

# Kearney Research News



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources | Research and Extension Center System

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## Message from the director: Dr. Jeff Dahlberg

So much for spring! We are busy around the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center and gearing up for several plantings, fieldwork, field days and center tours. We are working to replace some of our retired academics. Five positions have been released for KARE and I hope to see all those positions filled within the next year or so. The position of Area Integrated Pest Management Entomology Advisor, previously held by now-retired Walt Bentley, has been advertised. With a few more retirements happening soon, we are working to fill new positions as quickly as we can. I look forward to having some new research scientists on the center to continue the legacy of high quality research and extension of our retired researchers.

UC Agriculture and Natural Resources just finished a Global Food Forum in which we discussed topics ranging from sustainably feeding eight billion people worldwide and the ever-expanding population in California to the day-to-day operations of ANR. Our outreach programs at Kearney have also been busy. We helped 1,800 young students “transplant” their own lettuce plants at the Fresno County Farm and Nutrition Day. Each child was able to go home with a vegetable they could grow and eat. Outreach coordinators Laura Van Der Staay and Julie Sievert also participated at the California Ag Day in Sacramento in March to highlight the work and research we do at the center.

If you are so inspired, you can help us expand our research efforts to find sustainable solutions to the variety of problems faced by California farmers and our food systems by donating to KARE using our online donation button (<http://kare.ucanr.edu>). As always feel free to contact me at [jadahlberg@ucanr.edu](mailto:jadahlberg@ucanr.edu), through our blog or at our website [kare.ucanr.edu](http://kare.ucanr.edu).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jeff Dahlberg'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



### **KARE participates in local Earth Day celebration**

The City of Parlier's Earth Day celebration on March 30 attracted about 2,000 attendees. Events included a tree planting, Easter egg hunt, family walk, folk dancing, zumba dancing, free raffles for prizes, games for youth, and face painting. Representatives from many local service organizations had booths that provided families with free items ranging from food to dental screening. KARE's booth provided 1,000 strawberry crowns and 2,500 leaf lettuce transplants to the public. Youth from the local Leo club helped with handing out the plants and discussing the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables. [See more pictures.](#)



### **KARE and USDA collaborators visit Israel to learn more about the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer**

In 2003, the [Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer](#) (PSHB) was observed in Southern California. This beetle has a plant pathogen *Fusarium sp.* symbiont that causes susceptible host tree damage. The PSHB appears to be established in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside counties. In the Los Angeles area, PSHB has attacked over 200 species of native, ornamental and horticultural trees, including the native Coast Live Oak, California sycamore, and about 57% of the commonly used street trees in the area. Avocado trees are susceptible; the beetle and fungus have been found in several backyard avocado trees as well as some commercial avocado orchards in Los Angeles and Orange counties. The PSHB has caused severe damage to commercial avocado orchards in Israel, and is a threat to California's avocado crop which is worth about \$460.6 million and accounts for about 87% of the U.S. production. [Read more about PSHB and its impact on avocado orchards.](#)



### **UC helps increase student awareness of healthful food and where it comes from**

More than 1,600 third-graders and 330 teachers and chaperones from 24 Fresno County schools attended Farm and Nutrition Day March 22 at the Big Fresno Fairgrounds. Attendees had the opportunity to tour 50 stations with educational handouts, experiential workshops, presentations and demonstrations. Fresno County Farm Bureau organized the event with the assistance of several presenter groups, sponsors and volunteers, including two UC Agriculture and Natural Resources units. [Read more about this outreach event.](#)



### **KARE scientist visits Australia to share insights into disease control and food safety strategies for tree nut crops**

Themis Michailides, plant pathologist and lecturer in the Department of Plant Pathology at UC Davis, and Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center, recently travelled to Australia, primarily to visit pistachio and almond orchards and discuss disease control and food safety strategies for these crops. [Read more.](#)

### **Input about new ag dean at UC Davis gathered at Kearney**

California's land grant universities are not like others across the nation. Understanding the dynamic generated by the state's unique three-campus system will be an essential attribute of the new dean of the UC Davis College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES).

This imperative was among the thoughts shared at a town hall meeting April 22 at the UC Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center convened by CDFA secretary Karen Ross and farmer John Harris. [Read more about what stakeholders discussed at this meeting.](#)



**The University of California helps celebrate Ag Day: the California Advantage**

March 20, 2013, Ag Day: The California Advantage was held on the west lawn of the State Capitol, and gave UC Agriculture and Natural Resources the opportunity to share how we make a positive difference to healthy food systems, healthy environments, healthy communities and healthy Californians through our teaching, research, extension, youth development, and nutrition programs. [Read more.](#)

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