



California Association of Wheat Growers

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## Newsletter

April 15, 2011

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Truck and Bus Regulation Reporting Date Postponed Until April 29, 2011 for agricultural fleets and fleets with street sweepers with Tier 0

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The March 31, 2011 reporting date for agricultural fleets and fleets with street sweepers with Tier 0 auxiliary engines is being postponed until April 29, 2011 to give fleets more time to report.

The date that agricultural fleets have to report January 1, 2011 odometer readings for limited use agricultural trucks or information about specialty agricultural trucks to be eligible for the agricultural vehicle extensions has been extended to April 29, 2011. In addition, the date that fleets with street sweepers must report hour meter readings for the Tier 0 auxiliary engines has been extended to April 29, 2011. California Air Resources Board staff is preparing an advisory to reflect the change and will be updating related documents in the near future.

All other fleets do not have to begin reporting until next year.

Fleets that plan to use the phase-in option, want to take advantage of credits, or to use other provisions in the Truck and Bus regulation, would need to report by January 31, 2012.

Because the amendments considered by the Board in December 2010 will not become effective for at least several months, the delay in the deadline is being changed administratively pending approval by the Office of Administrative Law.

Additional information about the regulation is at:

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/dieseltruck>

**Background**

On December 11, 2008, the Board approved for adoption the Truck and Bus regulation to control emissions from nearly all existing diesel powered heavy-duty trucks and buses operating in California. The regulation became effective under California law on January 8, 2010. The regulation applies to diesel fueled trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 pounds that are privately owned, federally owned, and to publicly and privately owned school buses. Local and state government owned diesel fueled trucks and buses are already subject to other ARB regulations. Reducing emissions from in-use trucks and buses is necessary to meet federally imposed clean air standards and to reduce the adverse health effects from truck and bus pollution.

On December 17, 2010, the staff recommended amendments, which are presently pending adoption, that would delay the initial requirement to install particulate matter (PM) retrofit filters by one year to January 1, 2012 and extend the time before a vehicle equipped with a PM filter would have to have an engine that meets 2010 model year emission standards. The amendments would also defer engine replacements for vehicles without PM filters two years until January 1, 2015. Prior to 2020, replacements would be limited to 20 year old or older trucks that are not equipped with PM filters. By January 1, 2023, most vehicles would still need to be equipped with an engine meeting 2010 model year emission standards.

**Farms May Face New Water Rules in Central Valley**

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The way nearly 35,000 Central Valley farms manage water and nutrients from fields and ditches is about to change, but what those changes may entail was not resolved last week when the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board met in Rancho Cordova.

Farmers and ranchers from throughout the valley offered comments on the board's proposed changes to the Long-term Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, which controls runoff from more than 7 million irrigated acres. They were joined in addressing the board during an 11-hour meeting by agricultural group leaders and a large contingent from environmental organizations.

At stake is the future of a water quality program established in 2003, when the regional board adopted rules encouraging farmers to combine resources by forming coalitions to conduct water quality testing in their local watersheds, or to conduct testing individually. Through the coalitions, management plans were developed to improve water quality and to provide outreach and educational activities.

Now, the program is up for renewal and the regional board wants to expand the program by requiring farm coalitions to add monitoring and sampling of groundwater to the surface water quality improvement program.

Full article: www.cbf.com/agalert/

Breakthrough in U.S.-Colombia Trade: Agreement on Labor, Judicial Reforms

~~~~~(April 13, 2011) The United States has reached an agreement with Colombia on labor and judicial reforms that will open the door for U.S. congressional approval of the long-pending U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The Obama administration has worked closely with the government of Colombia and interested stakeholders, including members of Congress, to address labor concerns resulting in an agreed Action Plan Related to Labor Rights that will lead to greatly enhanced labor rights in Colombia.

Successful implementation of key elements of the action plan will be a precondition for the U.S.-Colombia agreement to enter into effect.

The U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement will expand U.S. goods exports alone by more than \$1.1 billion and give key U.S. goods and services duty-free access in sectors from manufacturing to agriculture. It will increase U.S. gross domestic product by \$2.5 billion and support thousands of additional U.S. jobs.

Full article: [www.calchamber.com/](http://www.calchamber.com/)

### **U.S. Loses Largest Food Company's Wheat Business**

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From USDA FAS GAIN Report

Nutresa, the biggest Colombian food processor and wheat importer announced it will begin sourcing Canadian wheat in place of U.S. wheat, due to the fact that wheat imports from Canada will go to zero duty under the Colombia-Canada free trade agreement.

The president of Nutresa (previously known as National Chocolate Company, or (CNC) recently announced that in the near future it will begin to source its wheat from Canada. Nutresa is the main producer of cookies, pastas and other food products in Colombia, and is also the single largest consumer of wheat imported to Colombia. Nutresa's wheat consumption represents 50 percent of total Colombian wheat imports.

In 2010, the U.S. supplied 683,000 tons of the Colombian total wheat imports of 1.4 million tons. According to the president of Nutresa, the shift of imports from the U.S. in favor of Canadian wheat is due to the fact that Colombia-Canada free trade agreement is about to eliminate the tariff for wheat imported from Canada. Sources indicate that the agreement will be implemented by summer of 2011.

Full article: <http://gain.fas.usda.gov/>

Congress Finishes FY2011 Budget as FY2012 Debate Heats Up

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The House approved the final bill, H.R. 1473, Thursday afternoon by a 260 to 167 vote, followed by the Senate's approval by an 81 to 19 vote.

While agriculture only totals 2 percent of the federal budget, H.R. 1473 and other recently-enacted stopgap continuing resolution legislation will have cut more than 14 percent from agriculture spending compared to fiscal year 2010.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) salaries and expenses were cut 3.4 percent; agriculture research was cut 9.3 percent; conservation was cut 12 percent; the Women's, Infants and Children nutrition program was cut 7 percent; Title II food aid was cut 11 percent; and the McGovern-Dole food aid program was cut 4.8 percent by eliminating the local purchase pilot program. However, within the overall cuts for research, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) received a 1 percent increase.

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack acknowledged this week that the cuts would not be easy to make with so little time left in the fiscal year, and House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Collin Peterson (D-Minn.) warned this week that the total agriculture baseline is also being eroded by "changes in mandatory program spending" or CHIMPS.

Full Article: [www.wheatworld.org/](http://www.wheatworld.org/)

## **Rep: U.S. Faces Agriculture 'Crisis' Without Farm-Worker Visa Reform**

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By Rafael Romo, CNN Senior Latin American Affairs Editor

Washington (CNN) -- The agricultural industry in the United States could face a crisis if the country doesn't find a way to attract more legal farm workers from abroad soon. That's one of the conclusions reached Wednesday at a congressional hearing.

The House Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement met to evaluate a migrant farm-worker visa program frequently used by Mexicans to legally work on farms and ranches across the United States. The H-2A visa program was created for that purpose back in the late 1980s.

Rep. Elton Gallegly, R-California, in his opening remarks as chairman of the subcommittee, said, "There are simply not enough Americans willing to do, to take the jobs of migrant farm workers. In fact, our government's policy for generations has been to remove Americans from such labor."

The lack of American farm workers and the labor needs of the agricultural industry coupled with low wages in Mexico create a situation in which the demand attracts many Mexican workers who enter the United States legally or otherwise.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's National Agricultural Workers Survey, which canvasses hired farm workers, over the period of 2007 to 2009, 48% of farm workers in the country admitted they were in the United States illegally.

The agricultural industry has repeatedly asked the federal government to streamline and expedite the H-2A visa program as its labor needs have grown over the years.

Lee Wicker, deputy director of the North Carolina Growers Association -- an organization with 600 grower members and the largest H-2A program user in the country -- said the current program is ineffective. Wicker called it "costly, time-consuming, and flawed. Farmers have to complete a lengthy labor certification process that's slow, bureaucratic, and frustrating."

Immigration remains a political hot-button issue in the country. Far from finding a way to legalize farm workers already in the country, many legislators at the federal and local levels are calling for stronger enforcement of the current immigration laws.

Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, said the argument that the country doesn't have enough farm workers and therefore has to import them is flawed. "I'm thinking about a nation that has a lot of people that are riding along on this boat and not pulling on the oars. Wouldn't a logical nation want to employ all of those that are eligible to work before they would bring people in, especially given that we have 71 welfare programs?" said King.

But Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-California, the subcommittee's ranking member, said Wednesday at the hearing that a hard approach, including deportations, wouldn't solve the problem.

"If we somehow deported the 1 (million) to 1.5 million undocumented workers on our farms and ranches right now, there are too few Americans jumping at the change to fill those jobs, and I suspect that's why we're having this hearing," Lofgren said.

Agricultural states like California and Florida would greatly benefit from an expedited visa program for farm workers. But Rep. Dan Lungren, D-California, says the appetite for such measures in the U.S. Congress is just not there.

"I doubt anybody running for president, including the incumbent, is going to run on the fact that he's going

to be softer on immigration enforcement that he has been," Lungren said.

He went further, saying that if no action is taken, "we're going to have... a crisis in agriculture."

To view article: <http://www.cnn.com/2011/POLITICS/04/13/immigration.agriculture/>