



January 23 Update

Members from across the state participated in CDC / CFU Joint Annual Meeting: Representative David G. Valadao, CA-21, spoke to a large audience of farmers from around the state about water policy, immigration reform, dairy policy and other issues during the California Dairy Campaign (CDC) and California Farmers Union (CFU) Joint Annual meeting in Hanford, CA. “Dairy producer prices have dropped significantly in recent weeks and are now well below average production costs in our state,” warned CDC President Augusto. “In 2015, one of our highest priorities will be to work to establish a California federal milk marketing order so that California dairy producer prices are no longer some of the lowest in the nation,” he added. “Rep. Valadao has played a vital role in this process by sponsoring the ‘California Federal Milk Marketing Order Act’ which was passed in the farm bill last year. Now thanks to Rep. Valadao and other supporters of that bill the process is moving forward and we expect federal order hearings to occur later this year,” he concluded.

New Study: Economic Downturn and Other Factors, Not COOL, Caused Decline in Live Cattle Imports to the U.S. *Canadian claims of economic damage without merit:* Contrary to arguments made by America’s trade competitors to the World Trade Organization (WTO), an economic downturn that sapped consumer demand — not Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) — caused decreased demand for cattle imports into the U.S., according to a new [study](#) released today. “COOL did not cause the declines in livestock exports to the United States, which largely coincided with a substantial global economic downturn that sapped demand for more expensive meat products,” notes the study, authored by C. Robert Taylor, Ph.D., an Auburn University Alfa Eminent Scholar and Professor. (*NFU News*)

USDA Reminds Producers of Upcoming Livestock Disaster Assistance Deadline – January 30th The U.S. Department of Agriculture reminds livestock producers that the Jan. 30, 2015, deadline to request assistance for losses suffered from Oct. 1, 2011 through Dec. 31, 2014, is fast approaching. Applications for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), restored by the 2014 Farm Bill resumed in April 2014, after having expired on Sept. 30, 2011. LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses for covered livestock on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or is planted specifically for grazing. The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather. To apply, contact your local FSA county office. (*USDA*)

California Air Resources Board Agricultural Vehicle Extension – January 31 Deadline to Report Annual Odometer Readings: The agricultural vehicle extension delays compliance for agricultural vehicles that operate less than specified mileage thresholds and for a limited number of specialized trucks. • Applies to diesel trucks and buses that are exclusively use for agricultural operations with a manufacturer gross vehicle weight rating greater than 14,000 pounds. • Pickups are not subject to the regulation. • **Owners must report odometer readings annually to remain eligible.** The mileage limits range from 15,000 to 25,000 annually depending on the age of the vehicle. More information can be found at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onrdiesel/documents/fsag.pdf> (*CARB*)

Emergency Protections for Tricolored Blackbirds: In December, the California Fish and Game Commission enacted emergency protections for tricolored blackbirds in response to a petition filed by the Center for Biological Diversity. The Tricolored Blackbird Regional Conservation Partnership Program seeks a sustainable solution for managing nesting colonies on farms, with the goal of increasing the statewide population. Over the five-year project, dairy and conservation groups will work together to continue implementation and promotion of the existing NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program, also known as EQIP, which provides silage buyouts to farmers who delay harvest when tricolored blackbirds are nesting in their fields. (*Dairy Cares*)