

EXPORT TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CALIFORNIA FARMERS AND RANCHERS ANNOUNCED

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In a press release dated February 4, 2008, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced an export training program for California farmers and ranchers.

The California Centers for International Trade Development, in cooperation with CDFA, is hosting a California Agricultural Export Training Certificate Program (CalAgX) for farmers, ranchers, and food processors. This training program is designed to meet the educational needs of agricultural companies seeking to export their products worldwide. Companies interested in registering in the program should visit www.citd.org/calag

"Ninety-six percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States," said CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura, "Assisting California companies in providing safe, nutritious and high quality products to international markets, furthers the economic development of our state."

The California Agricultural Export Training Certificate Program is a series of six classes over three months that focus on several aspects of exporting food and agricultural products. Class topics include how to get paid,

international transportation, tariffs/trade barriers, and finding foreign buyers. Classes are scheduled to begin in April and conclude in June, with a registration deadline of February 29, 2008. Training will be held at several locations throughout the state, with sites for the training program selected based upon attendees geographic location.

The training program is funded by the California Centers for International Trade Development through the California Community College Economic Development Program and with a U.S. Department of Education Title VI B Grant.

In 2006, California exported \$9.7 billion in agricultural products to more than 150 countries setting a new record for the State. The leading export products included almonds, wine, dairy products, cotton, and table grapes. The top destinations for California agricultural products included EU, Canada, Japan, China/Hong Kong, and Mexico. On average, California farmers and ranchers export 24 percent of the products that they produced.

2007 CROP REPORT

Cree Morgan and Dagny Thomas, of our staff, have begun gathering information for Sonoma County's annual crop report. Questionnaires have been sent to local growers. Information obtained from growers includes the following: planted acreage, units sold, and gross sales.

Information is received directly from producers of the following commodities: Christmas trees, field crops, vegetables, fruits and nuts, and apiary and nursery products. Data on dairy, eggs, beef, sheep, pork, fish, and timber are compiled from various State reports.

The crop report will be released to the public in early May after being presented to Sonoma County Board of Supervisors.

Copies of the crop report will be available online after the presentation. Copies of the current and past crop reports can be found on our website at: <http://www.sonoma-county.org/agcomm/>

DPR HONORS IPM INNOVATORS

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is recognizing eight organizations in its 2007 IPM Innovator Awards.

DPR Director Mary-Ann Warmerdam presented the IPM Innovator Awards on January 17 at California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in Sacramento.

"California has taken on more urban and agricultural environmental challenges than any state in the nation," said Director Warmerdam. "These awards illustrate how we can overcome many pest management problems in ways that re-define the traditional measures of success.

"Our Innovators do more than comply with environmental rules and regulations," Director Warmerdam continued. "They go the extra mile to create new pest management solutions that are both environmentally friendly and cost-effective. They are truly pioneers, blazing new trails toward a greener, cleaner California."

Breyer's Vineyard IPM Service is a vineyard IPM consultant and contract pest monitoring service for North Coast growers, primarily in Sonoma County. Seasonal interns help with

routine work, such as monitoring blue-green sharpshooter traps. Laura has a long history of conducting grower appellation meetings, PCA breakfasts, organic producer sessions, and other educational events. She conducts training sessions for pest identification and monitoring, discusses how and why treatment decisions are made, and encourages growers to share their observations. At an annual field day event in August at Shone Farm, attended by hundreds of growers and members of the public, Breyer provides a comprehensive summary of the season's pest and disease issues. She also has been a featured speaker on IPM-related topics at conferences and wine grape technical group meetings.

Congratulations to Laura Breyer, Breyer's Vineyard IPM Service, for receiving this distinguished award!

