



Newsletter of the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association

The Cotton Chronicle

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October 2026

Volume 36, Issue 10

Industry Calendar

**Joint Steering
Committee Meeting**
Nov. 18

**CCGGA Boarding
Meeting**
Dec. 1

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Association Speaks to FPU Ag Leadership Class
Association President/CEO Roger A. Isom and Association Vice President Priscilla Rodriguez conducted a tag team presentation to the **Ag Leadership Class at Fresno Pacific University** last month. Isom and Rodriguez talked about the Association and their responsibilities. They also provided an overview of the issues the Association is tackling, and the political environment they must work in. That led to a discussion on how to be successful in that environment through involvement, engagement and leadership. Priscilla drew upon her experiences and lessons learned with the California Ag Leadership Program in explaining on how to be successful in California. Isom provided several examples of working with legislators and finding common ground. The Ag Leadership Professional Certificate gives participants direct access to California agricultural leaders. Through candid conversations and guided reflection, participants will see how professionals address finances, marketing, organizational development,

nutrition, workforce challenges and government relations.

Water Blueprint Releases Unified Water Plan

The Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley and the California Water Institute at Fresno State has released the Unified Water Plan for the San Joaquin Valley, a congressionally authorized, federally funded report that gives local, state, and federal decisionmakers a single roadmap for water investment across the eight-county region. The California Water Institute at Fresno State prepared the plan with the Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley and Stantec, and its results will be reported to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the House Committee on Natural Resources. The plan integrates the adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plans of all sixteen Valley subbasins into one regional strategy covering Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties. Congress directed the study in Public Law 111-

11, the 2009 San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation funded it. The plan establishes the first Valley-wide measure of the region's water challenge: an annual supply-demand gap of about 2.5 million acre-feet per year by 2040. Without coordinated action, that gap would take up to one million acres out of irrigated production and cost the region about \$7.2 billion in annual farm revenue, 85,000 jobs, and \$2.1 billion in annual employee compensation, with losses concentrated in



communities already facing economic and drinking water challenges. The plan responds with three nested investment scenarios, ranging from roughly \$18 billion to \$33 billion, that sequence the region's response. The scenarios begin with restoring the capacity of subsidence-affected Central Valley Project and State Water Project canals, a foundational investment that protects existing deliveries and enables the local recharge, reuse, and storage projects that follow. Throughout, the plan integrates water supply reliability, flood risk reduction, and ecosystem enhancement as one strategy. With coordinated investment, the land transition drops from an unmanaged loss of up to one million acres toward a deliberate repurposing of up to 400,000 acres. The Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley is a coalition of San Joaquin Valley community leaders, businesses, water agencies, local governments, and agricultural representatives working together to advance common sense water solutions for our region. **The Association's Assistant Vice President Priscilla Rodriguez is on the Blueprint Board of Directors.**

2027 Beltwide Cotton Conference Registration Now Open

Those planning to attend the 2027 Beltwide Cotton Conferences, set for January 5-7 (Tuesday- Thursday) at the Omni Fort Worth Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas, may now register [HERE!](#) More information about the 2027 BWCC, including a link to make housing reservations and view our online program, is at www.cotton.org/beltwide. Room reservations must be made prior to or on December 14 to obtain the Conferences' special room rate of \$185 single/double plus taxes and fees. If you encounter problems with your pre-registration or with housing reservations, call the NCC at 901-274-9030 and ask for Lauren Krogman.

US EPA and Army Seeking Additional Comments on WOTUS Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of the Army announced a Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to gather public input on additional regulatory language for defining "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) to be considered alongside the [2025 proposed rule](#). This action reflects the agencies' commitment to radical transparency and to developing a durable, final WOTUS definition that adheres to the Supreme Court's direction in *Sackett v. EPA*, cuts bureaucratic red tape, and protects water quality while recognizing that states and Tribes are best positioned to manage their own water resources. The supplemental proposed rule will help EPA

and Army evaluate a wider range of options as they work toward a final rule that fully implements the Supreme Court's 2023 decision in *Sackett*. Once finalized, the rule will provide greater predictability for landowners, farmers, ranchers, energy producers, the technology sector, developers, and small businesses while protecting water quality in coordination with states and Tribes. While WOTUS determines where federal permits are required for certain activities, waters that fall outside federal jurisdiction remain subject to regulation under state, Tribal, and local law, consistent with the framework of cooperative federalism that underlies the Clean Water Act.

Cal/OSHA Advances Changes to First-Aid Kit Requirements

The Cal/OSHA Standards Board has advanced revisions to first-aid requirements. The changes are intended to make it easier for employers to determine what belongs in a workplace first-aid kit while ensuring supplies are suited to the hazards employees may face. The Association has testified on earlier proposals and remained engaged throughout the process to represent our industries' safety and operational needs.

Under the proposed revisions, employers could use a first-aid kit meeting the rule's listed minimum supplies, based on the ANSI/ISEA Class A standard, or have the kit's contents determined by an employer-authorized physician or other licensed health care professional. This provides an alternative to the current requirement for consulting physician approval. The proposal also calls for employers to consider workplace hazards and employee locations when deciding how many kits and what additional supplies are needed, keep kits readily available, and communicate their locations to employees.



The revisions are not yet in effect. They must proceed through Office of Administrative Law review and be filed with the Secretary of State before an effective date is confirmed. For now, members should maintain and inspect their first-aid kits under existing requirements. Once the final rule and effective date are published, the Association will review the changes and provide members with guidance on which operations are affected and whether any kit contents or procedures need updating.

USDA Announces 2026 and 2027 Enrollment for Key Price and Revenue Safety Net Programs

Agricultural producers can soon begin enrolling in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently updated to include more than 30 million new base acres. Now that the base allocation process is complete, producers can make elections and enroll for the 2026 crop year from Sept. 16 through Dec. 11, 2026, and for the 2027 crop year from Nov. 2, 2026, through March 15, 2027. Because eligible acres exceeded the nationwide 30-million-acre cap, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is applying an across-the-board, prorated reduction of 3.69% to all newly allocated base acres.

The opportunity for landowners to review their base allocation summaries and take necessary action ended Aug. 31, 2026. Base allocation notifications will be available beginning Sept. 16, 2026. Landowners can access notifications online at fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc using a Login.gov account. Landowners who do not currently have a Login.gov account can contact their FSA county office to obtain their base allocation notification beginning Sept. 16, 2026. Producers can now change their election and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which both provide crop-by-crop protection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm. Although election changes for 2026 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Existing multi-year contracts ended in 2025, but producers have the option to sign a new multi-year contract for 2026 through 2031. Producers who opt out of a multi-year contract can enroll for the 2027 crop year starting Nov. 2, 2026, through March 15, 2027. If producers do not submit their 2026 election by Dec. 11, 2026, their election remains the same as their 2025 election for crops on the farm, and the farm is ineligible for payments for the 2026 program year. Landowners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC election and enrollment can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products. Producers can now add SCO coverage or the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) regardless of their ARC or PLC election. Previously, producers who elected ARC-CO or ARC-IC were ineligible to purchase the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance

Provider for the same acres, but The Working Families Tax Cuts Act removed this restriction. For more information on [ARC and PLC](#), visit the ARC and PLC webpage or contact your [local FSA County Office](#).

Association Pushes Back on Expansion of Wildfire Smoke Requirements

Cal/OSHA held an advisory meeting to discuss potential revisions to California's Protection from Wildfire Smoke Standard. The meeting provided stakeholders an opportunity to comment on potential regulatory language being developed to implement AB 2243.

During the meeting, worker advocacy organizations urged Cal/OSHA to consider requirements beyond the draft language under discussion, including lowering the PM2.5 AQI threshold from 151 to 101 beyond the proposed respiratory protection for agricultural employees at an AQI of 300 instead of the current threshold of 500. These organizations also suggested expanding the scope of the standard beyond wildfire smoke to include smoke from prescribed burns.

Assistant Vice President Priscilla Rodriguez testified in opposition to these changes and questioned whether sufficient occupational exposure data has been provided to justify the substantially lower thresholds or for expanding a regulation specifically developed to address wildfire smoke to other sources. Rodriguez stated, "We have significant concerns with lowering the Air Quality Index (AQI) threshold from 151 to 101 without clear occupational data demonstrating that this significant expansion is necessary." Rodriguez also questioned the justification for treating agricultural workers differently from other outdoor employees. "Agriculture is not the only industry with employees performing work outdoors," Rodriguez said. "If Cal/OSHA believes agricultural workers face a unique risk requiring a substantially lower threshold, it should provide the data demonstrating that difference."

The Associations stressed that these changes could significantly increase compliance obligations and costs for agricultural employers and urged Cal/OSHA not to adopt lower thresholds or include burns beyond the scope without sufficient scientific and occupational evidence.

Cal/OSHA will consider written and verbal stakeholder comments as it evaluates potential revisions to the standard. Another advisory meeting is expected to be scheduled to continue the discussion.

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NCC Advocacy Delivers for California Cotton Producers



Continuous engagement with Congress, USDA and the White House is delivering real benefits for California growers.

\$404/acre
in Average Annual Benefits
Since 2019

Your membership dues are critical to ensuring that NCC can continue to effectively represent the cotton industry on a wide range of issues.



Farm Programs – The Working Families Tax Cut Act (WFTCA) increased the reference price, improved the marketing loan program, and boosted textile assistance.



Crop Insurance – WFTCA provided more affordable risk management options for underlying and area-wide coverage, both of which are critical to the economic viability of cotton production.



Buying American Cotton Act – Strongly supporting legislation that establishes tax credits for brands/retailers that document the use of U.S. cotton, yarn & fabric in their finished goods.



Supplemental Economic/Disaster Assistance – Support additional economic and disaster assistance to address extreme market shocks or adverse weather events.



Trade Policy – Maintaining global market access and preserving Western Hemisphere trade agreements are critical to the competitiveness of U.S. cotton fiber, yarn and fabric.



Regulatory Issues – Workable environmental and labor regulations, coupled with access to effective crop protection products and new technologies are essential for cotton growers.



Plant Not Plastic – To promote cotton as the healthy choice, the campaign educates consumers about the negative health impacts of microfibers from manmade fiber textiles and apparel.

Producer Payments for California Cotton Demonstrate NCC's Track Record of Success

Program (Million Dollars)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 ¹	Average
Seed Cotton PLC/ARC Payments	\$38	\$16	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19	\$53	\$18
Insurance Net Indemnities	\$4	\$31	\$55	\$73	\$112	\$49	\$33	\$51
Supplemental Econ/Disaster Assistance	\$27	\$15	\$10	\$2	\$12	\$20	\$5	\$13
Total Benefits (Million Dollars)	\$69	\$62	\$65	\$75	\$124	\$89	\$93	\$82
Total Benefits (Dollars per Acre) ²	\$252	\$347	\$369	\$395	\$641	\$420	\$404	\$404

1. Estimated PLC benefits for the 2025 crop.

2. Includes PLC/ARC payments per enrolled base acre; insurance, disaster, and economic support per plant/fail/prevent acre (USDA-FSA).