

## **Happy Election Year 2012!**

Yes, believe it or not, another election year is already upon us. For Californians the Presidential Primary is not as important compared to what lies ahead in a year where many changes are being implemented related to elections in this state.

While all aspects of the redistricting process have not yet been finalized, candidates will likely be running in newly drawn districts. Farm Bureau had hoped that the citizen-lead process would result in more competitive races, but a review of the current voter registration numbers reveals most districts still favor one party or the other.

Farm Bureau has been a long time supporter of measures that aim to make legislators more accountable to the people they represent. And while the redistricting did not turn out as well as we had hoped, we still have another opportunity to create change in California.

This year marks the first time that Californians will see a Top-Two, Open Primary system where the two candidates who earn the most votes in the Primary, regardless of their party affiliation, will square off in the general election.

We know we can elect quality people to represent agriculture in the rural areas of California, but our biggest challenge is electing candidates in the urban areas who value and understand what goes into building a vibrant economy that benefits everyone. It is in these districts, with the help of the Open Primary, that we can create the change we need to improve California's business climate.

However, the only way we can support candidates in those districts where there is little or no agriculture is by financially supporting their campaigns. Our tool for doing so is FARM PAC®, the California Farm Bureau Fund to Protect the Family Farm.

Every dollar invested in FARM PAC strengthens our ability to elect leaders who appreciate and understand that business is not a four letter word and that agriculture is truly a renewable and sustainable enterprise.

No one person can change the face of the Legislature, but by pooling our resources, together we can make a difference. As you review your business plan, consider your investment in FARM PAC – whether it is checking the box on your membership renewal, responding to a fundraising letter or participating in a county fundraising effort – it is a small investment with big returns.

Special interest groups are investing millions of dollars on candidates each year who are committed to issues and agendas that threaten our rich agricultural heritage. We stand at a

critical juncture this election year. Farmers and ranchers can make it known that we aren't going to take it anymore.

We know there are many competing interests for your political dollars. Every dollar counts and by working together, we can bring balance to the State Legislature and protect our farming and ranching operations.

To learn more about FARM PAC, please visit our website at [www.cfbf.com/farmpac](http://www.cfbf.com/farmpac) or contact your County Farm Bureau office at (805) 543-3654.