



The Cotton Chronicle

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Industry Calendar

Trust Protocol Enrollment Webinar Participation Urged

Mark Your calendars! More grower enrollment webinars for the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol will



be offered in December. Attendees will learn how the Trust Protocol helps U.S. grower meet their end customers' changing demands by documenting/verifying the sustainability practices and advances already incorporated into U.S. cotton farms. The webinar also will detail how the program enables U.S. cotton growers to prove their sustainability. Stewardship and derive commitment to continuous improvement. For questions, please reach out to the Grower Helpdesk at growers@trustuscotton.org and be sure to follow the Trust Protocol on Facebook and Instagram for the latest Updates.

Association President/CEO Isom Testifies on West Coast Port Crisis

A special hearing was held last month by the Joint Assembly and Senate Select Committees on Ports and Goods Movement at their special hearing today in Sacramento on the West Coast Port Crisis. **Association President/CEO Roger Isom** was asked by the Committee to speak to the impact of the crisis on agriculture. Additional panelists included representatives from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, California Association of Port Authorities, California Retailers Association, California State Transpor-

tation Authority, Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, BNSF, Teamsters and the ILWU. Isom's comments focused on quantifying the costs and impact to agricultural exports, and outlined the direct problems faced by the industry included rolled bookings and the cancellation of Shipping Lines coming to Oakland to take exports. Isom stated "taking empties back to Asia, bypassing Oakland and leaving ag exports on the docks is clearly a trade issue... agriculture and our inability to get our exports out is simply collateral damage. We need solutions and we need them yesterday." While the

Media on Demand

Joint Hearing Assembly Select Committee on Ports and Goods Movement and Senate Select Committee on Ports and Goods Movement, Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021



state of California has little jurisdiction on issues affecting the crisis, they can help with some of the short term solutions to alleviate the logjam, including finding off-port storage and other potential solutions.

US EPA and Army Propose New WOTUS Rule

This past month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of the Army (the agencies) announced a proposed rule to re-establish the pre-2015 definition of "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) which had been in place for decades, updated to reflect consideration of Supreme Court decisions.

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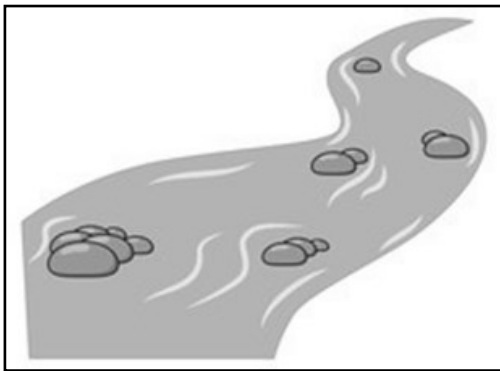
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This action advances the agencies' goal of establishing a durable definition of WOTUS that protects public health, the environment, and downstream communities while supporting economic opportunity, agriculture, and other industries that depend on clean water. This proposed rule would support a stable implementation of "waters of the United States" while the agencies continue to consult with states, Tribes, local governments, and a broad array of stakeholders in both the implementation of WOTUS and future regulatory actions. According to **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**, "Through our engagement with stakeholders across the country, we've heard overwhelming calls for a durable definition of WOTUS that protects the environment and that is grounded in the experience of those who steward our waters. Today's action advances our process toward a stronger rule that achieves our shared priorities." EPA claims that recent court deci-



sions have reinforced the need for a stable and certain definition of WOTUS. The U.S. District Courts for both Arizona and New Mexico have vacated the Navigable Waters

Protection Rule. Considering the court actions, the agencies have been implementing the pre-2015 regulatory regime nationwide since early September 2021. EPA claims that the proposed rule would solidify the rules of the road for a stable implementation of "waters of the United States" while the agencies continue to consult with stakeholders to refine the definition of WOTUS in both implementation and future regulatory actions. EPA further states the proposed rule would maintain the longstanding exclusions of the pre-2015 regulations as well as the exemptions and exclusions in the Clean Water Act on which the agricultural community has come to rely. The agencies are taking comment on this proposed rule for 60 days beginning on the date it is published in the Federal Register. The Association is currently reviewing the proposed rule in preparation of making comments.

Registration for 2022 Beltwide Cotton Conferences Now Open

Those planning to attend the 2022 Beltwide Cotton Conferences set for January 4-6 at the Marriott Rivercenter

Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, now may register by going to the Beltwide Cotton Conference home page at www.cotton.org/beltwide/ and clicking on the registration tab.

The Beltwide Cotton Conference home page also includes more information about the forum, including a link to make hotel reservations and an updated program.



NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Opportunities for FY2022

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced fiscal year 2022 assistance opportunities for agricultural producers and private landowners for key programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). While NRCS accepts applications for these programs year-round, producers and landowners should apply by state-specific, application cutoff dates to be considered for this year's funding.

California Application Cutoff Dates

- Sign-up Period 1 for EQIP: December 10, 2021
 - Sign-up Period 2 for EQIP: April 1, 2022
 - EQIP - Sage Grouse Initiative: May 6, 2022
 - CSP: April 1, 2022
- ACEP: December 1, 2021

Applying for Assistance

NRCS accepts applications for its conservation programs year-round. State Technical Committees, composed of producers and landowners, work with NRCS to set state-specific, ranking dates to evaluate applications for funding. These dates account for producer needs, staff workload, and ensure potential participants have ample opportunity to apply. Producers should apply by California-specific ranking dates to be considered for funding in the current cycle. Funding is provided through a competitive process. Ranking dates for all programs and states are available at nrcs.usda.gov/staterankingdates. Applications received after application deadlines will be automatically deferred to the next funding period. Producers, landowners and forest managers interested in applying for assis-

tance should contact the NRCS at their local [USDA Service Center](#).

Program Options

EQIP provides cost share assistance for producers to use 170-plus conservation practices to address a wide variety of resource concerns. CSP helps producers take their conservation activities to the next level through comprehensive conservation and advanced conservation activities. ACEP helps producers enroll wetlands, grasslands and farmlands into easements for long-term protection.

NRCS Announces Three Local Appointments

The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in California has announced three new leadership selections in the state. **Allen Curry** has been selected as the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Salinas covering the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, and Stanislaus. **Johnnie Siliznoff** has been selected as the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Fresno covering the counties of Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Tulare, and Tuolumne. **Jon Gustafson** is the new permanent State Resource Conservationist (SRC). Jon will work with staff and partners to provide leadership over our agency conservation planning and technical standards. Their assignments will be effective November 21, 2021. The Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations is responsible for working closely with employees, customers, and partners to deliver conservation programs and technical assistance, oversee staff, deliver training, and communicate agency plans, progress, and goals. In addition, they will be working with you and the District Conservationists (DC), to strengthen Local Work Groups and focus on your most critical conservation

NRCS Natural Resources
Conservation Service

needs. They will be working with partners and the DCs to implement the California Strategic Plan which focuses on people and making progress on six key natural resource concerns, including soil health, plant vigor that includes forest health, air quality, water quality, water quantity, and enhancing habitat.

Allen Curry is currently the DC in Indio, CA. He has worked in several field and area leadership positions in Mississippi (MS) and CA including Soil Scientist, local Soil Conservationist, and as an area Resource Soil Scientist. Curry is a native of Port Gibson, MS, and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant and Soil Science from Alcorn State University.

Johnnie Siliznoff is currently the Acting DC in Fresno and previously the DC in Madera. He has worked as the Central Valley Air Quality Specialist and has extensive experience serving in several technical and leadership positions in CA, the West National Technology Support Center, and National Headquarters. Johnnie is a graduate of California State University-Fresno with a degree in Agriculture Science and has a California Pest Control Advisors license.

Jon Gustafson is currently the State Rangeland Ecologist. Jon started his career with NRCS in February 1998 as a rangeland management specialist at the field office in Petaluma California. Jon has spent most of his life in California, with his formative years in Orcutt and the past fifteen years in Davis. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Rangeland Resource Science from Humboldt State University.

USDA Provides \$1.8 Billion to Offset Market Fluctuations

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today it is in the process of issuing \$1.8 billion in payments to agricultural producers who enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2020 crop year. These payments provide critical support to help mitigate fluctuations in either revenue or prices for certain crops. These two USDA safety-net programs help producers of certain crops build back better after facing the impacts of COVID-19 and other challenges. In addition, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is encouraging producers to contact their local USDA Service Centers to make or change elections and to enroll for 2022 ARC or PLC, providing future protections against market fluctuations. The election and enrollment period opened on Oct. 18, 2021 and runs through March 15, 2022. ARC

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and PLC payments for a given crop year are paid out the following fall to allow actual county yields and the Market Year Average prices to be finalized. This month, FSA processed payments to producers enrolled in 2020 ARC-County (ARC-CO), ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and PLC for covered commodities that triggered for the crop year. For ARC-CO, view the [2020 ARC-CO Benchmark Yields and Revenues online database](#) for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity.

For PLC, payments have triggered for barley, canola, chickpeas (large and small), dry peas, flaxseed, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat. For ARC-IC, producers should contact their local FSA office for additional information pertaining to 2020 payment information, which relies on producer-specific yields for the crop and farm to determine benchmark yields and actual year yields when calculating revenues.

