergia capensis*) was found in September of 2023, by the Butte County Agricultural Commissioner's office in a rice field in Butte County. The weed was identified by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. It is the first find of this weed in California, and possibly in the United States. It is native to Africa, southern China, and tropical Asia, and it is known to be in rice fields in Europe, Central and South America, as well as the Caribbean. It was likely transported in seed to rice-growing areas and has been established in those locations for many years.



White water fire (*Bergia capensis*), photo by Troos Van Der Merwe

In Butte County, the weed was only found in one rice field, and the Agricultural Commissioner's office surveyed surrounding rice fields but found no additional infestations. The method of introduction in California is unknown at this point. It currently has a "Q" rating by CDFA: "An organism or disorder suspected to be of economic or environmental detriment, but whose status is uncertain because of incomplete identification or inadequate information". At this point, it is not considered a quarantinable pest so if it is found, there is no penalty or restriction for finding it in a field.

Identification

White water fire looks similar to another common rice field weed, redstem (*Ammania* spp). However, the two species are not from the same plant family and are therefore not closely related. Due to the similarity, white water fire is quite difficult to identify in the field. One of the key distinctions is the thickness of the leaves, which are much broader in white water fire than in redstem. Another key distinction is flower color. The flower color of white water fire is white, whereas redstem can have either purple or red flowers.

Figure 2. Redstem (*Ammania coccinea*), photo by 2019 Jennifer Mo.



Possible control

Currently, no herbicide testing has been conducted in California, as we have recently collected the seed. UCCE will be scouting the previously infested field again in 2024, and we will collect more seeds at that time. In other countries, pretilachlor has been used (Parthipan et al, 2013), as has metsulfuron (FMC Corporation, 2022). However, neither of these products are registered in California rice, although some herbicides in the same Mode of Action are registered and may be effective. However, extensive testing with currently registered herbicides, as well as herbicides in the registration pipeline, will need to occur before recommendations can be made.

Currently, the best recommendation for control is to hand-rogue (pull) out the plants. Plants should be removed completely from the field, bagged, and disposed of in the trash. Other recommendations are to thoroughly clean equipment between fields when moving from an infested field to a non-infested field.

Reporting

If you suspect you have this plant in your field, please give your nearest Rice Farm Advisor a call. The best way for us to deal with this weed, including possibly being able to use an herbicide, is by knowing the extent of the issue. We can assist with identification, as well as control strategies.

References

FMC Corporation (2022). Sumet Pro Herbicide Label. India. Parthipan, T., Ravi, V., and Subramanian, E. (2013). Integrated weed management practices on growth and yield of direct-seeded lowland rice. *Indian Journal of Weed Science* 45(1): 7-11. 🌱

California Almond Acreage Drops Again in 2023

Courtesy of Almond Board of California

California's total almond acreage dropped again in 2023, this time by about 74,000 acres, making two years in a row that acreage has decreased, something that has not happened since at least 1995, according to a new report from Land IQ to the Almond Board of California (ABC).

Total acreage dropped from just under 1.64 million acres last year to about 1.56 million in 2023, even though bearing acres – orchards producing almonds and planted in 2020 or earlier – increased slightly to 1.37 million acres compared with 1.34 million acres at this time last year. But the amount of non-bearing acreage – new orchards planted in 2021, 2022 or 2023 – sank about 105,000 acres from 294,000 acres in 2022 to 189,000 acres in 2023, according to the Land IQ 2023 Standing Acreage Final Estimate.

“The latest Land IQ California almond acreage analysis continues to point to a reduction in total acreage driven by fewer new plantings and an increase in orchard removals,” said Richard Waycott, ABC president and CEO. “The 1.37 million bearing acreage in 2023 established a new record, reflecting plantings in 2020 or earlier, but going forward, the analysis points to a lowering of bearing acreage in 2024.”



MZ Photography
Michelle Zearfoss ©

Photo by Michelle Zearfoss - Almond Orchard

Orchard removals increased again in 2023 to about 83,000 acres as of Aug. 31, compared with 60,400 acres removed in 2022 and continuing a trend of an increasing pace of removals that started in 2021, according to the accompanying Land IQ 2023 Removal Update. That contributes to the analysis pointing to fewer acres next year and possibly beyond, Waycott said.

In addition, nearly 41,000 acres are classified as either stressed or abandoned. They were included in the standing acreage total because the orchards “may have the ability to recover,” Land IQ said.

The estimates come from multiple lines of evidence, including agronomic and

remote sensing knowledge, robust on-the-ground verification, customized image analysis, artificial intelligence and more. Land IQ said the 2023 standing acreage estimate is 98.8 percent accurate.

Land IQ's acreage estimates are commissioned by ABC to provide statistical transparency and a robust picture of California almonds to industry stakeholders around the world. In 2018, ABC first commissioned Land IQ, a Sacramento-based agricultural and environmental scientific research and consulting firm, to develop a comprehensive, living map of California almonds. The map is the result of more than a decade of research.

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Yuba-Sutter's Young Farmers and Ranchers

Written by Martina Damboriena, YF&R Member

Happy New Year from the Yuba Sutter Young Farmers and Ranchers. We ended the year with a fun filled bonfire and toy drive. We are looking forward to the new year with exciting upcoming tours and fundraisers. If you or anyone you know is passionate about the agriculture industry or eager to learn more about it, please reach out to our organization we'd love for you to join! 🌾



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Farm Flock Losses Climb as Avian Flu Outbreak Spreads

Written by Ching Lee – Assistant Editor of CFBF Ag Alert

Despite on-farm biosecurity efforts to protect the state's poultry flocks, outbreaks of a highly contagious strain of avian influenza have spiked markedly this winter, leading to the destruction of millions of birds to try to contain the deadly virus.

Mounting losses from the disease have devastated impacted farms, which are required to euthanize entire flocks to prevent spread. Since the H5N1 virus first surfaced in the U.S. in 2022, nearly 80 million birds across the nation have been destroyed, driving up prices of eggs, chicken and turkeys as production plummeted.

But until last fall, the disease appeared to have left California poultry farms relatively unscathed compared to farms in states such as Iowa, the nation's largest egg producer and where nearly 19 million birds have been wiped out since 2022 due to AI. The first year of the outbreak, California bird losses totaled 751,680. The number jumped to more than 4.7 million in 2023, with most of the cases occurring since October, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"This year, it's just a different story, and we're very concerned about it," said Bill Mattos, president of the California Poultry Federation.

Commercial poultry farms in Merced and Sonoma counties, which did not record any cases in 2022, have been hit particularly hard this time, with more than 3.78 million birds destroyed so far between the two regions.

"We're still trying to put out a wildfire here," said Scott Weber, an owner of Petaluma-based Sunrise Farms. The Sonoma County egg producer has been grappling with impacts of the virus since late November, having been forced to euthanize all its birds.

Weber said the farm has tried to keep all employees working during the cleanup process, which he expects will continue for months. But with production at a standstill, he acknowledged the farm may need to lay off some of its workforce, even though "we're trying our



best not to do that."

He said it remains unclear how the farm contracted the virus, noting "we've done everything we can" to keep it out.

Avian influenza is introduced primarily by wild birds such as waterfowl and shorebirds, which can carry the virus but not appear sick. Infected birds shed the virus into the environment through their feces and secretions. Domestic poultry can catch AI directly from infected birds or indirectly through contaminated water, feed, clothing and equipment.

First identified in Europe in 2020, the H5N1 strain of the virus has circled the globe with outbreaks in 67 countries on five continents. In the U.S., the disease ripped through some of the largest poultry farms in the Midwest and East Coast, sending egg prices to record levels in 2022 and early 2023.

To protect commercial flocks, State Veterinarian Annette Jones has asked producers to keep their poultry indoors through June, including certified organic layers and meat birds that are required by law to have outdoor access.

Sonoma County egg farmer Tiffany Holbrook, whose birds are raised on pasture, said she will not be moving her chickens indoors, though she continues

to practice strict biosecurity. That includes not allowing people onto the pasture and changing her boots and clothes whenever she goes out there.

She said she recognizes her farm remains susceptible to AI, as infected birds could land on the farm's chicken coop or eat from her birds' feeder, passing the disease to her flock. "I just stay vigilant as much as possible," Holbrook said.

Jones said most of the farms impacted by the current outbreak have been "very biosecure." Still, the disease has been "popping up like popcorn around the state." With California's last confirmed AI finding as recent as Dec. 28 in Marin and Sonoma counties, the state remains focused on controlling spread and eliminating the virus, she said. State epidemiologists will work to better understand the outbreak in the coming months. It remains unclear if the virus itself has become more virulent, if it is more prevalent in the environment or if there were breaks in farm biosecurity.

"We hope to find the answer with more study," Jones said. "But sometimes we never get the answer to that important question: Was it bad luck or is there something that can be fixed to prevent future introductions of virus?"

Weber of Sunrise Farms expressed frustration that even though a new vaccine for AI is available, poultry producers do not have access to it. The vaccine is being used in a trial on the California condor to protect the endangered bird. Weber said his farm already vaccinates its birds for other diseases and that vaccinating for AI would be “a better solution than trying to fight an invisible wildfire.”

Jones said use of the AI vaccine, which is regulated by USDA, remains “complicated,” though there are “very active national discussions on the topic, and influenza control experts continue to look at indications for use.” Mattos of the poultry federation noted most countries ban poultry vaccinated for AI.

Maurice Pitesky, a poultry specialist and expert in highly pathogenic avian influenza at the University of California, Davis, said vaccines are likely part of the solution, but they’re not a panacea. He said not allowing the AI vaccine for poultry appears to be more of a political decision than one based on science.

“This is an example of where the science is ahead of the policy and economics,” he said.

With millions of waterfowl arriving in California each fall during migration season, Pitesky said it’s clear poultry farmers need to do more than what they’ve done for years. He said biosecurity methods alone—including fencing, foot baths, vehicle washes and employee training—have not been sufficient to keep out AI.

“The reality is, if you have high waterfowl abundance around your farm and there’s AI in those waterfowl, there’s just no way that that physical operational barrier is good enough to prevent exposure and infection,” he said. “We need to think outside the barn.”

Pitesky is trying to get more farmers to also use prediction tools such as the Waterfowl Alert Network, a software subscription service that gives daily notifications to producers when waterfowl are close to their farms. Having this information, he said, would allow farmers to be more strategic

about their biosecurity.

He compared the tool to weather forecasting that tells farmers when a storm is coming. If farmers know where high numbers of waterfowl are roosting, for example, they could deploy water cannons or blasters or change the habitat around the farm to push birds away.

Mattos said the poultry federation has helped Pitesky apply for a USDA grant that would allow the tool to be offered to producers on a pilot basis. Pitesky said his hope is for these types of technologies to be subsidized completely by the government to encourage producers and other stakeholders to start using them.

“We’re dealing with an existential issue for the commercial poultry industry, not just in the U.S. but globally,” Pitesky said. “(Poultry) is our primary source of animal protein, and we’re losing millions of birds a year if we keep on continuing down the same path.” ☞

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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

Orchard Machinery Corporation

2700 Colusa Hwy, Yuba City

(530) 673-2822

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

Bains Inc.

2091 Eager Rd, Live Oak • (530) 300-3594

Balbir Bains

2909 Reed Rd, Yuba City, CA 95993

(530) 682-9315

BGH LP

6394 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953

Full Belly Farm 16141 Road 43,

Guinda, CA 95637 • (530) 796-2214

Just Farms LP

Gridley • (530) 846-3958

Lundberg Family Farms

Mike Denny • (530) 538-3500

Nor-Cal Farming Company LLC

1325 Berry Rd. Yuba City

(530) 674-5861

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

T&M Meyer Farms

Butte Rd Sutter, CA • (530) 570-9957

Triple H Ranches

Robbins • (530) 666-1500

FUEL

Lakeview Petroleum

1528 Colusa Hwy, YC 95993
(530) 742-7614

Valley Pacific Petroleum

Stockton CA rob.goodman@vppls.net
(209) 948-9412

HULLING & DRYING

Fedora Farms

2551 Farmlan Rd., Meridian
(530) 696-2230

INSURANCE

Denney Insurance Services

856 Richland Rd., Suite B, Yuba City
(530) 671-5813

Farm West Insurance

475 N Palora Ave., Suite B
(530) 741-0441

Galligan & Associates

440 Palora Ave, Yuba City
(530) 671-4841

Huntley Bravos Zall Insurance Brokers

520 Olive St., Marysville, CA 95901
(530) 743-9264

Oakview Insurance Services, Inc.

1560 Sierra Ave., #202, Yuba City, CA
megan@yourfavoriteagent.net
(530) 674-5054

Rose Insurance Agency Inc.

855 Harter Pkwy.,
Yuba City, CA 95993

Roberson & Sons Insurance Services Inc.

Eric Roberson • (530) 365-1009

Sutter Buttes Insurance

1527 Starr Dr #M Yuba City
Rajash Joshi (530) 216-1067

Zenith Agribusiness Solutions

Craig Thomson
cthompson@thezenith.com
(916) 781-2110

LEGAL SERVICES

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

Guillaume Grapevine Nursery

21208 State Highway 113
Knights Landing • (530) 735-6821

Sierra Gold Nurseries

5320 Garden Hwy., Yuba City
(530) 674-1145

PROCESSING & DRYING

Catlett Warehouse

2138 Catlett Road, Pleasant Grove
(530) 674-2380

District 10 Dryers LLC

9000 Mathews Lane, Marysville
(530) 742-3116

Miki Orchard, Inc.

803 Boyer Rd., Marysville
(530) 743-4402

Sacramento Packing Inc.

833 Tudor Rd., Yuba City, CA 95991
530-671-4488

Shoei Foods

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

Sunsweet Growers

901 Walton Ave, Yuba City
(530) 751-5379

SunWest Foods, Inc. Yuba City

(530) 671-8888

Taylor Brothers Farms

182 Wilkie Ave., Yuba City
(530) 671-1505

Van Dykes Rice Dryer

4036 Pleasant Grove Rd.,
Pleasant Grove • (916) 655-3171

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

SERVICES - OTHER

Bridge Coffee Co. LLC

101 Clark Ave YC
(530) 673-6001

Country Butcher

Adam & Katie Knapp
(530) 742-0284

G3 Enterprises 502 E Whitmore Ave.,

Modesto, 95358 • 209-648-8246

Joel Giusti • Yuba City

(530) 237-6951

Pride Employment & Staffing

Paul Basi • (530) 661-3405

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

Calpine

5029 S. Township Rd., Yuba City, CA
95993 • 530-821-2072

Chico Electric

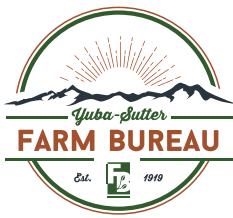
36 W Eaton Rd, Chico • (530) 891-1933

Meridian Farms Water Co.

1138 4th St., Meridian • (530) 696-2456

Renewable Solar

601 W. Grangeville Blvd. Hanford, CA
93230 • (559) 410-8640



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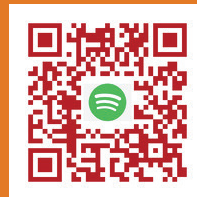
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