



# Tulare County Ag News

## 2022 Summer Edition



Tom Tucker; Agricultural  
Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and  
Measures

## IMIDACLOPRID & NEONICS

I wouldn't have believed it had I not read the memorandum myself. The Director of the California Department of Pesticide Regulations (CDPR), Julie Henderson, recently released the following decision memo on June 16, 2022: DIRECTOR'S DECISION IN RESPONSE TO THE PESTICIDE REGISTRATION AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE'S SUBCOMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING IMIDACLOPRID IN GROUNDWATER. This memorandum can be found here: [Director's Decision in Response to the Pesticide Registration and Evaluation Committee's Subcommittee Findings and Recommendations Regarding Imidacloprid in Groundwater \(ca.gov\)](#), on DPR's website.

I am surprised because the subcommittee and the Director have stated, "Based on the evidence presented in this proceeding, as well as the reasons outlined above, the Director concurs with the subcommittee's unanimous finding that imidacloprid currently does not pollute and does not threaten to pollute the state's groundwaters. Not that I thought the pesticide did pollute the states groundwaters but that they came up with this response based upon scientific review and evidence presented in the proceedings. I am hoping this is not short lived because the Director had some additional comments. In part, "The Director concurs with the subcommittee recommendation for GWPP to consider incorporating, to the extent feasible, pounds of active ingredient of imidacloprid applied to soil used per section, combined with an assessment of depth to groundwater and vulnerable soil types, to determine priority monitoring wells. This leaves the door open for increased scrutiny of the material and possible future changes in the allowable limits detected. My summation of course.

I was hoping that the recently proposed neonic regulations would follow this same path, but it is becoming apparent that this is not going to be the case. From the information I have seen there are going to be extreme restriction placed upon the use of neonic pesticides in the future. These being developed to protect pollinator health, which is not a bad thing, but how much is a good thing and how much too much. It all comes down to moderate and considered precautions rather than wholesale prohibitions of the use of these materials.

I will end my message by saying, "thank you", to all those that worked to protect our livelihoods. To those that have been trying to protect our rights to use safe crop protectant materials as one of the methods used to bring good and wholesome food to America's table and those of the world as well. Farmer and grower organizations such as the California Farm Bureau Federation, California Citrus Mutual, CCGGA and so many others. Finally, the farmers, growers, ranchers, and all those working in the related fields that made comments and offered support to those leading this battle against those that would take our rights away. THANK YOU!

## KEEPING SPOTTED LANTERNFLY OUT OF CALIFORNIA

Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is a new invasive species that was first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014. In the following years it has been detected in New York, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Virginia. SLF is a large planthopper with a body length of ~1” and a width of ~0.5”. It originates in northern China and can be found in Vietnam, Japan, and South Korea. It has a large range of hosts that consists of 70+ plant species. At least 40 of these hosts occur in North America. Its preferred host is an invasive species commonly known as Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). SLF have piercing-sucking mouthparts and produce large quantities of honeydew that acts as a substrate for the growth of sooty molds. In addition to being an agricultural pest, SLF may also be a residential nuisance pest in urban areas due to their aggregation behavior.



Pinned Adult Spotted Lantern Fly (*Lycorma delicatula*)  
Credit: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Invasive species can cause high levels of economic damage when introduced into new environments that don't have the predators that normally suppress their populations in their native environments. Therefore, identification and early detection of Spotted Lanternfly is key to preventing their establishment in Tulare County. The spotted lanternfly could negatively impact high value commodity crops in our county if it were to become established. On the east coast it has already caused a reduction in grape production and loss of vineyards. To proactively respond to such a possibility, the CDFA has funded researchers at UC Berkeley and UC Riverside to test biological control agents of the SLF. The Proactive IPM Solutions grant program funds research to identify and test IPM strategies for anticipated invasive species to rapidly implement management options if SLF were to be discovered in California.

Since the Tree of Heaven is the preferred host of the adult SLF, these trees can be visually monitored for detection in our area. If you suspect you have found SLF, it is important to report your sighting to your local county Agricultural Commissioner's Office right away. Document the location of the find and either collect the insect in a sealable container to bring to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office or take a photograph of the suspected SLF. Nymphs cannot fly and adults do not readily fly away when approached so both can be easily collected. Early detection of this invasive pest is key, and together, we can all play a role in keeping the Spotted Lanternfly out of California.

# SUMMER STONE FRUIT SEASON



Summertime brings hot temperatures here in the valley as well as the sweetest part of summer which is stone fruit season. The Stone Fruit Export Season has been in full swing and very busy since early May. Every summer, our division performs many different types of inspections on Cherries, Apricots, Nectarines, Peaches, and Plums.

Our Pest Exclusion & Standardization Division has 30 plus qualified inspectors who are working hard to perform various duties such as: orchard surveys inspections, supervising commodity fumigations, cull cutting inspections, regulatory inspections for exports and issuing Phytosanitary Certificates. These inspections are being performed to ensure exports are free from pests of concern and meeting all the requirements set forth by the importing countries. The responsibility which takes a larger personnel resource involves the inspection of export commodity and the issuance of the Phytosanitary Certificates for exports to other countries such as: Mexico, Australia, British Columbia, Japan, and China (Just to name a few).

Our inspectors are also very busy performing inspections, fumigations, and issuing Phytosanitary Certificates on table grapes. Table grape maturity tests are being completed as well in accordance with California State Standards.

A change in the upcoming months with cooler weather will mean that sweet summertime will come to an end as well as the summer stone fruit season. Our Inspectors will quickly transition right into Citrus season, until then the division will finish off the rest of the summer season.

# PESTICIDE LEGACY DISPOSAL EVENT



An Agricultural Pesticide Collection and Disposal Event is being planned to take place multiple days in October 2022 in the County of Tulare, in partnership with Kings County Department of Agriculture. The event targets pesticides specifically for agricultural use – unwanted or legacy – from growers that farm in the participating counties. This is an amnesty event, and no regulatory action will be pursued for participation in this event.

This is a wonderful opportunity for growers as events like this seldom occur anywhere in California. The last thing anyone wants to see happen is these products be disposed of improperly. By offering this free service, we're helping keep these chemicals out of landfills, rivers, canals, storm drains and illegal roadside dumps. This has a positive impact on our environment as well as it, lessens the chance of groundwater contamination and helps people get rid of containers that are taking up space in their barns, garages, or businesses in an environmentally safe manner. Aside from cleaning out their own property, some families may be faced with cleaning out barns and storage buildings of older relatives who have passed away. Some of the chemicals they come across could be 40 or 50 years old. Pick-up services are unfortunately not available, and participants will need to safely transport their pesticides to the collection site.

When we held this event in October 2018, we collected over 100,000lbs of pesticides from over 150 growers. We hope that this year's event is just as successful. This event takes many months of planning, resources, and staff time to put on, so it is unknown when an event like this could take place again.

Your pre-enrollment is to ensure the event will be well planned and scheduled so that agricultural pesticides that are no longer used can be properly disposed. The Agricultural Commissioner Personnel needs to gather information to make sure adequate funds are secured prior to the event. The counties have contracted with Clean Harbors, a licensed hazardous waste company, to collect and properly incinerate these products outside of the state of California.

Those interested in participating should pre-register by completing a questionnaire online at [Legacy Registration Form](#) or by scanning the QR code. Hardcopies of the registration can be acquired by contacting the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office at 559-684-3352. Please submit this form by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

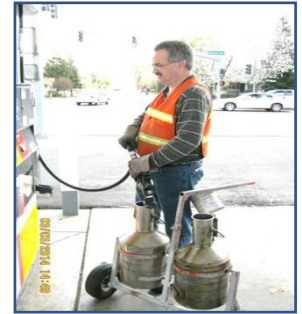
Note: this is not an empty container collection event; the containers must contain the product to be disposed of. If you are seeking to dispose of empty and properly cleaned containers, Tulare County has a free, recycle event September 19, 2022. Please contact our office for more information on that annual event.



# FUEL TANK CAPACITY & GAS PUMP ACCURACY

One of the more common complaints received by the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, Weights and Measures Division, is that the consumer has filled their vehicle's tank with more fuel than the tank could possibly hold. Citing the fuel gauge or rated fuel tank capacity as reasons why.

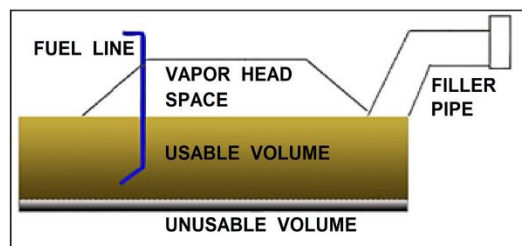
When the Inspector investigates this type of complaint, they will dispense a draft of fuel from the pump into a calibrated test measure, also referred to as a "standard". This standard's accuracy, as the accuracy of all standards, are traceable to the standards located at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Maryland.



In a few cases, it turns out that the fuel dispenser is out of calibration. The dispenser indicates that the customer is receiving an amount of fuel that is different than what the pump states is being delivered. Most of the time, the investigation determines that the dispenser is accurate and is calculating the total price correctly. So why is there an apparent discrepancy?

Addressing the fuel gauge first, it must be emphasized that the fuel gauge is not an accurate measure of how much fuel is in the tank. It is an approximation, and its purpose is to keep the vehicle from running out of fuel. It would be very unpleasant if a gas tank was truly empty when the gas gauge indicator hit the "E". Conversely, it may take a while on some vehicles for the indicator to move below the "F". The indicator position may also change depending on how level the vehicle is when the gauge is read.

Now let's address the vehicle's fuel tank capacity. According to an article in the National Conference on Weights and Measures, some manufacturers' tanks may vary as much as 3% in volume. This is due to what the industry views as acceptable variations in the design, manufacturing, and other factors associated with fuel tanks and systems. Typically, a tank's rated capacity is determined by averaging the actual volume of a representative sample of a particular type of tank. When the owner's manual for any one vehicle states the capacity of the fuel tank it is rounded to the nearest 10<sup>th</sup> of the whole unit. In other words, the fuel tank's rated capacity is an approximation and not an exact amount.



Most fuel tanks are rated by usable space in the tank. Unusable space includes that portion of the tank below the intake of the fuel pump, and the vapor headspace above the filler pipe. Some drivers ignore the automatic shutoff valve on the nozzle and continue to force fuel into the tank. The vapor headspace begins to fill up when this happens. When the area around the fuel dispenser is not level, sometimes fuel will shift into the headspace, allowing more fuel to be delivered into the tank. Both of these situations can lead to the consumer pumping more fuel into their vehicle than their rated fuel capacity.

As outlined above, there are several factors that can lead a consumer to believe that they have been overcharged for fuel when in fact, they have not. We have over 5,000 fuel pumps in Tulare County that are tested on an annual basis and approximately 97% are found to be accurate. However, if after reviewing this information, you believe you have indeed been overcharged, please call us at 559-684-3350. Include the name of the station, the location, the fuel grade, pump number, and date and time that you bought the fuel. Timeliness is always important, so report a suspected overcharge as

## PESTICIDE PERMIT, REGISTRATION, & PRIVATE APPLICATOR RENEWAL

Tulare County will begin renewal of Pesticide Permits/Private Applicator Certificates on **November 14, 2022**

**Private Applicator Certification (PAC)** is required for Restricted Material Permit applicants and those using federally restricted products. PAC's with last names beginning with **I - Q** expire on **12/31/2022**. Renewal of PAC's will require 6 hours of Continuing Education.

(2 hours of which must be Laws and Regulations)

If you would like to renew your Certificate with Continuing Education hours, bring copies of your class attendance with you when you come in for permit renewal.

### **PAC Exams:**

Private Applicator exams will be available on a walk-in basis. Tests will be available from 8:00A.M – 3:00P.M., Monday through Friday, at the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office Auditorium located at 4437 South Laspina St. Tulare, CA 93274

Phone (559) 684-3352

We will be limited on capacity, so if you need to send more than 5 employees, please call ahead and schedule.

Be aware County offices will be **closed** for the following dates:  
November 24-25, December 26, and January 16.

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## **Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office**

4437 S. Laspina St., Suite A  
Tulare, CA 93274

Main Office Phone: 559-684-3350  
Pesticides Office Phone: 559-684-3352

Main Office Fax: 559-713-3768  
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Website: <https://agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us/ag/>

**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Friday  
8:00am to 5:00pm

