

October 18, 2023

New Update for Growers!

Technical/regulatory issues in California abound; this update will be issued every other month, providing an update on incentives and issues relevant to growers. Let us know if you have any comments or other issues you would like to see covered!

Incentive Corner

CDFA is trying a new approach for distributing SWEEP and Healthy Soils Program grants for growers- Block Grants. This approach was first tried with the Pollinator Grant program. Growers will need to be in touch with block grant recipients directly to apply for their passthrough funding. To see a list of block grant recipients in all three programs, visit <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefil/>.

ABC has made it easier for growers to access incentive opportunities, with a redesigned, more user-friendly Almonds.com/Incentives webpage. Listen to the AgNet West Radio feature on the redesign to learn about the changes made to the page and how the functionality makes it easier for growers to find the information they need. [LISTEN NOW](#)

Changes to Telone use starting in 2024

In response to a lawsuit, California Department of Pesticide Regulations (CDPR) plans to change how they regulate the use of Telone to reduce the impact of emissions on workers and neighbors. They plan to end the township cap system as well as the prohibition on applications in December/January. Instead, they have added buffers to inhabited/occupied spaces as well as maximum acreage treated per application limitations. The size of the buffer or acreage limitation depends on the rate applied, the size of the acreage treated, and the time of year. Buffers range from 0 to 500 ft. The maximum acreage that can be treated ranges from 4-80 A and there is a 10 day waiting period before any adjacent acreage can be treated. Applications from Nov- Feb have wider buffers and smaller maximum acreage treated compared to applications from March – October. In a recently released revision, they plan to have wider buffers for applications in the coastal areas due to the weather (fog) conditions. The other big change for tree and vine applications is that either a Totally Impermeable Film (TIF tarp) needs to be

used or the application needs to be applied at a 24 inch depth (not 18 inches). Growers continue to need to ensure they have enough moisture in the top 6-9 inches.

DPR has worked to ensure growers have choices in how they choose to apply, but generally the buffers are smaller/maximum treated acreage are larger if use TIF compared to applying at 24inch but no tarp. DPR still needs to release the final version of the regulation, likely in November, with the expectation that it will take effect January 1, 2024. In addition, the plaintiffs that forced CDPR to review the regulation of Telone have successfully argued that the proposed mitigations do not properly address exposures to workers in adjacent areas. DPR plans to tackle that question next. In parallel under pressure from activists, efforts are underway for the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to research the greenhouse gas impacts of the use of soil fumigants. CDPR has also announced that as part of starting to implement the Roadmap to Sustainable Pest Management, that fumigants are “priority” pesticides to reduce or eliminate use. For questions, contact gludwig@almondboard.com

Farm Bill Update

ABC staff continues to monitor discussions surrounding the Farm Bill and how it would affect almond growers. With the government funding status up the air, the Farm Bill will likely be delayed until after a fiscal year-long funding solution is obtained. At this point the most optimistic view is that a Farm Bill may yet be agreed to by the end of the year. However, most now expect that the Farm Bill will likely need an extension and potentially be on the table for the first quarter of 2024. There are still many issues to be resolved between both parties and chambers, but those discussions are unlikely to occur until a timeline is more certain. For information, contact bdensel@almondboard.com.

Engine rules proposed for trucks; upcoming air quality rules for PM2.5; \$10M for new harvester incentive program

The new air quality “*Advanced Clean Fleets*” rule adopted by CARB will end sales of diesel trucks in California by 2036. While concerns were raised during its adoption over high prices, electric grid capacity, and lack of charging stations, CARB decided to move forward as part of accelerating efforts to increase Zero Emission Vehicles and reduce GHG. CARB plans to consider these issues as agency staff now

embark on workgroup sessions specific to the issues of agriculture. CARB also announced a [partnership](#) with truck and engine manufacturers on producing medium- and heavy-duty models to meet the agency’s aggressive climate mandates. Although nothing has been developed yet, previous regulations have also had purchase grants and incentives. For information, contact jroseman@almondboard.com.

Recharge Workshops with Sustainable Conservation

With the non-profit Sustainable Conservation, ABC has co-sponsored a series of grower workshops focused on opportunities to do groundwater recharge. Other sponsors included Madera Irrigation District and NRCS, which have developed a new recharge practice standard to partially cover expenses developing recharge infrastructure. The NRCS program is expanding to Fresno and both on-farm recharge and basins could be adopted as official practice standards if successful.

In addition to these recharge types, given the large floods this past winter, ABC has [suggested](#) using parcels that have been temporarily fallowed for recharge as well.

For more information or to schedule a workshop in your area, contact jroseman@almondboard.com.

AgNeighbors encourages NOW mating disruption

Using a grant from CDPR, ABC is helping connect almond growers interested in regional management of Navel orangeworm (NOW) using pheromone mating disruption (MD). The NOW Neighborhood Management program seeks to bring industry members together through use of the [AgNeighbors](#) online tool (use passcode: *nowmd*) to coordinate MD efforts. Research done by UC Cooperative Extension has shown use of MD results in damage reduction of as much as 50% in parcels 40 acres or more, and 78% in parcels 100 acres or more. For more information, see this [article](#). For more information, contact jroseman@almondboard.com.

Environmental Stewardship Tour

The Environmental Stewardship Tour occurred May 19, 2023 after a 3-year hiatus. The tour is focused on giving State, Regional, and Federal Environmental Regulators an opportunity to learn about how almonds are grown and what a grower needs to consider as they make decisions as to how to grow almonds. The tour was hosted by Rich and Tanya Gemperle, second and third generation almond

farmers at their Snelling ranch. They provided Almond Growing 101 (variety, rootstock selection, irrigation/nutrient/pest management) in addition to talking about their focus on organic matter inputs via composted chicken manure, whole orchard recycling, cover crops, and experimenting with hedgerows for pollinators. In addition, they provided a comparison of their organic vs conventionally grown almonds, helping participants understand the trade-offs. The group then was hosted by Northern Merced Hulling Association who provided a tour of the huller/sheller along with discussion of how all the co-products are used.

The tour included staff and a Board member of the Central Valley Regional Water Board, Department of Water Resources, CDPR, San Joaquin Valley Air District, CDFA, USDA-NRCS, etc.

2023 Western Plant Health Association (WPHA) Conference Overview

The 2023 Western Plant Health Association (WPHA) annual summer regulatory conference was held on August 1 and 2 in Sacramento, CA. This year’s conference featured presentations on California’s Sustainable Pest Management roadmap, emerging regulations and their impact on industry, water and air quality issues, and environmental justice concerns.

Speakers included Dr. Karen Morrisson, Chief Deputy Director and Science Advisor at the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR); presenting DPR’s vision of Sustainable Pest Management (SPM) policy and the roadmap of SPM adoption by 2050. ABC’s Dr. Gabriele Ludwig served on the SPM working group, providing industry view points and concerns.

Upcoming Events (follow link):

Nov 7-8 2023 Flood-MAR Forum

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