



# Tree Nut Times

March 2025

Volume 17, Issue 3

## Industry Calendar

WAPA Board Meeting  
March 6, 2025

Hazard Communication  
Webinar  
March 10, 2025

Aerial Lift Train-the-  
Trainer Workshops  
March 13, 18, 25, 2025

Aerial Lift Train-the-  
Trainer Workshops  
April 1, 3, 8, 9, 2025

Workplace Violence  
Webinar  
April 14, 2025

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## Newsletter Sponsored by: Douglas Products

### WTNA Speaks in Support of Increase in Incentive Funds for Low Dust Harvesters

**Western Tree Nut Association (WTNA) President/CEO Roger A. Isom** testified before the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board to increase incentive funds to upgrade harvesting equipment with low dust equipment. The proposed changes include the following:

- **Increased Incentive Levels for New Equipment**
  - Proposing to increase from 50% to a maximum of 75% of eligible costs, aligning with ag tractor replacement program (which offers 60% to 85%)
- **Increased Funding Caps for Low-Dust Harvesting Technology**
  - Proposing to increase the cap from \$150,000 to \$250,000 per unit for new low-dust harvesting technology
- **Eliminate Funding Caps for New Dual-Purpose Harvesting Technology**
  - Proposing to eliminate current \$150,000 per-unit cap for dual-purpose harvesting units that combine or eliminate certain elements of harvesting including shaking and sweeping, resulting in lower overall emissions.

**President/CEO Isom** stated "almond and walnut acreage has declined for three years running, making it difficult to afford this equipment. These changes will help growers to be proactive this new technology." The proposed changes were discussed by the board and unanimously approved.

### Fight Against Rat Infestation Continues



Last month, the **California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)** hosted a special Demonstration Day in Western Fresno County to discuss monitoring and controlling rats in tree nuts. **Dr. Roger Baldwin** of the **University of California Cooperative Extension** provided demonstration of monitoring techniques and various control methodologies for reducing rat populations. More than 30 growers attended the demonstration day supported by the **Western Tree Nut Association (WTNA)**. Recently, CDFA released an economic impact report estimating the rat issue has cost the almond industry somewhere between \$100 million and \$300 million in the form of irrigation system repair and replacement, yield loss, equipment damage and various other impacts. In addition, WTNA staff along with the **Fresno County Farm Bureau** met with staff from **Congressmen Costa, Valadao and Fong** to discuss needs in the form of financial assistance, as well as help in reducing the incredible populations of rats on the western side of the Valley.

### Association Hosts Important Kickoff Meeting on 9 ug/m3 PM2.5 Plan

The Association hosted a meeting with the **California Air Resources Board (CARB)**, the **San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)** and the agricultural in-



dustry for a kickoff meeting on issues dealing with the development of the new Moderate State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the new Federal EPA 9 ug/m<sup>3</sup> standard. Attending the meeting were the **Western Tree Nut Association, California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, Fresno County Farm Bureau, Nisei Farmers League, Western United Dairymen and the California Fresh Fruit Association.** The meeting focused on the emissions inventory development and modeling that will be necessary to demonstrate attainment for the new plan and how that information will be used to develop control measures to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions. In the meeting CARB identified the following agricultural sources being considered for review:

- Soil NO<sub>x</sub> and Ammonia from application of nitrogen to managed lands
- Farming Operations, Dairy Cattle Waste and Dust Emissions
- Silage NO<sub>x</sub> from dairy cattle operations
- Dust from harvesting, tilling and land preparation (emphasis on nut harvesting)
- Fugitive dust from unpaved farm roads
- Agricultural equipment including tractors and harvesters
- Agricultural burning (now banned)
- Fugitive windblown dust
- Ag irrigation pump engines
- VOC emissions from citrus packing house (?)



These topics and other will be discussed over the next several months as CARB and SJVAPCD work to put their PM<sub>2.5</sub> SIP together. All the research and modeling will have to be done in the next two

years, as these plans will be due to Federal EPA in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2027. CARB has identified seven areas in the state that will be non-attainment for the 9 ug/m<sup>3</sup> PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard including the San Joaquin Valley, Feather River AQMD (Yuba and Sutter Counties), the South Coast AQMD, Bay Area AQMD, San Diego County, Imperial County, Mendocino County, and the Portola area of Plumas County.

### **CARB Notice on HD Truck Opacity Testing**

Earlier this month, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) sent out notices to fleet owners reminding them of required opacity testing for the 2025 year. The notice was sent out to over 29,000 vehicle owners. This reminder is for both non-ag and Agricultural provision truck owners. Trucks that operate solely in agricultural operations should fill out an Agricultural Attestation form to reduce the number of required opacity tests conducted per year to 1, where other industries must complete multiple

opacity tests annually for the same equipment. Ag trucks must submit their passing opacity tests within 60 days of your annual registration date. If you received a notice of compliance testing, please check your reported trucks at <https://cleantruckcheck.arb.ca.gov/> to ensure that your testing date is accurate.

### **Upcoming Train-the-Trainer Workshops & Webinars!**

Western Tree Nut Association and California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association are offering safety training workshops in both Spanish and English. These workshops are for owners, managers, supervisors, safety personnel or those who are responsible for training. Each workshop attendee will be provided with a binder that includes the information needed for understanding the rules, regulations and conducting effective safety training. Each attendee will also receive a certificate of completion for those that participate in the full class.

Topics include:

#### **Aerial Lift Safety (Train-the-Trainer)**

- Tulare: March 13 | Turlock: March 18
- Wasco: March 25 | Le Grand: April 1
- Fresno: April 3 | Woodland: April 8 | Chico: April 9

#### **Webinars:**

- **Hazard Communication:** March 10
- **Workplace Violence Prevention:** April 14
- **Indoor & Outdoor Heat Illness Prevention:** May 19

The cost per training is \$65 per person for members and \$85 for non-members. For information on registering for the workshops and/or webinars please see flyer or visit our website at <https://www.agprocessors.org/>.

### **Do you still need to comply with the ZEV Forklift Rule?**

Last summer, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the Zero Emission (ZEV) Forklift Regulation, aiming to phase out the sale and use of propane forklifts in the state by 2038. The regulation was initially set to take effect on January 1, 2026. Under this rule:

- Beginning in 2026, equipment dealers would have been prohibited from producing or selling Class 4 or Class 5 propane forklifts with a lift capacity of less than 12,000 lbs.
- Agricultural operations would have been required to begin phasing out their fleets in 2029.

What Has Changed?

Under the Federal Clean Air Act, CARB must obtain a waiver

### SAFETY TRAINING WORKSHOPS

**Aerial Lift Train-the-Trainer:**

- Tulare March 13<sup>th</sup>
- Turlock March 18<sup>th</sup>
- Wasco March 25<sup>th</sup>
- Le Grand April 1<sup>st</sup>
- Fresno April 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Woodland April 8<sup>th</sup>
- Chico April 9<sup>th</sup>

**Webinars:**

- March 10<sup>th</sup> Hazard Communication
- April 14<sup>th</sup> Workplace Violence Prevention
- May 19<sup>th</sup> Indoor & Outdoor Heat Illness Prevention

**Cost per trainings:**

- \$65 Member
- \$85 Non-member

\*Subject to changes

The Western Agricultural Processors Association and California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association, are providing **Safety Training Workshops** to assist our members. These workshops are designed to be both basic and refresher knowledge, that are focused on fundamental effective safety training skills. Our workshops are participant-centered, interactive and encourage full participation.

**Topics:**

- Train-the-Trainer Aerial Lift
- Hazard Communication Training (webinar)
- Workplace Violence Prevention Training (webinar)
- Indoor & Outdoor Heat Illness Prevention Training (webinar)

These Train-the-Trainer workshops are for **owners, managers, superintendents, supervisors, safety personnel and for those who are responsible for training** on equipment. The Train-the-Trainer class does not "certify" or authorize the participants to operate equipment. Official training must be provided by the employer on their specific equipment and documented as such. Each attendee will receive a binder with training tools on how to conduct effective safety training, trainer guide materials, quizzes and certificate of completion.

These workshops will be offered as regional workshops throughout the valley and via webinars conducted in English and Spanish. Please note, COVID-19 conditions and State and local guidance are constantly evolving. WAPA and CCGGA will provide all registered attendees with COVID-19 updates and requirements as they become available.

Aerial Lift Train-the-Trainer Presented by the following Organizations:





And only nuts. Eliminate target pests; keep the quality.

Get food safety confidence with ProFume® gas fumigant and Precision Fumigation™ tools and techniques.  
We help deliver FSMA compliance so you can deliver quality.



Made in the U.S.A.  Get confident at [ProFume.com](https://www.ProFume.com)

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from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce this regulation. However, CARB has not yet submitted a waiver request, and given the current administration, approval appears very unlikely.

If no waiver is granted, businesses in California could have an additional four years of reprieve from the regulation. While this is not yet confirmed, CARB may lack the authority to enforce the rule, effectively buying businesses more time.

As has been from the beginning, the Association is fighting this regulation and pushing to prolong its implementation for as long as possible, especially with the current statewide infrastructure constraints. With misinformation circulating, we encourage you to stay informed and look for official updates from the Association. CARB is expected to release further details in the coming weeks—stay tuned for updates.

#### **WTNA Congratulates Fresno State's Alcidia Freitas Gomes on a Spectacular Career**

The Association would like to congratulate **Fresno State's AgOne Executive Director Alcidia Freitas-Gomes** on her retirement. Mrs. Freitas Gomes has been a cornerstone of the **Jordan College of Agriculture**, as well as the University, for over 30 years in her role as Executive Director of the AgOne Foundation. Through her vision, connections and leadership, she grew the scholarship endowment from less than \$1 million dollars when she started, to well over \$30 million. The fund helps provide scholarships for hundreds of students currently enrolled in the Agriculture Department each year. Additionally, Alcidia was instrumental in obtaining over \$120 million dollars in donations and gifts to the university for facility upgrades and repairs, as well as for incorporating industry advancements to benefit the student experience. WTNA previously coordinated with Alcidia to organize equipment donations and develop the WAPA Tree Nut Processing Course to students. The class offers students a hands-on opportunity to learn on equipment vital to tree nut processing, and gives valuable exposure to those students interested in the hulling, shelling and processing industry. We would like to thank Alcidia for all of her hard work, and congratulate her on her retirement.



#### **REMINDER: Important Survey for All Agricultural Operations**

As you are aware, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is moving full speed ahead on their “zero emissions” goals for California, including replacing all combustion vehicles and equipment by replacing them with electric or hydrogen vehicles or equipment. This includes all trucks and forklifts. The Association is convinced the infrastructure to meet such demand simply isn't

there. Up until a meeting last year hosted by the Association last year in Modesto, CARB and the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) were convinced there would be no problem meeting the demand. But after that meeting, CARB, CEC and the CPUC admitted they did not know how much demand would be from agriculture, nor did they know when it would be needed or where. At that same meeting the utilities, PG&E and SCE, also admitted they did not know, **and they were already having “system-wide constraints”**. In response, CARB and the CEC have contracted Cal Poly San Luis Obispo to work with agriculture to conduct a comprehensive survey of agricultural operations (farms, packing houses, cotton gins, nut hullers and processors, etc.) to see how much electricity demand would be needed to comply with these new regulations, when it would be needed by, and to the zip code level where it would be needed.

The survey is anonymous and only to zip code level. Your company or farm name and address is never entered or revealed.

We are working with several agricultural organizations on this survey to demonstrate what the true demand and need would be to meet these regulations. Without this data, CARB will move forward on all regulations as planned. Should you have any questions, please contact our office. We encourage you to participate. Here is the survey: <https://bit.ly/42VNYyP>.

#### **Cal/OSHA Adjusts to Federal Requirements: 2025 Penalty Updates**

Cal/OSHA has announced its updated penalty amounts for 2025, aligning with federal OSHA's annual adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index for

All Urban Consumers. These updates ensure that penalties keep pace with inflation and reinforce the importance of workplace safety compliance.

#### **Key Changes to Penalties**

Effective immediately, the maximum penalties for violations have increased by 3%. For 2025, California employers should note the following maximum penalty adjustments:

- **General and Regulatory Violations:** Increased to \$16,285 (previously \$15,873).
- **Minimum Penalties for Willful Violations:** Increased to \$11,632 (previously \$11,337).
- **Maximum Penalties for Willful or Repeat Violations:** Increased to \$162,851 (previously \$158,727).

One thing to note: while these adjustments apply to most violations, Cal/OSHA's maximum penalty for serious violations remains at \$25,000, which is already higher than the federal standards. Fines for willful or repeat violations can add up quickly. Staying proactive about safety and compliance is the best way to avoid these penalties and, most importantly, keep everyone safe. Staying updated on regulatory requirements is crucial for avoiding citations and ensuring worker safety.



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To adapt to these changes, employers should:

- Review and update workplace safety programs.
- Conduct regular safety inspections and address hazards promptly.
- Provide ongoing training to employees on safety protocols.

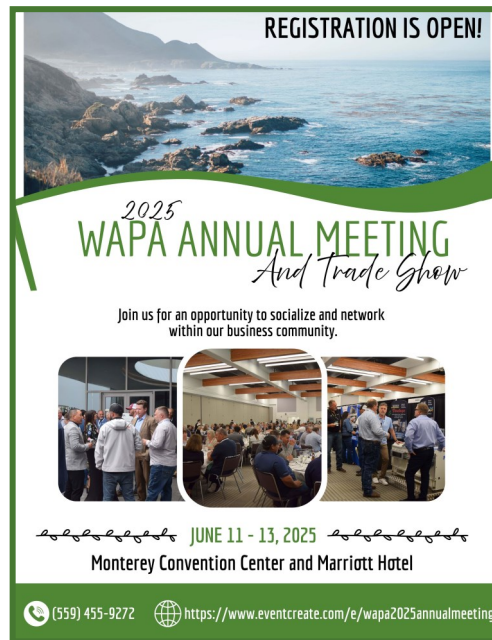
The good news is that **Western Tree Nut Association (WTNA)** is **here to help**. For our huller and processor members we offer resources, guidance, and support to ensure your safety programs meet Cal/OSHA standards. Whether it's reviewing your policies, conducting safety training, or answering compliance questions, WTNA can assist in keeping your workplace safe and compliant. For more information on Cal/OSHA's 2025 penalty adjustments, visit the [Cal/OSHA website](#) or contact us for workplace safety assistance.

### **REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! 2025 WAPA Annual Meeting and Trade Show**

The **2025 WAPA Annual Meeting & Trade Show**, in partnership with West Coast Nut, will be held at the beautiful **Monterey Marriott and Monterey Convention Center, June 11-13, 2025**.

Our Annual Meeting is an opportunity to socialize and network within our business community. Events include: Trade Show, Networking Opportunities, Annual Golf Tournament, Membership Dinner, Discussion on Hot Topic Industry Issues and much more! We are working promptly to get the agenda finalized.

Please follow the link below to view our event website and register. We look forward to seeing you there!  
<https://www.eventcreate.com/e/wapa2025annualmeeting>



### **WAPA Activities for February:**

- Attended AgOne Foundation Board Meeting
- Attended event for Congressman Vince Fong and Congressman Adam Gray
- Participated in meeting with Assemblywoman Esmeralda Soria
- Hosted and participated in meeting w/ SJVAPCD on PM2.5 SIP
- Participated in meeting w/ USDA and CDFA on Navel Orange-worm
- Spoke at AgSafe ACTIVATE 2025 Event
- Guest lecturer for two Fresno State Ag Business 150 classes
- Hosted and attended rodent control demonstration day
- Met w/ biomass to hydrogen company
- Attended Ag Leadership Breakfast Mtg. in Colusa

- Prepared comments on DPR action on paraquat
- Participated in AECA membership Development Committee mtg.
- Participated in My Ag Life interview on USDA firings
- Attended and testified at SJVAPCD Governing Board Hearing
- Attended Provision & Treehouse Lunch & Learn
- Conducted a Hazard Inspection for a pecan processor
- Conducted First Aid & CPR training for an almond huller
- Conducted Tractor Safety Training for a pistachio processor
- Conducted two Forklift Train-the-Trainer trainings for a pistachio processor
- Conducted Yard Truck Train-the-Trainer for a pistachio processor
- Presented to CA Ag Leadership Class 54
- Attended CARB Ag Equipment Survey Planning Meeting
- Attended NOW Pilot Program Call
- Conducted SPCC Reviews and updates for two member's facilities
- Attended CARB Soil NOx Expert Panel research presentation
- Attended Alcidia Gomes Retirement Celebration
- Submitted three throughput adjustments for Members with Air Curtain Burners
- Participated in the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint Board meeting
- Participated in the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint Technical workgroup meeting
- Produce Safety Alliance – Educators Training Call
- Meet with CDFA on Pre-Harvest Water Requirement Regional Workshops
- Conducted FA/CPR certification training
- Conducted Aerial Lift and Fall Protection safety training for a almond processor
- Assisted with organic certification for a walnut grower
- Developed three safety programs for an almond huller
- Developed three food safety programs for a walnut huller

- Conducted two FA/CPR Training for an almond processor
- Conducted one FA/CPR Training for an almond huller
- Conducted Tractor Safety Training for pistachio huller
- Conducted Employee Safety Orientation Training for pistachio huller
- Conducted an Aerial Lift/Fall Protection Safety Training for almond processor
- Conducted Forklift Train-the-Trainer Training for almond processor
- Developed four safety programs for an almond huller
- Participated in MyAgLife interview on Produce Safety Rule