

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 5:05 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] □CARD CHECK□ MAY BE OUT, EFCA REMAINS DANGEROUS



July 21, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **HORRIBLE BILL MADE SLIGHTLY LESS HORRIBLE**
- **ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE HEAT?**
- **NLGMA WEBINARS ON THE WAY**
- **LAWMAKERS FINALLY MAKE A DEAL**
- **FRUIT FLIES INVADE L.A.**
- **YOUR CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL CONVENTION**

“CARD CHECK” MAY BE OUT, EFCA REMAINS DANGEROUS

The Senate is planning to drop the “card check” provision from the Employee Free Choice Act (“EFCA”). Although the anticipated rewrite represents a major victory for advocates of employee and management rights, the decision to jettison the “card check” provision may turn out to be a political calculation to force passage of equally troubling proposals that change the way workers organize. EFCA could pose more of a threat than ever before.

Early indications are that an expedited union election schedule will replace EFCA’s “card check” provision. Presently an election typically is conducted six to eight weeks after the union files a petition with the National Labor Relations Board. During the pre-election period both the employer and the union utilize the time to fully inform the employees about the pros and cons of unionization. The reported expedited schedule of up to ten days would cut this time significantly, and significantly diminish the ability of employers to notify workers of issues associated with union membership such as paying dues and strikes.

EFCA’s two key remaining provisions – requiring mandatory binding interest arbitration for first contracts and increased penalties for companies that violate labor law – for now remain unaltered by the expected compromise. EFCA changes the fundamental principles underlying private sector collective bargaining. Currently, the employer and the union are free to negotiate an agreement without government interference or intrusion into the process. Under EFCA, as proposed, if the parties cannot reach agreement on first-contract with a union within 120 days after bargaining begins, a government-appointed arbitrator will be empowered to impose employment terms upon the business and its employees for a two year period. Employees may never get a chance to vote on an agreement. Additionally, the bill imposes a civil penalty of up to \$20,000 for each violation by the company that is willful

or repetitive.

There is also the troubling prospect that even if the Senate passes EFCA *sans* “card check,” the House can still pass EFCA *with* “card check” thereby enabling the Senate simply to include the provision during conference. With or without the “card check” provision, EFCA raises the stakes of a successful union campaign. Any iteration of the Employee Free Choice Act would be disastrous for our economy and our record unemployment rates. The fight against the so-called Employee Free Choice Act must continue.

For more information log-on to the Agriculture for a Democratic Workplace Web site or contact WG’s Jason Resnick (jresnick@wga.com) at (949) 885-2253.
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HEAT WAVE PRODUCES NEED FOR HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

The national weather forecast predicts that temperatures will exceed 100 degrees in many regions of California this week. It is important that employers take action to protect their employees from heat illness as required by the California Heat Illness Prevention Standard. There are four basic requirements under the new standards:

- 1) Provide heat illness training to all employees and supervisors;
- 2) Provide enough fresh water for each employee to drink at least 1 quart per hour and encourage them to do so;
- 3) Provide access to shade for at least 5 minutes of rest when an employee believes he or she need a preventative recovery period (There are additional shade requirements-not just when an employee requests it);
- 4) Develop and implement written procedures for complying with the heat illness prevention standard.

Cal OSHA indicates that employers are meeting the first three requirements, but most of the citations this year have been for failure to develop and implement written procedures for complying with the standards. These procedures must be available to employees and representatives of Cal/OSHA upon request. The procedures specify how the employer will comply with the heat illness standards, how to respond to heat illness symptoms, how emergency services will be provided and how clear and precise directions to the worksite will be provided to emergency responders in case of an emergency. More details on the written procedures can be found at the following website: www.dir.ca.gov. Compliance with the heat illness standards will reduce the potential for heat illness and facilitate prompt treatment of employees should a heat emergency situation arise.

For more information, contact WG’s Greg Nelson (gnelson@wga.com) at (949) 885-2287.
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PROPONENT GROUP URGES STAKEHOLDERS TO SUPPORT, COMMENT ON NLGMA

The current proponent group for the National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA) in anticipation of public hearings later this year, is planning a series of informational Webinars beginning next month. Instructions on how to sign-up and dates for the Webinars will be made available in subsequent editions of Spotlight. In the mean time, Western Growers is encouraging all interested parties to read and review important information about the agreement at www.nlgma.org.

The proponents (Western Growers, United Fresh Produce Association, Produce Marketing

Association, Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Association, Georgia Farm Bureau, Texas Vegetable Association, Arizona Farm Bureau, Leafy Greens Council, California Farm Bureau, Growers Shipper Association of Central California, Imperial Valley Vegetable Growers Association and the California Leafy Green Products Handler Marketing Agreement) submitted the proposal to USDA on June 8, to launch an open and transparent process that engages the leafy greens industry in the development and implementation of a NLGMA through the publication of a federal register notice, solicitation of comments and public hearings. Western Growers expects the USDA will publish a notice of public hearings in the federal register sometime in August with public hearings taking place across the country 30 days thereafter.

To build awareness and solicit feedback proponents have established a publicly available Web site that has copies of the DRAFT agreement along with other information including a copy of the request letter to USDA, justification and some frequently asked questions.

Western Growers is encouraging all interested parties to visit this Web site [here](#) and submit comments, suggestions or questions to the proponents.

In addition, the Web site also offers interested parties an opportunity to sign on as supporters of the NLGMA by filling out an on-line form, [here](#). Western Growers strongly encourages its member companies to formally indicate their support for the national leafy greens marketing agreement. We are working with other proponents across the country to develop a list of companies that favor a national agreement.

For more information, contact WG's Hank Giclas (hgiclas@wga.com) at (949) 885-2205.
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A DEAL — AT LAST (From the Sacramento Bee)

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders agreed Monday to erase California's \$26 billion deficit by cutting broadly across state government, shifting costs into the future and taking funds from cities and counties.

State leaders believe their budget plan is good enough to end the state's issuance of IOUs, a practice California is using for only the second time since the Great Depression.

Standing with legislative leaders in front of his Capitol office Monday evening, Schwarzenegger called the deal "a really great, great accomplishment," and heralded the fact that the \$88 billion general fund budget includes no tax increases.

To read this article in its entirety, click [here](#).

Western Growers is reviewing the budget at this time and will offer a more detailed analysis in a subsequent edition of Spotlight. For more information, contact WG's Gail Delihant (gdelihant@wga.com) at (916) 446-1435.

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ORIENTAL FRUIT FLY INFESTATION DETECTED IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced today it has begun an eradication program for the Oriental fruit fly in La Verne, Calif.

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2009 5:42 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] HOUSE AG COMMITTEE QUESTIONS NEED FOR FDA ON THE FARM



July 16, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **HOUSE AG CONVENES HEARING ON FOOD SAFETY**
- **ARIZONA RETAILER GOES UNDER**
- **EMERGENCY AMENDMENTS REJECTED**
- **GOVERNOR REMINDS ALL TO PREPARE FOR THE HEAT**
- **FOUNDATION MAKES DIFFERENCE IN ARIZONA**
- **WG OPPOSES CLIMATE CHANGE, TIME FOR MEMBERS TO WEIGH-IN**
- **THE PACK IS BACK!**

HOUSE AG COMMITTEE QUESTIONS NEED FOR FDA ON THE FARM

The House Agriculture Committee chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) held a hearing today in Washington, D.C. to listen to concerns facing agriculture including concerns raised by the Food Safety Enhancement Act (HR 2749) that was approved by the Energy and Commerce Committee on June 17, and which has been slated for a House floor vote before the August 8 recess.

Peterson cannot support the bill in its current form and said that if the bill is not fixed, he will hold a mark up of the bill in his Committee and report the bill out of his Committee unfavorably. Such action would make it extremely difficult for the bill to go to the floor for a vote. Among those testifying in the first panel was Drew MacDonald, vice president national quality systems for Taylor Farms. MacDonald spoke on behalf of Western Growers, United Fresh Produce Association, and the Produce Marketing Association, and talked extensively about the costs and inefficiency associated with the lack of a consistent and agreed-upon standard for food safety audits. He also talked about the need for strengthened FDA-industry partnership and used the California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement as the model example how industry came together to design and implement a program of good agricultural practices and science and risk-based, commodity-specific guidelines for food safety on farms. Moreover, he spoke to the need for more FDA accountability and use of industry expertise during foodborne illness outbreaks.

Representatives of the Farm Bureau Federation, American Meat Institute, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the National Farmers Union and an owner/operator of an

organic farm in Maryland, also testified and expressed concerns about user fees, food safety plans, recalls, quarantines and record-keeping policies outlined in the legislation. Also testifying was Carol Tucker-Foreman of the Consumer Federal of America, who said she supported the bill but would like to see changes made.

“Directing the Food and Drug Administration to tell farmers how to farm will make food more expensive, it will threaten our food security, it will increase our reliance on foreign food — it will not make our food supply safer,” said Robert W. Goodlatte of Virginia, the Agriculture panel’s ranking Republican.

Representative Jim Costa (R-CA) convened the second panel in Peterson’s stead questioning regulatory officials Jerold Mande, deputy under secretary for food safety, USDA; Cindy Smith, acting under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs, USDA, and Mike Taylor, senior advisor to the FDA commissioner. The Committee members wanted to know if they had any reason to believe the FDA would do a better job than the USDA when it came to ensuring good food safety practices on farms and questioned the ability of FDA and USDA to communicate effectively with one another under shared responsibility, as designated in the current food safety bill. Taylor assured the Committee that FDA and USDA are committed to working together and communicating effectively on food safety issues.

For more information, please contact WG’s Wendy Fink-Weber (wfweber@wga.com) at (949) 885-2256 or Cathy Enright (cenright@wga.com) at (202) 296-0191.

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ARIZONA'S LARGEST RETAILER BANKRUPT, WG HERE TO HELP

Bashas’, Arizona’s largest grocery store retailer with 158 stores, filed for bankruptcy protection announced it would close 10 stores by July 21. Produce creditors have contacted Western Growers for assistance.

The amount of produce debt covered by the PACA Trust provision reach \$5 million, and expect that it could be paid. In fact, Bashas’ has informed its creditors that it hopes to reorganize a bankruptcy within three months.

The firm blamed the national credit crisis and slow growth in Arizona for its financial woes. It announced that closing 10 under-performing stores and other cost-cutting measures will allow 1,000 jobs.

Bashas’ has obtained \$45 million in financing to fund ongoing operations. Financial experts during the bankruptcy period, Bashas’ may be able to negotiate more favorable terms with creditors more easily abandon store leases and other contracts.

With news of the bankruptcy circulating, produce creditors began to surface contacting PACA Western Growers to determine the steps they should take. Because of the PACA Trust provision produce creditors first in line in bankruptcy proceedings, Oliveri said every indication is that a produce debt could be paid.

Western Growers’ trade practices department’s primary mission is to protect the association members’ PACA trust rights. For assistance or more information about Bashas or any other PACA trust issue, please contact WG’s Tom Oliveri (toliveri@wga.com) at (949) 885-2269.

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Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2009 4:09 PM
To: dl_Altempoyees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] OBAMA ADMINISTRATION GIVES BRIEFING ON FOOD SAFETY



July 7, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **OBAMA ADMINISTRATION GIVES BRIEFING ON FOOD SAFETY**
- **ARIZONA LEGISLATURE ACTS IN SPECIAL BUDGET SESSION**
- **BARBIC JOINS WASHINGTON, D.C., STAFF**
- **DON'T WAIT FOR ICE AUDIT NOTICE**
- **WESTERN GROWERS OFFERS EMPLOYMENT POSTERS**
- **REGISTER TODAY!**

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION GIVES BRIEFING ON FOOD SAFETY

In a White House briefing today, recommendations made by a Food Safety Working Group created in March by President Obama were announced by Vice President Joe Biden, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. The Administration emphasized its focus on both preventing food contamination and enhancing the ability of the food safety system to respond to events such as an adulterated product in the market stream or an actual outbreak. The Administration issued new measures across the egg, beef and produce sectors.

With regard to produce, FDA will issue commodity-specific draft guidance by the end of July for the reduction of microbial contamination in production and distribution of tomatoes, melons and leafy greens across the United States. FDA will seek public comment on this guidance over the next two years with a view to mandatory adoption through regulation at the end of that time. FDA has already conveyed its support of the development of a national Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, and we expect the FDA guidance to be informed by the experience of the produce industry, particularly the leafy green, tomato and melon sectors, which have, or are, developing food safety production standards. These guidelines as well as overarching verification programs such as the one associated with the leafy greens marketing agreements provide a foundation for FDA to complete their work in a fashion that both improves food safety and engages the expertise and experience of the fresh produce industry.

Other announcements today included:

- Improvements to food safety system's response and recovery efforts through strengthened coordination between local, state and federal food safety authorities, industry guidance on product tracing systems, and the establishment of an incident command system to address outbreaks of foodborne illness.
- The use of new technology to deliver individual food safety alerts to consumers.
- Improved accountability through the creation of a Deputy Commissioner for Foods who will be empowered to restructure and revitalize FDA's activities.
- The targeting of salmonella contamination by developing tougher standards to protect the safety of eggs, poultry, and turkey.
- Reducing the threat of E. coli contamination by stepping up enforcement in beef facilities.
- A continuing role for the Food Safety Working Group to address cross cutting issues and ensure increased coordination on food safety across the U.S. government.

For more information, please contact WG's Cathy Enright (cenright@wga.com) at 202-296-0191, or WG's Hank Giclas (hgiclas@wga.com) at 949-885-2203.

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ARIZONA LEGISLATURE ACTS IN SPECIAL BUDGET SESSION

The Arizona Legislature convened yesterday for the special session called by Governor Jan Brewer after she issued a series of vetoes last week on many of the budget bills that were sent to her on the eve of a new fiscal year as a potential government shutdown loomed. While she signed the general appropriations bill to keep government agencies operating, she line-item vetoed the payments to school districts which are supposed to occur by July 15th. In addition, her veto of several supplemental bills put the state in jeopardy of losing federal stimulus monies for education and healthcare.

Fortunately, last night the Legislature was able to put together a bipartisan plan that restores school funding and puts Arizona in compliance to receive the stimulus money. The Legislature adjourned after passing these bills and has committed to coming back to finish the special session once an agreement is reached. The vetoes last week leave the state with a \$2 billion deficit going forward.

Even though the Governor's office had expressed support for the Budget Reconciliation, Efficiency and Consolidation (BREC) Plan for the Department of Agriculture (ADA), it too was vetoed as part of larger supplemental budget bills. As it stands today, ADA has to find a way to cut \$1 million out of its general fund budget without the tools and efficiencies that were provided through the BREC Plan.

It is still unknown when the Legislature will come back to finish the budget though indications are that something will be done in August. WG staff will continue to work

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2009 3:20 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] WG LEADERSHIP REENERGIZED AFTER FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS



July 2, 2009

The Rat Pack Tribute Show

Hang onto your hats during Wednesday night's Suppliers' Event – we're going back to Vintage Vegas with Dean, Sammy and Frank. They will sing, joke, dance and carouse with the show girls – just like the good ol' days. Bring your shiny suits and style your beehive hairdos. You won't want to miss this!



November 11th, 2009

6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

See below for more information about Western Growers' 2009 Annual Convention

IN THIS EDITION:

(In recognition of Independence Day, Western Growers offices will be closed tomorrow, July 3, 2009)

- **WESTERN GROWERS CONCLUDES TOWN HALL MEETINGS**
- **ARIZONA BUDGET REMAINS UNSETTLED**
- **ADMINISTRATION TARGETS EMPLOYERS**
- **ARE I-9 FORMS STILL VALID?**
- **CARB EXTENDS COMPLIANCE DEADLINE**
- **VITAL EMPLOYMENT LAW WORKSHOPS SLATED FOR IMPERIAL**

WG LEADERSHIP REENERGIZED AFTER FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

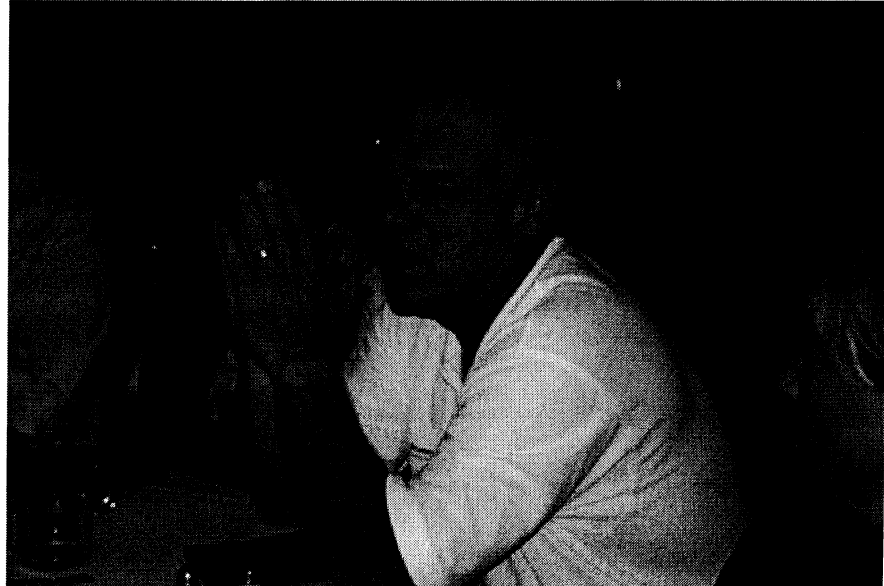
Western Growers is finishing its current round of town hall visits today with stops in Visalia and Coalinga already in the books and a dinner engagement in Bakersfield set for this evening.

With more than 100 attendees scheduled to attend today's meetings, Western Growers

Chairman Kevin Andrew and association President and CEO Tom Nassif and staff discussed the wide array of issues facing California agriculture, with today's focus centered on the natural- and regulatory-drought crippling California agriculture. Nassif spoke about his role during last week's town hall meeting at Fresno State, where he presented opening remarks before Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. Nassif assured those in attendance that water availability remains Western Growers' top issue and will continue to advocate on behalf of the state's specialty crop industry.

Western Growers leadership went on to lay out the association's involvement on such issues as labor, including AgJOBS and the Employee Free Choice Act, specifically the formation of Agriculture for a Democratic Workplace; food safety, and the formation of a proponent group consisting of agricultural organizations spanning the country that has officially requested the U.S. Department of Agriculture adopt a National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement; and California's fiscal crisis and the possible impacts on the state's farmers.

Western Growers leadership relished this opportunity to spend time on the front lines with members, gaining an even clearer understanding of how the decisions in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. are truly affecting Western Growers' members' day-to-day operations.



For more information, contact WG's Paul Simonds (psimonds@wga.com) at (949) 885-2257. **(Above, Western Growers Director Rick Stacey, Visalia Citrus Packing Group's vice president finance and administration/chief financial officer asks a question about the proposed National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement today at Western Growers town hall meeting in Visalia, Calif.)**

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BREWER VETOES BUDGET, CALLS SPECIAL SESSION

As reported yesterday, the Arizona Legislature passed the FY 2010 budget early Wednesday morning. However, shortly after passage, Governor Jan Brewer vetoed several budget bills and line-item vetoed portions of the general appropriations bill. She also called the legislature into a special session commencing Monday, July 6, to address the budget issues.

Her vetoes included two bills that had portions of the Budget Reconciliation, Efficiency, and Consolidation (BREC) Plan for the Arizona Department of Agriculture. The portions vetoed included key components to the plan including the ability of the Ag Advisory Council to appropriate funds within ADA and the sale of the State Ag Lab Building. The bill she signed included general appropriations, and in that legislation the ADA's General Fund allotment is set to decrease by more than \$1 million.

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2009 4:59 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] WESTERN GROWERS ROUNDS OUT TOWN HALL MEETINGS



June 30, 2009

The Rat Pack Tribute Show

Hang onto your hats during Wednesday night's Suppliers' Event – we're going back to Vintage Vegas with Dean, Sammy and Frank. They will sing, joke, dance and carouse with the show girls – just like the good ol' days. Bring your shiny suits and style your beehive hairdos, it's gonna be wiiiild!



**November 11th, 2009
6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.**

See below for more information about Western Growers' 2009 Annual Convention

IN THIS EDITION:

- **WESTERN GROWERS HEADS TO CENTRAL VALLEY**
- **JUDGE SAYS "NOT SO FAST" RE H-2A RULES**
- **NASSIF'S REMARKS — WHICH SPECIES ARE WE SAVING, FISH OR MAN?**
- **GOVERNOR LOOKS TO SNOW TO HELP OUT WITH WATER**
- **EMPLOYMENT SEMINAR SLATED FOR NEXT WEEK**

WESTERN GROWERS ROUNDS OUT TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Western Growers Chairman Kevin Andrew and association President and CEO Tom Nassif and staff are looking forward to their dates in Visalia, Coalinga and Bakersfield on Thursday. These three meetings conclude a month of forums, which has brought Western Growers leadership face-to-face with its members. Nearly 150 members attended the town halls in Salinas and Guadalupe two weeks ago.

A broad range of issues are sure to be discussed on Thursday, including California's ever-worsening natural- and regulatory-drought; labor, including AgJOBS and the Employee Free

Choice Act, specifically the formation of Agriculture for a Democratic Workplace; and food safety, and the formation of a proponent group consisting of agricultural organizations nationally that has officially requested the U.S. Department of Agriculture to adopt a National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement.

The meetings on Thursday, July 2 are slated for:

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Marriott Visalia, Nevada Room
300 South Court Street, Visalia, CA 93291
Breakfast will be provided

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

Harris Ranch Inn & Restaurant, South Ballroom
24505 West Dorris Avenue, Coalinga, CA 93210
Lunch will be provided

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Luigi's Restaurant
725 E. 19th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93305
Dinner will be provided

Please RSVP to WG's Jo Timmering (jtimmering@wga.com) at (949) 885-2268.

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DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN

Last night, the North Carolina federal district court judge assigned the complaint seeking an injunction blocking suspension of the Bush H-2A rules granted that injunction.

The details of the order are still unclear; however, for now, producers who utilize the H-2A system do NOT revert to the pre-January 16, 2009 rules and will not be required to revert back to the old processes and the recently published 2009 Adverse Effect Wage Rates.

Producers filing for labor certification for the foreseeable future will also apply under the "transitional rules" that had previously been extended by the DOL until year's end.

For more information, contact WG's Jason Resnick (jresnick@wga.com) at (949) 885-2253.

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NASSIF URGES FEDS TO TAKE ACTION

As noted in Sunday's special edition Spotlight, Western Growers President and CEO Tom Nassif, at request of Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, delivered opening remarks during a town hall meeting in the San Joaquin Valley at Fresno State University on the ever-worsening drought, which is devastating California agriculture. Here are Nassif's remarks:

Today you will hear from people in this audience about businesses being destroyed and with them tens of thousands of jobs and the decimation of whole communities. You will hear a level of desperation that has probably not been witnessed since the Great Depression.

We are in the midst of a drought in California... there is no question about that. But we have endured droughts like this many times before without the immense harm our farmers and the communities they support are suffering today. This drought has been compounded by

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2009 5:10 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] PRODUCE ASSOCIATIONS PETITION USDA FOR A NATIONAL LEAFY GREENS MARKETING AGREEMENT



June 9, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **INDUSTRY REQUESTS USDA TO ESTABLISH NLGMA**
- **TOWN HALL MEETINGS BEGIN NEXT WEEK**
- **NASSIF ADDRESSES IOFVA**
- **MOVIE Review: *Food, INC.***

PRODUCE ASSOCIATIONS PETITION USDA FOR A NATIONAL LEAFY GREENS MARKETING AGREEMENT

Yesterday, a proponent group, including the United Fresh Produce Association, Produce Marketing Association, Georgia Fresh Vegetable Association, Georgia Farm Bureau, Texas Vegetable Association, Arizona Farm Bureau, Leafy Greens Council, California Farm Bureau, California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California and Western Growers sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) formally requesting the agency begin the process necessary to establish a national marketing agreement for leafy greens (NLGMA).

"This marketing agreement is an excellent example of our fresh produce associations working together for the good of the industry," said Charles Hall, executive director of the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association in a press releases issued by the proponent group yesterday. "The 'proposed agreement' guarantees all parties - growers, packers, handlers, manufactures and end-users - are at the table as we move forward to ensure the food safety of leafy greens for the consumer."

The group also unveiled its Web site aimed and informing all interested parties about the NLGMA. The Web site features the Draft agreement, Background Information, Frequently Asked Questions and Next Steps.

"This is really the first step in the process for USDA to commence the formal development of a national leafy greens marketing agreement that will enhance the preventative steps on the farm aimed at increasing the safety of leafy green vegetables," said Western Growers Vice President of Strategic Planning, Science and Technology Hank Giclas. "A national leafy greens marketing agreement marries the talent and expertise of industry, academic and regulatory stakeholders in a union committed to the common goal of high quality, safe leafy

greens for the consumer."

To read the release in its entirety, review and/or comment on the NLGMA or for more information, please visit the NLGMA Web site at www.nlgma.org. Feel free to also reach out directly to WG's Hank Giclas (hgiclas@wga.com) at (949) 885-2205, for more information.
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ASSOCIATION PLANS TOWN HALL MEETINGS California and Washington, D.C. ... Ag in Crisis?

Western Growers is planning a series of 90-minute town hall meetings throughout the state beginning Wednesday, June 17 in Salinas and Santa Maria and invites interested members to attend. Meetings are also scheduled for July 2 in the Central Valley.

Western Growers' Chairman of the Board, Kevin Andrew, President and CEO, Tom Nassif and senior staff will lead an interactive discussion on some of today's critical issues, including, Sacramento's budget crisis, California's water emergency, state and federal food safety issues, healthcare reform and more.

The meetings on June 17 are scheduled for:

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Richard Nutter Ag Center,
1432 Abbott Street, Salinas, CA, 93901
Lunch will be provided.

And

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Far Western Tavern,
899 Guadalupe Street, Guadalupe, CA 93434
Dinner will be provided.

The meetings on July 2 are scheduled for:

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Marriott Visalia, Nevada Room
300 South Court Street, Visalia, CA 93291
Breakfast will be provided

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.
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725 E. 19th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93305
Dinner will be provided

Please RSVP to WG's Jo Timmering (jtimmering@wga.com) at (949) 885-2268.
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NASSIF HAMMERS HOME THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2009 4:35 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] WESTERN GROWERS HAILS REINTRODUCTION OF AGJOBS



May 14, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **WG HAILS REINTRODUCTION OF AGJOBS**
- **WG SPEAKS OUT AGAINST EFCA**
- **HOUSE AG COMMITTEE DISCUSSES FOOD SAFETY**
- **FOOD SAFETY WORKING GROUP CONVENES**
- **AG TAKES ON STATE**
- **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SEASON IN FULL SWING**

WESTERN GROWERS HAILS REINTRODUCTION OF AGJOBS

Western Growers officials today are applauding California Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Congressmen Howard Berman (D-CA) and Adam Putnam (R-FL) for reintroducing AgJOBS in the Senate and House of Representatives, respectfully.

“We commend Senator Feinstein and Congressmen Berman and Putnam for showing tremendous political courage. The current economic crisis has only magnified what our industry has been saying for years; despite record unemployment in parts of this country, we are not seeing American workers willing to take jobs as field laborers,” said Western Growers President and CEO Tom Nassif.

AgJOBS is a two part bill. The first part would allow workers to qualify for temporary resident status provided they can prove they were substantially employed in U.S. agriculture during the past two years. Such workers would eventually be permitted to apply for permanent residency status provided they can prove that they have performed extensive agricultural work in the U.S. after the bill’s enactment. The second part restructures and reforms the current H-2A temporary agricultural worker program.

“This is more than an immigration issue; it’s an economic issue,” Nassif said. “California agriculture is a \$37 billion industry. Without the passage and implementation of AgJOBS, California and the nation will continue to export farms along with the field jobs and the three to four upstream and downstream jobs that are created in the economy.”

For more information, contact WG’s Jason Resnick (jresnick@wga.com) at (949) 885-2253.

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WESTERN GROWERS STANDS WITH HOUSE REPUBLICANS AGAINST EFCA

Western Growers Past Chairman Steve Patricio and President and CEO Tom Nassif joined U.S. House of Representatives Republicans today at a press conference on Capitol Hill to discuss the impact the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), if passed, would have on the agricultural industry and rural economies.

The press conference was called by Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK), ranking member; Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN), Republican Conference chairman; Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Republican chief deputy whip; Rep. Buck McKeon (R-CA), ranking member, Committee on Education & Labor; and Chuck Conner, president & CEO, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives.

With the media on hand, Nassif and the other panelists made the case against EFCA from agriculture's point of view.

"Protection of the secret ballot is fundamental to our cause, and we will fight to ensure the basic American right of casting a ballot in private is defended. The mandatory arbitration provisions of the bill threaten the economic growth and job creation in agriculture and are also unacceptable," Nassif said. "While field workers would not be subject to EFCA, we must remember that agricultural employment reaches far beyond the farm gate. Many of the workers in the agricultural industry would be subject to the provisions of this legislation. EFCA could adversely impact every segment of the agricultural supply chain, putting further pressure on the ability of farms to continue to operate in the United States."

"I strongly support a worker's right to vote his choice under the most basic right of a democracy; a secret ballot," said Patricio. "I also strongly support that worker's right and the right of his employer to negotiate in good faith for the wages and conditions they know and understand best. This is a bad piece of legislation and an insult to our democratic principles. This bill should not be allowed to see the light of day."

Western Growers is a founding member of ADW (www.coalitionforagriculture.org), which is active in the leadership of the broader coalition working to defeat the EFCA. The bill was introduced in both Houses of Congress in March 2009; however, a number of Senators have reconsidered their support as constituents have become more vocal about the potential threat to the secret ballot in union elections.

For more information, contact WG's Jason Resnick (jresnick@wga.com) at (949) 885-2253.
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HOUSE AG COMMITTEE DISCUSSES FOOD SAFETY

Today the House Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture held food safety hearings to review food safety standards for horticulture and organic agriculture.

Panelists included: Dr. David Acheson, associate commissioner for foods, U.S. Food and Drug Administration; David Shipman, acting administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Joe Pezzini, chief operating officer, Ocean Mist Farms, Castroville, Calif.; Ron Ratto, president, Ratto Bros., Inc., Modesto, Calif.; Dr. Robert F. Stovicek, president and chairman of Primus Group, Inc., Santa Maria, Calif.; and other industry stakeholders from Maryland, Ohio and South Carolina, respectively.

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D- CA), chairman of the subcommittee, opened the hearing referencing California's efforts toward food safety saying producers here have, "implemented a solid first step toward food safety with the leafy greens marketing

agreement,” following the E. coli outbreak in spinach in 2006.

As the subcommittee prepares to take action on food safety legislation, possibly as early as this summer, Rep. Jim Costa (D- CA) recognized that the food produced in this country is the safest in the world, but conceded that does not mean there isn't room to improve the food safety efforts here. He also said imported standards must meet domestic standards.

During the hearing Pezzini spoke about the success of the California Leafy Greens Handlers Marketing Agreement and how it could be a viable model nationally to enhance food safety. Ratto echoed Pezzini's remarks noting the, “LGMA food safety practices have elevated our food safety practices to a much higher level.”

During the question and answer period, there was a clear emphasis by the members in using USDA for inspection purposes. There was also a desire shared by all parties, members and panelists alike, for greater collaboration, though there has been progress made of late, between USDA and FDA on matters of food safety.

For more information about the hearing please contact WG's Hank Giclas (hgiclas@wga.com) at (949) 885-2205.

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FOOD SAFETY WORKING GROUP CONVENES

Yesterday, the Food Safety Working Group held a listening session aimed at hearing from a broad range of stakeholders about their ideas for improving the nation's food safety system.

The Working Group, established by President Barack Obama, is working on a set of principles and guidelines for improving food safety. The White House Listening Session was an opportunity to engage stakeholders in a conversation to help shape these principles.

The Listening Session included remarks from Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, the co-chairs of the Working Group. Those remarks were followed by smaller group breakout sessions with Administration and Congressional staff and stakeholders to discuss how to address major challenges and opportunities in food safety.

“A new system will depend upon good data. It must engage industry at every level and it must provide for high-quality inspections and effective enforcement by public agencies. When outbreaks do occur, we must all respond quickly, both to protect public health and to speed the recovery of affected industries,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius

“The key to a functioning food safety system is preventing foodborne illness. That means robust standards and sufficient authorities to prevent illnesses from occurring. Both FDA and USDA have embraced this principle and we must have a consistent approach,” said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack.

To read these statements in their entirety and for more information on the Working Group, please click [here](#).

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FARMERS, STATE SQUARE OFF OVER FUND SWEEPS MAY 18

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2009 4:02 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] WESTERN GROWERS HEARS FROM ADMINISTRATION, FOOD SAFETY A PRIORITY



April 24, 2009

SPECIAL EDITION

WESTERN GROWERS HEARS FROM ADMINISTRATION, FOOD SAFETY A PRIORITY

Today, Western Growers participated in a conference call hosted by President Barack Obama's Food Safety Working Group, which is headed up by the Secretaries of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS). This group is scheduled to counsel the president in June on administrative, regulatory, and legislative options as it relates to food safety on a national level.

The overarching theme of the call was that the federal government has a renewed commitment to coordinate with state agencies and the industry to develop federal food safety policies. A steering group, comprised of representatives from agencies ranging from USDA to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and others, will report back to the White House its recommendations in June.

According to today's briefing, the steering group is looking to make recommendations in three areas, which include:

- Administrative actions that could be taken now to address food safety needs.
- Regulatory actions using current authority that could be taken now through notice and comment rule making, and
- Legislative steps that the Administration could support in Congressional bills (current or not yet introduced)

With "prevention" being the group's primary concern, as it relates to limiting food borne illnesses, it identified five areas of work:

- Setting and verification of appropriate food safety standards.
- Strengthening early warning through better risk assessment and detection
- Implementing risk-based inspection and enforcement
- Rapid outbreak identification and response
- Necessary Infrastructure

This group will be seeking public input on its Web site, which will be unveiled next week (www.foodsafetyworkinggroup.gov). Western Growers will be working closely with this group throughout the process to ensure the industry's voice is heard. Meanwhile, Western

Growers continues to work with officials at USDA and industry counterparts to take the leafy greens marketing agreement model, which is in place and thriving in Arizona and California, nationally. This preventative approach to food safety could prove to be a valuable model as national food safety policies are discussed and enacted.

For more information, please contact WG's Cathy Enright (cenright@wga.com) at (202) 296-0191.

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SPOTLIGHT INFORMATION

For more information on Spotlight or any of Western Growers' communications efforts, contact WG's Paul Simonds (psimonds@wga.com) at (949) 885-2257.

E-MAIL UPDATE

Please contact WG's Rob Steinmann (rsteinmann@wga.com) at (949) 885-2266 if you are changing internet providers or the format/layout of your company emails. Any changes for "Spotlight" recipients' e-mails will be performed ensuring uninterrupted delivery of this newsletter.

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Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 4:26 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER URGES CONGRESS TO END MEXICAN TRADE DISPUTE



March 26, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **SCHWARZENEGGER URGES CONGRESS TO END MEXICAN TRADE DISPUTE**
- **NEW YORK TIMES GETS FIRST-HAND LOOK AT LGMA AUDIT**
- **HOUSE APPROVES SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION AGREEMENT**
- **UPDATED WATER FORECAST STILL LOOKS BLEAK**

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER URGES CONGRESS TO END MEXICAN TRADE DISPUTE

Yesterday, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger sent a letter to the California Congressional Delegation urging them to take action to end the current trade dispute with Mexico. Mexico has imposed \$2.4 billion in tariffs on a host of U.S. products in retaliation to Congress' de-funding of a pilot cross-border trucking program. Under the program, a limited number of Mexican trucks were able to travel beyond the 20-25 mile commercial zone at the border to deliver goods to their points of destination within the United States. The program was in accordance with the provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement as well as the 2000 ruling by the World Trade Organization.

Congress effectively ended the program when it de-funded it, leading Mexico to slap significant tariffs ranging from 10-45 percent on many items including lettuce, strawberries, onions, grapes and pears.

In the letter, Gov. Schwarzenegger wrote: "In this time of economic distress, when more than one in 10 Californians are out of work and the repercussions are felt throughout our great state, we must do all we can to boost trade with our international partners – not stifle it. And yet I am afraid that the prohibition recently placed on Mexican truckers will do exactly that, with the result being markets functionally closed to our goods and thousands more Californians unemployed at a

time when we can quite literally least afford it."

He added that the drought and economic crisis "have already punished the agricultural community of California severely. Now this community faces even more job losses and economic devastation because the United States has acted voluntarily to violate its commitments under the North American Free Trade Agreement."

Responding to the claims that Congress de-funded the program for safety reasons, Schwarzenegger said "we must not allow safety to serve as a smokescreen for protectionist measures... The termination of the pilot program has not made U.S. roads safer, but it has hurt the economy of California and the nation as a whole."

He noted the ongoing efforts to address this issue but asked the California representatives to "immediately take the lead in restoring a program to allow Mexican trucks to safely operate within the United States and allow Mexico to remove the retaliatory tariffs it has put in place."

For more information, contact WG's Ken Gilliland (kgilliland@wga.com) at 949-885-2267

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NEW YORK TIMES GETS FIRST-HAND LOOK AT LGMA AUDIT

Yesterday, New York Times food and beverage reporter, Andrew Martin, and his photographer traveled to Huron with California Leafy Green Products Handler Marketing Agreement's (LGMA) Executive Director Scott Horsfall and experienced a standard food safety audit at a lettuce field during harvest.

Earlier this month, Martin investigated the audit protocols and procedures at the Peanut Corporation of America plant in southwest Georgia and published a front page story March 6, "Food Problems Elude Private Inspectors," in which he took those inspections to task following the recent outbreak of salmonella in peanut paste processed at the Georgia facility.

Martin, who interviewed Hank Giclas earlier this year for a story about irradiation of leafy greens, contacted Western Growers' communication department two weeks ago to find out what actions the spinach industry took after the 2006 outbreak of E. coli and learned about the rapid response remedy that became the LGMA. Western Growers offered to put him in touch with the LGMA so he could see the audit process for himself. In a phone call to Western Growers' Tom Nassif, following the four-hour audit, the reporter expressed his satisfaction with the thoroughness of the procedure and the cooperation he received from grower. During the telephone interview, Nassif told the story of how the California LGMA came to be and outlined the efforts Western Growers is currently spearheading on a national level: bringing together a proponent group and drafting a proposal to the USDA for a national leafy greens marketing agreement. Martin asked if this model could be expanded and used for other commodities, to which Nassif replied, "Yes, it may serve as a model for others and we are working to ensure it is incorporated into food safety legislation

that is currently being discussed in Washington."

Martin said he will continue his research through next week and is not sure at this point exactly when the story will be published. He seemed very satisfied with the information and the openness shown him by Western Growers and the LGMA.

For more information, please contact WVG's Wendy Fink-Weber (wfweber@wga.com) at (949) 885-2256.

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HOUSE APPROVES SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION AGREEMENT

After decades of negotiations, legal challenges and debate, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill Wednesday that basically ratifies an agreement reached among stakeholders to restore the San Joaquin River. But the massive public lands management plan included many other projects as well.

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 will settle a 1988 lawsuit filed by the Natural Resources Defense Council. It authorizes river channel improvements and other work needed below Friant Dam to restore full river flows and a salmon run by 2013. Ultimately the bill will take water from agriculture to restore the San Joaquin River. This first year, 40,000 acre feet have been allocated for the river restoration project with more water being used in coming years. Western Growers did explore the possibility of delaying that allocation because of the current drought conditions, but that apparently is impossible under the terms of the settlement.

The bill is loaded with many other projects outside of California which caused some members of Congress, mostly Republicans, to vote against it. Among the 140 "No" votes were San Joaquin Valley legislators George Radanovich, R-Mariposa, and Devin Nunes, R-Visalia. Radanovich was in favor of the San Joaquin River restoration project but opposed to some of the other projects included in the bill. Nunes said the bill's provision diverting San Joaquin River water from farms to environmental protection "will ensure higher unemployment" in the Valley.

Valley Democrats, including Reps. Dennis Cardoza, D-Merced, and Jim Costa, D-Fresno, voted for the legislation.

The bill was previously passed by the Senate and now it moves to President Obama for his expected signature.

For more information, contact Wendy Fink-Weber (wfweber@wga.com) at 949-885-2249.

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UPDATED WATER FORECAST STILL LOOKS BLEAK

Last week, the Bureau of Reclamation updated the Water Year 2009 allocations for the Federal Central Valley Project, and despite a wet February, the situation is still dire. The Bureau uses a number of forecasting models guesstimating runoff and

Paul Simonds

From: WesternGrowers@wga.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2009 5:56 PM
To: dl_Altemployees
Subject: [WGA Spotlight] SPECTER PLEDGES TO VOTE AGAINST EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT



March 24, 2009

IN THIS EDITION:

- **EFCA MAY HAVE RECEIVED FATAL BLOW**
- **MEXICO ANNOUNCES TARIFFS, WG URGES ACTION FROM WASHINGTON**
- **GROCERY CHAIN FILES BANKRUPTCY, WG HERE TO HELP**
- **HEAT ILLNESS TRAINING ON THE WAY, Q & A DOC NOW AVAILABLE**
- **PACKER COVERS WESTERN GROWERS' D.C. TRIP**

SPECTER PLEDGES TO VOTE AGAINST EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

Sen. Arlen Specter read a prepared statement on the floor of the Senate today pledging to vote against the Employee Free Choice Act, or card check bill, as well as against cloture, which is the procedural move that would open the door for the legislation to come up for a vote. The Republican Senator from Pennsylvania also said that he did not support the EFCA during this time of severe recession, as the legislation would likely result in further job losses.

Specter was likely to be one of the decisive votes in the Senate on EFCA as he was the only Republican to vote for cloture when the measure was last considered in 2007. Organized labor and the bill's Democratic sponsors had been working to secure Sen. Specter's vote to reach the 60 needed in the Senate to avoid a Republican-led filibuster. During his announcement, Specter noted his previous support for EFCA, but suggested that the current condition of the economy makes "this is a particularly bad time to enact employee's choice legislation."

For more information, contact Jason Resnick (jresnick@wga.com) at (949) 885-2253.

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MEXICO APPLIES TARIFFS TO 36 AG PRODUCTS

Western Growers is working with a broad based group of fresh produce representatives urging the Obama administration and Arizona and California's Congressional delegations to immediately resolve the NAFTA Mexican trucking issue that has resulted in retaliatory tariffs being levied by Mexico, including against several fresh produce commodities.

“The administration and our Congressional leaders must resolve this issue with our trading partners in Mexico,” said Western Growers president and CEO Tom Nassif. “How can we expect other countries to abide by agreements outlined in trade treaties when we stand in violation of our own international obligations? This issue needs to be resolved for the sake of our industry – an industry that is already suffering from a severe water supply crisis and a recession.”

The U.S. department of Agriculture issued a voluntary Global Agriculture Information Network (GAIN) report late last week titled, *Mexico Announces Tariff Modification on 36 U.S. Agricultural Products*.

From the report: *The Secretariat of Economy (SE) published on March 18, 2009, in the Diario Oficial (Federal Register) an announcement modifying the import tariffs on 90 U.S. agricultural and industrial products. This announcement was triggered by the dissolution of the U.S.-Mexico Cross-Border Trucking Demonstration Project. From this list, 36 were agricultural products valued at approximately \$864 million. The list of these agricultural products, including the new import tariffs as well the value of these imports (based on Mexico’s official data) from 2008 is as follows (click [here](#) to read the report and view the complete list in its entirety).*

These newly implemented tariffs range from ten to 45 percent on fresh commodities, including a ten percent tariff on onions and lettuce; 20 percent on almonds, dates, pears, apricots, cherries and strawberries; and 45 percent on fresh grapes.

The fresh commodities targeted by Mexico represented more than \$200 million in export value in 2008. These retaliatory tariffs could equate to more than \$2 million per month in excess tariffs that could severely limit exporting to Mexico.

For more information, contact WG’s Ken Gilliland (kgilliland@wga.com) at (949) 885-2267. [Back to top](#)

BI-LO SUPERMARKETS FILES FOR BANKRUPTCY

The grocery chain BI-LO LLC filed for bankruptcy today. According to a public statement, BI-LO stores will remain open and continue to operate without disruption.

BI-LO has 215 supermarkets in South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee.

Western Growers is encouraging any members who sell direct to BI-LO to contact WG’s Tom Oliveri (toliveri@wga.com) at (949) 885-2269 if they have any concerns about non-payments or if there are any questions about their PACA Trust rights.

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HEAT ILLNESS Q & A DOCUMENT AVAILABLE; UPCOMING TRAINING SESSIONS

After hearing complaints from growers and farm labor contractors concerning inconsistent enforcement of the Heat Illness Prevention Standard (§3395, General Industry Safety Orders) by Cal-OSHA inspectors, the Division of Occupational Safety & Health (DOSH) set out to establish new guidelines intended to inject uniformity into the interpretation of the regulations. The guidelines will be used to train inspectors and may be relied upon by

employers to ensure they are in compliance with the standard.

The Q&A document clarifies the requirements for the provision of drinking water, ready access to shade, and other clarifications regarding Regulation §3395. The document does not modify the regulations in any way but merely serves to clarify DOSH's interpretation of the existing rules and ensure uniform enforcement. The Q&A document can be accessed [here](#).

In addition, Western Growers and ten other industry groups are introducing "Heat Illness Prevention in Agriculture," a program aimed at combating heat illness injuries in California and giving growers and contractors the tools necessary to comply with the regulation.

Dates and Locations::

Monday, March 30, 2009

Imperial Irrigation District
1285 Broadway
El Centro, CA 92243
Spanish session: 10 am
English session: 1 pm

Monday, April 6, 2009

Robert J. Cabral Agricultural Center
2101 E. Earhart Avenue
Stockton, CA 95206
FLC session: 1 pm
Spanish session: 10 am
Grower session: 8 am

Thursday, April 9, 2009

Kern Agriculture Pavilion
3300 E. Belle Terrace
Bakersfield, CA 93307
Grower session: 8 am
Spanish session: 10 am
FLC session: 1 pm

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Sonoma County Farm Bureau
970 Piner Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
English session: 1 pm
Spanish session: 10 am

Look for the announcement of future training dates and locations in upcoming issues of Spotlight. For more information, contact WG's Greg Nelson (gnelson@wga.com) 949 885-2287.

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PACKER COVERS ANDREW'S, NASSIF'S DC TRIP

As reported here two weeks ago, Western Growers Chairman Kevin Andrew and Western Growers President and CEO Tom Nassif visited Washington, D.C. and met with the Obama administration and members of Congress on a wide range of issues including water, food

safety, immigration and others.

From *The Packer*.

...Nassif said his organization is in favor of expanding the California and Arizona marketing agreements nationally, an idea that was met initially with resistance from grower groups in other states. Now that Congress is revamping food safety legislation and a national good agricultural practices standard is likely, growers in other areas are more receptive to being involved in the discussion.

"We're hopeful that will happen and we're hopeful that if there is going to be legislation, utilize what we have been doing as the produce section of the bill," Nassif said. "Give us the ability to make changes, to make product safer as science evolves and don't force us to make amendments to legislation in order to improve on good science."

Nassif met with Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack about a federal water task force. Although the Department of the Interior is taking the lead on plans to alleviate drought effects, the USDA is involved in the process. In a bi-partisan effort, California state legislators are working for an exemption from the Endangered Species Act, which has led to water restrictions to protect a fish, the delta smelt.

"We discussed the loss of jobs, the loss of revenue and many people are moving out of cities because the businesses that were supporting agriculture, or were supported by agriculture, are not doing well since everyone has to cut back so dramatically, especially in the Central Valley, which is the produce basket of the country," Nassif said....

To read this article in its entirety, click [here](#).

For more information, contact WG's Paul Simonds (psimonds@wga.com) at (949) 885-2257.

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SPOTLIGHT INFORMATION

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WESTERN GROWERS ON THE WEB

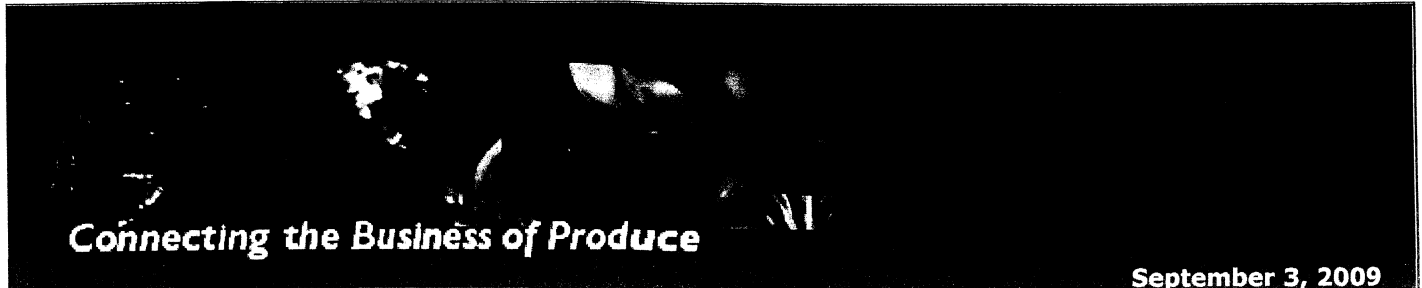
Visit Western Growers homepage at www.wga.com or for information nutrition and health, visit WG's Producepedia at www.producepedia.com. For information about either of these sites, please contact WG's Adam Higgins (ahiggins@wga.com) at (949) 885-2255.

CS

Miss
Hosack

Wendy Fink-Weber

From: United Fresh Produce Association [unitedfresh@unitedfresh.org]
Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2009 11:11 AM
To: Wendy Fink-Weber
Subject: Commissioner Hamburg, Rep. Farr to Address Record Attendance at WPPC this week Inside United Fresh



In Today's Issue

•

FDA Commissioner Hamburg, Representative Sam Farr, to Address Food Safety, Child Nutrition at WPPC

Next week's Washington Public Policy Conference will feature two leading voices on critical produce industry priorities: U.S. FDA Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg and U.S. Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA). Dr. Hamburg will deliver a keynote address outlining the importance of continued diligence on food safety at the Friday breakfast general session. Rep. Farr will address attendees on the importance fresh fruits and vegetables in school nutrition and the potential impact of salad bars in schools during Thursday's luncheon general session. **More.**

•

CNN Pundit Tells United Members "Bring Stories, Not Statistics" to Capitol Hill

As a preview of his remarks at the Washington Public Policy Conference on Sept. 12, Former Clinton White House aide Paul Begala offers advice for United Fresh members in an interview with United's Ray Gilmer. Begala served as senior strategist for the Clinton-Gore presidential campaign in 1992 and appears as a political analyst on CNN. Following is an excerpt of the complete interview, which appears in this week's issue of *The Packer*. For more information or to register for WPPC, please click **here.**

Gilmer: What kind of reputation and clout does ag have [in Washington]?

Begala: Agriculture is very important. When I was in the White House, our president was from Arkansas, which has a tremendous agricultural base. President Clinton knew a lot of people in agriculture in his state. For President Obama, his time when he served as a senator from Illinois, the key to his political strength was not just Chicago but downstate as well, which includes a lot of wonderful agricultural communities. More.

-

Record Number of Attendees Prepare to Storm Washington for WPPC

The number of registrations for next week's Washington Public Policy Conference has surpassed all previous years, according to United President and CEO Tom Stenzel. **More.**

-

Washington-Area Food Bank to Receive Produce from Fresh Festival

Excess fruits and vegetables from next week's Fresh Festival on Capitol Hill will be packaged and donated to Washington's D.C. Central Kitchen, said United Fresh President and CEO Tom Stenzel on Tuesday. **More.**

-

United Fresh to Entertain WPPC Attendees at Nationals Park

In addition to a full slate of activities on Capitol Hill, attendees at this year's Washington Public Policy Conference will have the added enjoyment of watching the World Series champion and division-leading Philadelphia Phillies take on the hometown favorite Washington Nationals at Nationals Park. **More.**

-

Webinar Prepares Attendees for Important Work to Be Done

Several members of United's senior staff led more than 70 attendees to next week's Washington Public Policy Conference through an instructional webinar on key pieces of United's policy priorities yesterday. **More.**

-

Management Resource Center to Provide Solutions for Driving Business Success

United's newest member benefit, the Management Resource Center will launch at next week's Washington Public Policy Conference, providing attendees unprecedented access to companies and government agencies offering solutions and resources for a wide range of businesses. **More.**

-

Last Call for 2009 Produce Inspection Training Program

United Fresh and USDA will hold the final Produce Inspection Training Program for 2009, September 21-25. This hands-on training course is designed to help produce industry receivers, handlers, buyers, shippers and sellers understand the fundamentals of the produce inspection process. [More.](#)

•

AMS Announces Schedule for NLGMA Hearings

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has announced the schedule for several hearings on the proposed National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA). The dates and locations, posted in the Federal Register are:

- September 22-24 in Monterey, Calif.
- September 30 and October 1 in Jacksonville, Fla.
- October 6 in Columbus, Ohio
- October 8 in Denver, Colo.
- October 14 and 15 in Yuma Ariz.
- October 20 in Syracuse, N.Y.
- October 22 in Charlotte, N.C. [More.](#)

•

United Chairman, Staff Reach Out to Idaho Industry

United Fresh President Tom Stenzel and Chairman Jim Lemke of C.H. Robinson are in the mountains of Idaho this week for the 81st annual Sun Valley convention of the Idaho Grower Shippers Association. The United contingent will address the group during Friday's breakfast session, where they will provide an update on key industry issues. In addition, United's Vice President of Supply Chain Management Dan Vaché led a discussion on the Produce Traceability Initiative during a convention workshop yesterday. [More.](#)

•

United Staff Address Traceability and Food Safety at Pacific Northwest Conference

Dr. David Gombas, United Fresh senior vice president of food safety and technology and Dan Vaché, vice president of supply chain management stopped in Wenatchee, Wash. last week to address a meeting of the Pacific Northwest Food Safety Committee. [More.](#)

•

New Member Welcome

Our newest partners in building a stronger produce industry. [More.](#)

AMS Announces Schedule for NLGMA Hearings

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has announced the schedule for several hearings on the proposed National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA). The dates and locations, posted in the Federal Register, are:



- September 22-24 in Monterey, Calif.
- September 30 and October 1 in Jacksonville, Fla.
- October 6 in Columbus, Ohio
- October 8 in Denver, Colo.
- October 14 and 15 in Yuma Ariz.
- October 20 in Syracuse, N.Y.
- October 22 in Charlotte, N.C.

At the hearings, USDA officials will hear testimony and collect data from growers, handlers and other stakeholders regarding the NLGMA, including potential benefits, costs and administration. United members wishing to participate in the hearings are advised to contact United to learn more about the information being requested by USDA.

The NLGMA proponent groups include: Georgia Fresh Vegetable Association, Georgia Farm Bureau, Produce Marketing Association, Texas Vegetable Association, Arizona Farm Bureau, Leafy Greens Council, California Farm Bureau, California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Western Growers and United Fresh.

The complete Federal Register notice can be accessed [here](#). For more information contact Robert Guenther at 202-303-3409 or Ray Gilmer at 202-303-3425.

Wendy Fink-Weber

From: United Fresh Produce Association [unitedfresh@unitedfresh.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2009 10:24 AM
To: Wendy Fink-Weber
Subject: Salad Bars on Capitol Hill, No More No-Match and USDA Loans this week Inside United Fresh



Connecting the Business of Produce

August 20, 2009

In Today's Issue

- **United Fresh to Feature Salad Bars at Capitol Hill Event to Advocate National School Salad Bar Policy**

During September's Washington Public Policy Conference, United Fresh will feature a salad bar stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables, illustrating to lawmakers United's initiative promoting a national school salad bar policy.

"This is certainly a great opportunity to advance policy that directly affects the health of so many young Americans," said United Fresh Vice President of Nutrition and Health Dr. Lorelei DiSogra. "Placing a salad bar in front of so many lawmakers shows them how salad bars can be an effective tool for increasing produce consumption and promoting healthy eating habits among students." **MORE.**

- **DHS to Eliminate No-Match Rule**

Yesterday, the Department of Homeland Security published in the Federal Register its notice of intent to rescind the Social Security No-Match Rule, marking the end of a long legal and regulatory battle over one of the most controversial immigration enforcement efforts of the Bush Administration. Originally due to take effect on September 14, 2007, the implementation of the rule was delayed by litigation led by United Fresh, alongside the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Roofing Contractors Association and American Nursery and Landscape Association. The lawsuit was filed on the basis that certain procedures, including an analysis of the law's economic impact on small businesses, were not followed. **MORE.**

- **United Fresh Joins Produce Industry Groups in Response to Tribune Residues Story**

In a letter to the editors at the *Chicago Tribune*, United Fresh joined other produce industry organizations in clarifying several aspects of the newspaper's August 12 story on pesticide residues. The industry letter questioned the story's conclusions about the actual risk posed by residues on fruits and vegetables, saying " a child, a teen or an adult would have to eat 400 to nearly 16,000 servings a day to reach the science-based no effect level." The *Tribune* story was based on USDA data and independent testing commissioned by the newspaper on several commodities. [MORE.](#)

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Immigration, Food Safety on Tap for United President at Texas Produce Convention Town Hall

United Fresh President Tom Stenzel moderates a town hall discussion on industry issues at the Texas Produce Convention in Austin today. Stenzel joins a panel of produce industry leaders in discussing important food safety, immigration, labor and marketing issues. [MORE.](#)

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Sustainability Conference Highlights United Members, Industry Efforts

Jeff Oberman, United's vice president of membership, took part in the Food Marketing Institute's second annual Food Industry Sustainability Summit this week in San Francisco. The summit brought together leading retail chains, produce companies, distributors and producers of grocery products as well as suppliers of products and services in order to address the growing issue of sustainability within the retail community. [MORE.](#)

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Industry Webinar Touts Benefits of National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement

More than 200 industry members, representing growers, marketers, retailers and others participated in a national webinar Wednesday (Aug. 19) to share information about a proposed National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA). Participants represented Texas, Arizona, Colorado, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California, Wyoming and several other states. The NLGMA would implement best practices and a corresponding verification program that could reduce the potential for microbial contamination in leafy greens. [MORE.](#)

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USDA Expands Loan Program to Include Storage Facilities for Fruit and Vegetables

This week, the USDA Farm Service Agency announced that it will expand the Farm Storage Facility Loan program to include cold-storage facilities for fruits and vegetables. According to the FSA, "the program provides low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities." [MORE.](#)

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"We had a great turnout for this informational webinar," said Robert Guenther, United's senior VP of public policy, who was a presenter for the online session. "It served as a valuable tool for addressing questions about the NLGMA and how it could improve the safety of leafy green vegetables."

The webinar presentation included information about the value of the agreement for growers and buyers, how it would be administered, expenses, responsibilities and its implementation in relation to possible food safety legislation.

The proponent group for the NLGMA include: Arizona Farm Bureau, California Farm Bureau, California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Leafy Greens Council, Produce Marketing Association, Texas Vegetable Association, United Fresh Produce Association and Western Growers.

In response to the industry request to establish the agreement, the USDA will soon solicit input from stakeholders and conduct public hearings. A draft agreement is ready for comment and review from all stakeholders at www.nlgma.org. This web site also provides additional information to all interested parties including the proponent letter to the USDA. For more information, contact United's [Robert Guenther](#) at 202-303-3400.

AMS Announces Schedule for NLGMA Hearings

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has announced the schedule for several hearings on the proposed National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement (NLGMA). The dates and locations, posted in the Federal Register, are:



- September 22-24 in Monterey, Calif.
- September 30 and October 1 in Jacksonville, Fla.
- October 6 in Columbus, Ohio
- October 8 in Denver, Colo.
- October 14 and 15 in Yuma Ariz.
- October 20 in Syracuse, N.Y.
- October 22 in Charlotte, N.C.

At the hearings, USDA officials will hear testimony and collect data from growers, handlers and other stakeholders regarding the NLGMA, including potential benefits, costs and administration. United members wishing to participate in the hearings are advised to contact United to learn more about the information being requested by USDA.

The NLGMA proponent groups include: Georgia Fresh Vegetable Association, Georgia Farm Bureau, Produce Marketing Association, Texas Vegetable Association, Arizona Farm Bureau, Leafy Greens Council, California Farm Bureau, California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Western Growers and United Fresh.

The complete Federal Register notice can be accessed [here](#). For more information contact Robert Guenther at 202-303-3409 or Ray Gilmer at 202-303-3425.