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Regional Range Tour Recap

On May 25, 2017, Madera County Cooperative Extension, US Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, Fresno State, and California Rangeland Conservation Coalition hosted a ranch tour at the San Joaquin Experimental Range. The tour included presentations from local experts in hydrology, range management, wildlife research, and the history of the Range. Twenty-five people attended the tour. The agenda is posted at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/livestockandnaturalresources/Events/>.

News Briefs

New land monitoring app: LandPKS

The Jornada research unit of the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has created a new mobile app that land managers can use to quickly collect information on the soils and vegetation of the lands they manage. The app is freely available from either Apple Apps or Google Play - search for "LandPKS" if you are interested. Data collected through this app will be freely accessible for anyone to use.

More information is available at <https://www.landpotential.org/>.

Swine Health: Seneca Valley Virus

The California Animal Health and Food Safety (CAHFS) lab system announced that signs of Seneca Valley virus (SV), a disease in swine similar to Foot and Mouth Disease, have been recorded in shipments of pigs from other states coming into California this summer. Many different states have introduced the virus into California in this way in previous years. Signs of SV include: blisters around the nose, mouth and hooves, which can lead to lameness and are associated with fever and lethargy. For more information on this disease, visit <http://cahfs.ucdavis.edu/> or contact the CAHFS lab in Tulare, (559) 688-7543, or in Davis, (530) 752-8700.

Feel free to contact Rebecca Ozeran at (559) 241-6564 with any questions.





Wildfire Season

Forest and rangeland prevention of and response to fire

Wildfire at the San Joaquin Experimental Range this June removed most of the standing annual grass as the fire spread. What does this mean for the grassland?

In the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada Mountains, summer is synonymous with fire season.

Dry annual grasses, dead and dying forest trees, and hot, dry weather combine to fuel often disastrous wildfires. Unfortunately for residents, any wildfire in the area often contributes to a smoky haze that can last for weeks, trapped in the valley. Fire also travels very quickly uphill, putting hilltop structures at risk. Human and animal health are major concerns during this season - be sure you have an evacuation plan for yourself and your animals in this fire-prone area. CalFire has a great online resource for evacuation planning with animals: www.readyforwildfire.org/Animal-Evacuation/.

Beyond the immediate impacts of wildfire, however, range landowners are also at risk of losing their forage base.

How do I calculate my forage loss for budgeting, supplementation, insurance, and so on?

If part or all of your property burns due to an unplanned burn (e.g. accidental fire, wildfire), it is a good idea to calculate both the physical amount and monetary value of the lost forage. Knowing what you lost can help you adjust stocking rates, plan for hay or other supplemental feed purchases, account for the lost forage value in your annual budget, and provide a number for insurance agencies who may cover your property.

UC Cooperative Extension has published a free, comprehensive guide (Publication 8446) to estimate the cost of these kinds of forage losses. You can download the PDF for free here: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/forageloss/>. In combination with the guide, we also have Excel worksheets to help with the calculations.



There are 2 different Excel files available at the same website as the PDF, underlined above. The first, called “**Forage Replacement** Worksheets ANR Pub 8446 Jan 2011”, is the worksheet you should use if the burned area **WAS NOT grazed** before the burn. The other, called “**Prior Grazing Forage** Replacement Worksheets, ANR Pub 8446, Jan 2011”, is the worksheet you should use if the area that burned **WAS grazed** before the burn.

Each Excel file has instructions on the first “sheet”, which you can find by clicking on “Instructions” at the bottom of the Excel window (see image to the right). Then there are 3 calculation sheets, “Beginning Inventory”, “First Growing Season”, and “Second Growing Season”. Simply follow the instructions in the first sheet, and refer to Publication 8446 for additional information. Feel free to come into the Cooperative Extension office to work through these sheets with Rebecca, especially if you do not have access to Microsoft Excel.

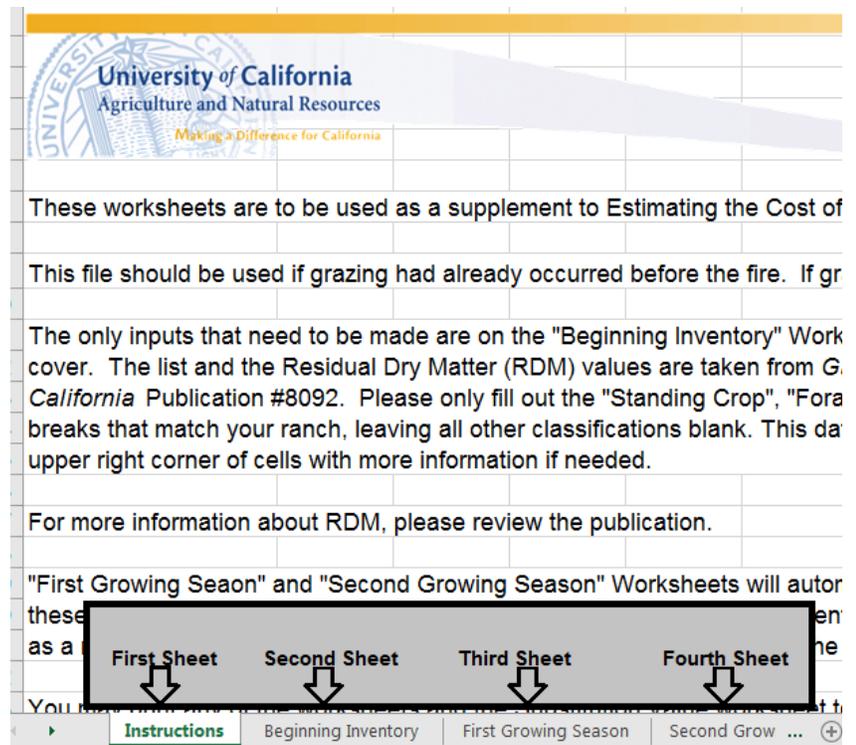
What can I do to prevent catastrophic fires from impacting my home?

Rangeland and forest residents should create and maintain a defensible space around their homes, barns, corrals, and all other structures. The Central Sierra UC Cooperative Extension Forestry Advisor has the following suggestions to maintain defensible space:

REMOVE:

Create a lean, clean, and green zone 30 feet around any structure. Remove branches, limbs and brush 8-10 feet above ground.

Dead trees should be removed to avoid falling onto homes or other infrastructure.



This article continues ►



Wildfire cont'd

REDUCE:

Reduce the number of shrubs and trees from 30 to 100 feet from the structure, or up to the property line to create a reduced fuel zone.

REPLACE:

Replace fire prone vegetation with green areas and fire breaks.

At least 102 million trees in the Sierra Nevada are standing dead as of 2016. The current number is probably higher than that, which means the fire risk in our forests is extremely high. Local Resource Conservation Districts, such as Coarsegold RCD in Madera County and Sierra RCD in Fresno County, may be able to help you remove hazardous trees.

Depending on the intensity and spread of a wildfire, there may still be plenty of trees remaining on your property, or many of them may have been destroyed. If you still have robust living trees on your property, you may not need to make any replanting efforts - much of the forest is too densely treed already, and thus more fire prone.

The following are suggestions from the Central Sierra Forestry Advisor and Master Gardeners on how to decide when to replant, and how to maintain existing trees and plant new trees.

ASSESS YOUR LANDSCAPE

If you have a significant number of trees left, you may not need to replant. Thin trees so that available sun and soil moisture is focused on the healthiest trees. Water where trees are receiving more sun to reduce stress.

NURTURE EXISTING TREES

Native conifers are the best option and are adapted to our climates. Due to climate change, choosing trees that are from a slightly lower elevation may hedge against warmer temperatures in the future.



This article continues ►



Wildfire cont'd

IF YOU DECIDE TO REPLANT, OPTIONS INCLUDE

•**Large tree saplings**

Most expensive to purchase. Requires soil amendments and weekly waterings during the dry season for the first few years. Best for select locations near the home for visual screening or wind breaks.

•**Small container-grown seedlings**

Much less expensive to purchase though may require some care including watering during the dry season. May be held in pots until ready to plant.

•**Bare root tree seedlings**

Least expensive option. Does not require soil amendments or watering when planted during periods of high soil moisture. Best option for planting numerous trees on large acreages.

•**Oaks**

Container sized plants can be expensive. Least expensive option is starting by seed. Gather acorns locally in the fall and plant immediately. Germination success can be high if done right.

MAINTAIN

Clear competing vegetation, mulch and water new trees for the first few seasons as needed.



For more information, please visit CalFire's website, <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>, or call your regional CalFire unit. Fresno-Kings Unit: (559) 493-4300; Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit: (209) 966-3622.

To see the extent of tree mortality in the Sierras, visit: <http://egis.fire.ca.gov/TreeMortalityViewer/>.



Dairy cattle official identification requirements effective April 1, 2017

This is an update from Dr. Jenny McDougle, of the Animal Health Branch of the California Department of Food and Agriculture.



On **April 1, 2017**, changes to animal disease traceability regulations, including requirements for movement of cattle, identification, documentation, and specific livestock diseases, go into effect. The regulation changes can be found in Chapters 2 and 7, Division 2 of Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations. These include the requirement that:

- All dairy cattle born after January 1, 2017 must be officially identified prior to leaving their birth premises, unless moving directly to an approved tagging site.
- All dairy cattle changing ownership also require official identification unless moving directly to:
 - An approved tagging site
 - A recognized slaughtering establishment with a USDA approved backtag
 - No more than one approved livestock marketing facility (that is an approved tagging site), and then to a recognized slaughtering establishment with a USDA approved backtag

For more information, please visit our website: www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health

For a list of approved tagging sites: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/pdfs/ApprovedTaggingSites.pdf

Summary of Regulation Changes – Disease Traceability: https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/pdfs/ADT_RuleChangeSummary.pdf | **Trichomonosis:** https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/animal_health/pdfs/Trich_RuleChangeSummary.pdf

Besides providing the resources listed above, we would be happy to answer any questions that come up. Dairy farmers and managers can contact our Animal Health Branch District Office in Tulare at 559-685-3500.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many of the changes to the identification and disease traceability rules also impact beef cattle. Visit the websites above (type, or copy and paste the link) or call the Tulare Branch District Office to make sure you know what has changed.



Update on Your Local Extension Program

This summer, Rebecca has been collecting water samples from the Sierra National Forest to measure E. coli levels near campgrounds, rural residences such as cabins, and Forest Service grazing allotments. Final results from this study will be available soon, but in general the E. coli levels have satisfied the EPA requirement for recreational water quality.

In collaboration with another UC Cooperative Extension Advisor, Rebecca is looking for cattle ranchers in Fresno and Madera counties who might be interested in participating in a micro-nutrient study. The study needs a small blood sample from each of about a dozen cattle from your herd. The livestock advisors can come to you to collect the blood. Please contact Rebecca if you are interested in participating or would like more information!

If you would like to see a particular topic in this newsletter, let us know! Contact Rebecca Ozeran with your suggestions.

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**Or, fill out the online needs assessment survey:
<http://ucanr.edu/2017needs>**

Stay cool out there!



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