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California

Revised state budget impacts ag, sparks talks at California Capitol

By TIM HEARDEN
Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — Joel Nelsen hustled from meeting to meeting on May 16 trying to coax state leaders to pay more attention to a tree disease that could devastate California's citrus industry.

Nelsen, the president of California Citrus Mutual, urged lawmakers and officials from the state Department of Finance to boost the \$4.4 million designated for a pest and disease prevention program in Gov. Jerry Brown's revised budget proposal.

Citrus industry leaders want money specifically set aside to halt the spread of the Asian citrus psyllid and huanglongbing, which has killed 54 residential citrus trees in Southern California but not yet migrated to commercial groves.

"We would like to see some additional dollars in the general fund allocated to the (state Department of Food and Agriculture) for regulatory enforcement," Nelsen told the Capital Press as he shuttled to his next meeting at the Capitol.

Nelsen's efforts come as budget negotiations at the Capitol kicked into high gear after Brown presented his \$124 billion revised ledger on May 11. The Democrat-con-



Tim Hearden/Capital Press

Student Colton DeBerry separates goats in a pen on the farm at Shasta College in Redding, Calif., earlier this year. Gov. Jerry Brown's revised budget proposal would increase community college funding by \$160 million but cut \$15 million in FFA funding.

trolled Legislature must approve a 2017-18 budget by June 15.

The revision leaves intact Brown's proposal to provide \$284.4 million to the CDFA, up from its \$253.9 million in the current budget, and add nearly 300 new positions for a total of 1,752.1 full-time-equivalent positions, agency spokesman Steve Lyle said.

Including federal funds and fee programs, CDFA's overall budget would be \$411.5 million. That's down slightly from the \$414 million allocated to the agency in the 2016-17 ledger.

The governor's proposal would include nearly \$22.4 million in new spending to regulate cannabis produc-

tion, which voters legalized for non-medical uses in November, and about \$2 million apiece to implement the Produce Safety Rule and new antibiotic controls.

The governor also wants to boost community college funding by \$160 million to, among other goals, improve students' employment opportunities.

However, part of that would come at the expense of FFA and high school career-technical programs, which would lose \$15 million.

Jim Aschwanden, the California Agricultural Teachers' Association's executive director, said in a statement he was "extremely disappointed" by the proposal.

Almond producers expect record crop

By TIM HEARDEN
Capital Press

SACRAMENTO — Almond producers in California expect to reap another record harvest this summer despite stormy weather in February that complicated the bloom.

Almond production is estimated to weigh in at 2.2 billion pounds — a 2.8 percent increase from last year's record 2.14 billion pound crop, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service office in Sacramento.

Nut set has been good throughout the state even after winter storms and cold weather extended the bloom, as significant rains caused some bee boxes to rest in standing water and made spray applications more difficult, industry officials report.

Richard Waycott, president and chief executive of-

ficer of the Almond Board of California, said he's "always amazed" by nature.

"The conditions aren't right, but somehow the pollination gets done," he said. "Even in the northern part of the state, crops are looking good from what I've heard."

The return to record production is fueled by new plantings that are continuing to come on line. Bearing acreage is expected to reach the 1 million mark this year, up from 940,000 acres in 2016, according to NASS.

The continued growth comes as the industry is still rebounding from a price slide that began in late 2015, as prices fell by nearly half from the more than \$4 a pound that was paid for some almonds during the 2014 crop year.

However, almond production has remained profitable despite the slide, University of California Cooperative

Extension adviser Roger Duncan has said.

Prices stabilized around the middle of last year, while almonds' status as the lowest-priced tree nuts helped boost demand, Waycott said. The California industry has shipped 2.13 billion pounds from the 2016-17 crop year, so "shipments are very much in line with the crop size," he said.

"I think we'll probably be in a very good, stable supply situation for the next crop," he said. "I would think we would see increased demand around the world."

In anticipation of a 25 percent increase in production over the next three years as all the new trees begin bearing nuts, the Almond Board received the USDA's permission to raise its grower assessment from 3 cents to 4 cents per pound, which will enable the board to boost its marketing efforts.

Better feed conditions drive higher ram prices at sale

PORTERVILLE, Calif. — The market for rams is apparently becoming more brisk as a recent sale netted a significantly higher average winning bid than last year.

The 447 range rams offered at auction at the California Ram Sale in April averaged \$832 a head compared to \$668 in 2016, according to organizers.

The 275 head of Suffolk

rams that were sold averaged \$875 per animal, while 146 crossbred rams averaged \$747 a head. The top bid of \$6,750 netted a trio of speck-faced composite rams.

California Wool Growers Association president Ryan Inard cited much improved feed conditions as one of the drivers of the higher prices.

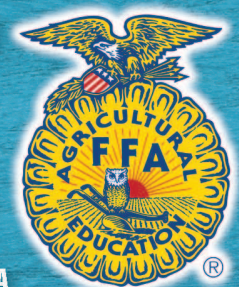
Among the sale's honorees,

long-time consigners John and Anita Phillips of Paul, Idaho, were given the Best Overall Consignment Award, and Jim Neumiller of Healdsburg, Calif., was among sale consigners bringing rams with the largest loin eye measurements, according to a news release.

For information on the sale and the CWGA, visit <http://cawoolgrowers.org/>.

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IDAHO FFA FOUNDATION AWARDS OVER \$50,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2017

Through support from generous donors, the Idaho FFA Foundation awarded \$43,000 in college scholarships, and \$6,400 in Washington Leadership Conference Scholarships at the 2017 Idaho State FFA Leadership Conference in Twin Falls on April 7. An additional \$2,000 was awarded later in April through special Idaho FFA Foundation endowments. Congratulations to the 2017 Idaho FFA Foundation scholarship recipients!

\$2,000 J.A. Wedum

Foundation Scholarships:
Sydney Anderson, *Nampa FFA*
Ashlyn Schiers, *Meridian FFA*

\$1,500 United Dairymen of Idaho Scholarships:

Garrett Barnes, *Middleton FFA*
Jennifer Bautista Ramirez, *Homedale FFA*
Kathryne Day, *Jerome FFA*
Dustin Winston, *Middleton FFA*

\$1,000 Idaho Grower Shipper Association Scholarships:

Ross Blattner, *Kuna FFA*
Gretchen Hansten, *Jerome FFA*
Riley Haun, *Homedale FFA*
Abigail Johnston, *Rigby FFA*
Bret Kindall, *Cambridge FFA*
Valery Kindall, *Cambridge FFA*
ReAnn Mahler, *Fruitland FFA*
Sadie Simpson, *Malad FFA*
Hannah Smith, *Meridian FFA*
Emily Trees, *Genesee FFA*

\$1,000 Betaseed Scholarships:

Wyatt Neal, *Parma FFA*
Mason Roberts, *Kuna FFA*

\$1,000 Integrated

Biological Systems Inc. Scholarship:
Jessica Kohntopp, *Meridian FFA*

\$2,000 Tractor Raffle

Agricultural Education Scholarships:
Kjersti Clawson, *Genesee FFA*
Randy Clements, *Madison FFA*

\$1,000 Tractor Raffle Scholarships:

Robert Allison, *Middleton FFA*
Danielle Church, *Fruitland FFA*
RaAnna Dable, *Fruitland FFA*
Shyla Flavel, *Kuna FFA*
Jimmie Gilder, *Troy FFA*
Katelynn Hall, *Emmett FFA*
Jacee Lancaster, *Hagerman FFA*
Alysha O'Connell, *Genesee FFA*
Alexa Phillips, *Meridian FFA*
Maren Roberts, *Preston FFA*
Carson Schumann, *Raft River FFA*
Megan Smith, *Melba FFA*
Maddie Stapleton, *Nezperce FFA*
Danielle Van Lith, *Ridgevue FFA*
Cherie BreAnn Weeks, *Malad FFA*
Afton Winn, *Preston FFA*

\$1,600 Dwaine Tesnohlidek

Washington Leadership Conference Scholarships:

Alyssa Hansten, *Jerome FFA*
Logan Stansell, *Marsing FFA*

\$1,600 Sara Braasch Schmidt

Washington Leadership Conference Scholarships:

Harrison Jansen van Beek, *Middleton FFA*
Savannah Stroebel, *Kuna FFA*



2017 Idaho FFA Dwaine Tesnohlidek Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship recipients are, left to right, Alyssa Hansten, Jerome FFA, and Logan Stansell, Marsing FFA. The scholarships were presented by Ellie Tesnohlidek and Katie Mosman, granddaughters of Dwaine Tesnohlidek.

\$1,000 Wayne & Blanche Kuhlman Kuna FFA Scholarship:

Jacob Rowland, *Kuna FFA*

\$1,000 Don & Mary Johnson Kuna FFA Scholarship:

Taylor Stephenson, *Kuna FFA*

To learn more about participating in the 2018 Idaho FFA Foundation Scholarship Program, please contact Laura Wilder, Executive Director at lwilder@idffafoundation.org



2017 Idaho FFA Sara Braasch Schmidt Washington Leadership Conference Scholarship recipients are, left to right, Savannah Stroebel, Kuna FFA, and Harrison Jansen van Beek, Middleton FFA.



Megan Smith, Melba FFA, is one of 18 2017 Idaho FFA Tractor Raffle Scholarship recipients.



Katie Hall, Emmett FFA, is one of 18 2017 Idaho FFA Tractor Raffle Scholarship recipients.

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2017 Idaho FFA J.A. Wedum Foundation Scholarship recipients are, left to right, Sydney Anderson, Nampa FFA, and Ashlyn Schiers, Meridian FFA.

Learning to do, Doing to Learn Earning to Live, Living to Serve.

