## Methane bill includes safeguards for Calif. dairies

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS Capital Press

A bill to reduce methane emissions from California's dairies and livestock operations is headed to the governor following its passage on the final day of the state Legislature's regular session.

SB 1383 would require the state Air Resources Board to begin implementing a strategy to reduce methane emissions 40 percent below 2013 levels by 2030. Implementation would be required no later than Jan. 1, 2018, with regulations to take effect by Jan. 1, 2024.

Originally opposed by the dairy industry — which argued the mandate would target dairy operations with unachievable goals, no viable strategy and no financial assistance — the bill survived with some added safeguards to make it slightly more palatable

The livestock portion of the bill pertains to manure management and requires that regulations to reduce emissions be economically and technically feasible and foregoes ARB's proposal to directly regulate enteric emissions from livestock.

It defines what ARB's authority is related to the dairy industry, as opposed to unrestrained authority given the agency in SB 32 — which establishes a new mandate of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, said Rob Vandenheuvel, manager of Milk Producers Council.

SB 32 doubles down on a 2006 legislative goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, giving ARB virtually unlimited authority to meet that goal, he said.

"I think all of this needs to be looked at through the lens of, I believe, very unwise state policy to tackle climate change on our own," he said.

In context, the methane bill turned out to be a positive compared to the exposure the dairy industry was facing in earlier versions of the bill and in SB 32, he said.

"It's more palatable than previous versions and more palatable than doing nothing. Allowing ARB to do whatever they want is a very scary thought," he said.

The bill states "the regulations must be economically feasible considering milk and cattle prices and the commitment of state, federal, and private funding, among other things, and that markets exist for the products generated by dairy manure management and livestock manure management methane emissions reduction projects, including composting, biomethane, and other products.'

The bill establishes parameters under which ARB is required to operate. ARB has to be able to demonstrate feasibility all through the policy before it can regulate methane emissions on dairies,

The bill requires ARB to work with stakeholders to address technical, market, regulatory and other challenges to the development of dairy methane emissions reduction projects.

It also requires ARB in consultation with the state Department of Food and Agriculture to analyze the progress being made in the dairy and livestock sectors to overcome technical and market barriers no later than July 1, 2020. If that analysis shows that progress has not been made, ARB in consultation with the CFDA and stakeholders "may reduce the goal in the strategy" for those sectors.

In addition to methane reduction, the bill would require a 40 percent reduction in hydroflourocarbons gases and a 50 percent reduction in anthropologic black carbon (soot) and would establish specified targets for reducing organic waste in landfills.



Photos by Tim Hearden/Capital Press File

Michael Vasey, general manager of Lindauer River Ranch in Red Bluff, Calif., stands near flats at the ranch's prune dryer. Lindauer River's prune crop was about one-third its normal size as yields came up short statewide because of stormy weather during the blossom.

# Prune crop smallest in decades

By TIM HEARDEN Capital Press

RED BLUFF, Calif. — The harvest of plums for prunes in California this summer was short and not very sweet — at least in terms of yields.

Industry representatives were expecting a short crop this season, mainly because of stormy weather that spoiled the blossom in March, and there were few, if any, surpris-

At Lindauer River Ranch, the harvest lasted a little more than a week and yields were about one-third of normal, general manager Michael Vasey said.

In Northern California, shakers were working in orchards a little earlier than normal and dryers were finished well before Labor Day, he said.

We had a 10-day harvest .. and normally we go 21 days," he said. "Statewide, it was probably a little less than half our average crop.'

This year's crop was expected to weigh in at about 45,000 tons, down 58 percent from the 107,000 tons that came out of dryers in 2015, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service office in Sacramento. It's the smallest crop since estimates began in 1920.

NASS issued its grim forecast in June after surveys returned by 217 growers reported that wet and windy weather in late winter and early spring created adverse conditions for bees during the height of the pollination period.

While the March storms filled reservoirs, they also caused spotty, uneven pollination of plum trees, resulting in a much heavier-than-normal shed of the developing fruit in the subsequent weeks, the Prune Bargaining Association reported.

To make matters worse, afternoon temperatures that soared to nearly 110 degrees in late July caused instances of blue prune, in which plums dropped from trees prematurely, reported Rick Buchner, a University of California Cooperative Extension adviser in Red Bluff.

Though supplies were affected, the California Dried Plum Board expected quality and taste to remain "of the consistent excellence that have made California prunes the standard-bearer throughout the world," executive director Donn Zea said in a statement.

The small crop comes after last year's production slightly exceeded an estimate of 100,000 tons, leaving a sizable carry-over supply that will help meet demand.

Moreover, the industry is doing more to maintain market share through promotion and nutrition research than it was doing in 2004, when a similar busted crop ate into its worldwide market share.

With last year's good crop, Vasey doesn't anticipate a drastic increase in prices as a result of this year's low yields, he said. For growers, the failed crop is a good argument for diversification, agreed Vasey, whose farm also produces walnuts and wheat.

"When you have one crop that doesn't hit, you've got another," he said.

## Clif Bar cuts ribbon on sustainable bakery Gov. Butch Otter said

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS

Capital Press

TWIN FALLS, Idaho — Hundreds of people gathered at Clif Bar's new bakery Aug. 30 to officially celebrate the opening of the \$90 million facility, which began production of the company's CLIF Bars and CLIF KID Z Bars in May.

sustainability-fo-The cused bakery is inspired by the visions and values of company co-owners, founder Gary Ericson and Kit Crawford, who aspire to not only business and brand sustainability but the sustainability of people, community and the planet, said Clif Bar CEO Kevin Cleary.

Unfortunately, the couple could not attend the celebration, with Erickson grounded from travel by a temporary health issue, Cleary said.

The bakery's Twin Falls location stemmed from the beauty of the area and the quality of the people and community and grew with the quick alignment of the company's goals with the city's aspirations and the state's pro-business environment, he said.

"Idaho is a great place to do business," he said.

it's a "great day of pride for Idaho" and Clif Bar's commitment tells other companies they can find security and predictability in Idaho, where the rules won't change to accommodate the latest whim.

"You couldn't find a better place to cook your biscuits," he told the Clif Bar team to the amusement of those in attendance.

The company operates two production lines at the bakery with 202 employees and will hire 60 or so people for its third line opening in 2017.



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