

Today is _____, _____ the _____. This is Ken Morgan's Northcoast Ag Report, our lead story is about _____ when we return

Wildfires Continue to Sweep Through Northern California

Since late Sunday night, 16 wildfires in Northern California have consumed large areas of Yuba, Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Butte and Lake counties. The fires are spreading quickly, aided by windy conditions with gusts of up to 51 mph. Governor Brown declared Yuba, Sonoma, and Napa counties disaster areas on Monday.

The fires burning in Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino, and Yuba counties have collectively taken the lives of at least 15 people. The wildfires have scorched over 119,000 acres altogether and destroyed over 1,500 homes and businesses. Over 100 people are reported to have checked into hospitals with fire-related injuries or health issues, such as burns and smoke inhalation.

The fires are also having devastating effects on the agriculture industry in the area. Numerous farmers and ranchers have already been forced to evacuate, with many more making the necessary preparations to leave if the wildfires continue to progress. Backup generators are being utilized to ensure livestock has access to water if the power goes down and many ranchers are leaving specific gates open so animals will not be trapped in the event the fire gets to their property.

Many of the areas dairy cows, sheep, chickens, and goats were successfully moved to various equestrian centers, shelters, and the Napa County Fairgrounds. Livestock is being relocated to the Solano County Fairgrounds in Vallejo now that the Napa County sites are at capacity. The Sebastopol Grange in Sebastopol and the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa are also accepting evacuated livestock.

Northern California wine production will also feel the impact from the wildfires. While roughly three-quarters of the wine grapes have already been picked, much of the merlot and cabernet sauvignon crops remain

on the vine. Produce farmers are also concerned about their freshly harvested winter squash and tomatoes as the fires continue burning.

In Sonoma County alone, the value of agricultural production came close to \$900 million last year, according to the 2016 Sonoma County Crop Report. There are over 30,000 dairy cows and 35,000 sheep and goats housed in the area.

- [Large Production Totals For Walnuts And Almonds This Season](#)

Broadcast Date:

Thu, October 12, 2017

The projected harvest for two, popular California tree nuts reveals there will be plenty of both varieties for consumers. (Rod Bain and USDA economist Agnes Perez)

Lawsuit Filed Against Iowa 'Ag-Gag' Law

A coalition of animal-rights and food safety groups filed a federal lawsuit this week against Iowa's "ag-gag" law, which makes it a crime to conduct undercover investigations of farms and slaughterhouses. The groups, including the Animal Legal Defense Fund, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and others, say the law is unconstitutional. A Courthouse News Dot Com article says the suit alleges that the law prevents them from investigating alleged animal abuses in Iowa-based livestock confinement operations, egg production operations, and slaughterhouses. The groups are represented by an attorney from the American Civil Liberties Union of Iowa. The two local plaintiffs in the suit include Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement and Bailing Out Benji. A spokesman for the state attorney general said they'd just received the complaint and weren't able to comment on it yet. A first conviction under the law is a misdemeanor, which can mean up to a year in jail. The second or subsequent conviction is an aggravated misdemeanor and can mean up to two years in jail. The groups argue that the law violates their First Amendment rights and the equal protection and due process clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

THE FARMERS



GUILD



CAFF

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
WITH FAMILY FARMERS



NORTH BAY FIRE RECOVERY FUND



Dear friends and farmers,

This week we face devastating fires in Sonoma, Mendocino and Napa Counties, fires which have so far taken dozens of lives, destroyed

of our beloved farms to the ground and scorched nearly 150,000 acres of this place we all love.

https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/egov/Press_Releases/Press_Release.asp?PRnum=17-062

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE SEEKS BIDS FOR GROWER FOOD
SAFETY TRAINING



Release #17-
062

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SACRAMENTO, October 2, 2017- The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is seeking a contractor to provide food safety training for California produce growers. Interested parties can learn more and submit proposals through a Request for Proposals (RFP) that has been posted by the Department on the Cal eProcure website. Proposals are due October 16, 2017.

“The Department has received funding for 2018 in the amount of \$450,000 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA),” explained Natalie Krout-Greenberg, Director of CDFA’s Inspection Services Division. “The funds are meant to provide farmers with affordable access to food safety training courses required under new FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act) laws.”

The Division is working with the FDA to bring produce farmers in California into compliance with FSMA, which becomes effective January 2018. More than 20,000 produce farms in California are expected to be covered under what is called the Produce Safety Rule, one of several sections of the new law. As part of this Rule, each of these 20,000 farms must employ at least one individual who has completed an approved food safety training course.

To facilitate the training, CDFA has divided the state into four regions. Contractors who submit proposals must provide a plan to conduct classes in each region. Classes must be open to any grower who wishes to attend and

the course curriculum must be accredited by the Produce Safety Alliance, located at Cornell University.

Much more detailed information is available in the official RFP, which can be accessed by registering at www.caleprocure.ca.gov and searching for bids under Department Number 8570. The official RFP title is “Environmental Auditing Unit, Standardized Grower Training” and there are four different RFPs – one for each training region. A hard copy of the RFPs can also be accessed by contacting Valerie Roberts, Contract Analyst at (916) 403-6518.