

## Farm Bureau Continues to Keep You Informed About Government Activities

Those of us working for Farm Bureau are proud to say, "We constantly communicate with our members and the agricultural community." We give our members the opportunity to know what is happening legislatively.

### HOW DOES FARM BUREAU COMMUNICATE?

Four different means of alert go out to the farmers and ranchers regularly.

#### 1) Farmer & Rancher Magazine

Our monthly magazine, which includes legislative articles, reaches approximately 2,000 agricultural households plus legislators and agencies, many banks and businesses and all of the county's Chamber of Commerce organizations.

#### 2) Notes From Farm Bureau

Twice monthly e-mail memos, highlighting current government issues and actions, are sent to more than 100 Farm Bureau and non-Farm Bureau subscribers and agricultural organizations.

#### 3) Meetings

Farm Bureau staff and members attend a wide range of meetings, hearings and events with and for farmers and ranchers throughout the year, where we testify and discuss policies, ordinances and legislation.

Farm Bureau plays host to such meetings as Strategic Growth workshops, California Agricultural Vision Session, Water Quality Short Courses and Santa Maria/Oso Flaco TMDL.

We have representatives seated on the Ag. Liaison Advisory Board, Water Resources Advisory Committee, Ag. Tourism Committee, Vector Control Advisory Committee, the Visitors and Conference Bureau and the Economic Vitality Corporation.

#### 4) Farm Bureau Website

Updated regularly, our website ([www.slofarmbureau.org](http://www.slofarmbureau.org)) discusses legislative topics and includes a Farm Team link to the California Farm Bureau where you can take action on legislation. This resource is available to anyone who wants to know what is happening.

### WHAT TOPICS DOES FARM BUREAU ADDRESS?

We can truthfully say that 2008 was a very busy year. Take a look at some of the 30-plus legislative topics that Farm Bureau continues to address.

- Conservation and Open Space Element
- Road Improvement Fee for Rural Development
- Morro Bay Nitrate Issue
- Williamson Act Program

The Conservation and Open Space Element (COSE) represents a major update of combining five County Elements "conserving and protecting resources." In this process, Farm Bureau remains firm that the Agricultural Element must remain a "stand alone" element and that the COSE refer agricultural issues to the Ag. Element. The Public Review

Draft of the COSE is out for comment and can be seen on the Planning Commission website, [www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning.htm](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning.htm). (There have been 17 Farm Bureau alerts relating to this issue.)

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### SPEAKING UP WORKS!

Farm Bureau has participated in many legislative successes over the last few years. Some of these include the following.

#### Successes on the County Level

- Planning Staff over the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, a number of proposed linkage fees for agriculture have been eliminated and others have been reduced.

- has led to agriculture not being included in the proposed Conservation and Open Space Element.

- San Simeon Creek Bridges have been moved forward and passed at the Coastal Commission.

#### Successes on the State and Federal Levels

- and the Governor, have maintained subvention funding to the County relating to land in Williamson Act Contracts for 2009.

- Legislators, helped to stop the 2008 misnamed Healthy Pet Initiative.

- worked with others to change the cargo securement regulations.



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## HOW CAN YOU STAY INFORMED? SIGN UP FOR "NOTES"!

"Notes From Farm Bureau" is a great member benefit, provided only for San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau voting members.

"Notes," sent by e-mail on a weekly basis, keeps our members informed of what is happening in our county that affects those with a stake in agriculture.

If you are interested in receiving "Notes," please e-mail or call Farm Bureau with your voting member name and number and your e-mail address.

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## Farm Bureau CALENDAR

### MAY

- 7 Edna Farm Center
- 11 Farm Bureau Women
- 15 Adelaida Farm Center
- 26 Farm Bureau Board of Directors

### JUNE

- 4 Edna Farm Center
- 8 Farm Bureau Women
- 17 Creston Farm Center
- 19 Adelaida Farm Center
- 23 Farm Bureau Board of Directors

- **Strategic/Smart Growth Amendment**
- **Agricultural Element**
- **Linkage Fee for Inclusionary Housing**
- **On-Site Waste Water Treatment Systems (Septic Systems)**
- **Cargo Securement Requirements**
- **Countywide Rural Plan**

**Strategic/Smart Growth** is a new direction in future county development that was finalized at the Board of Supervisors on March 28. During the last two years Farm Bureau, through meetings and testimony, addressed the impact to agriculture relating to the new proposals. The concept of compact communities and community hard edges reverses the large-lot development that has been a major attraction to this county since World War II. (There have been 16 Farm Bureau alerts to this issue.)

- **Growth Management Ordinance**
- **Grading Ordinance**
- **Diesel Truck Air Rule**
- **2008 Farm Bill**
- **Vector Control Program**
- **Santa Maria/Osos Flaco TMDL**
- **Transfer of Development Credits**
- **Biosolids Ordinance**
- **Ag. Tourism**

**Agricultural Tourism** has been a protracted ordinance proposal. A July 30 Planning Commission hearing date has been set on the Events section of the ordinance. Farm Bureau, from the time of the initial working groups through the Agricultural Liaison review and now before the Planning Commission, has continued to support responsible events and agriculturally related activities that

are secondary and incidental to the agricultural production on the land. (There have been 15 Farm Bureau alerts relating to this issue.)

- **County Stormwater Pollution Plan**
- **San Simeon Bridge Replacement Project**
- **California Healthy Pet Act**
- **Hazardous Materials Inventory**
- **Los Osos Sewer Project**
- **Agricultural Clusters**

The **Major and Minor Agricultural Cluster** concept was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1998 with the adoption of the Agriculture & Open Space Element. In 2008, the Board of Supervisors voted to revisit the Ag. Cluster ordinances. Farm Bureau continues to support the original intent of agricultural clusters, allowing limited development while protecting 90 to 95 percent of the land for continued agricultural production. These two ordinances will be moving forward through the County planning process this year. (There have been nine Farm Bureau alerts to this issue.)

- **California Veterinary Tax**
- **Agricultural Buffers**
- **Irrigated Agriculture Discharge Waiver**
- **Paso Robles Ground Water Management Plan**

Whether it is water, air or food safety, or County, State or National issues, our Farm Bureau aims to keep our members fully informed. We continue to work to improve our system and welcome suggestions from our members.