



**California/Nevada Section
Bimonthly Update
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Twenty-Ninth Edition**

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* **George A. Conway, MD, to be Annual Meeting Speaker**

We are delighted to announce that our speaker this February 9 at Tulare will be Dr. George Conway, head of the Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing division of the National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health. Dr. Conway is based in Anchorage, Alaska, and has had recent extensive experience in leading a team of engineers developing improvements in equipment used on fishing vessels. His responsibilities within NIOSH are extensive and we look forward to hearing from him. Please watch your inboxes for the formal meeting announcement.

* **CAST meeting held in Sacramento, October 5-8**

The Annual Fall Meeting of the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) was held in California on October 5-8, and generously hosted by Section member Claude Brown, President of Ag Industrial Manufacturing, Lodi, CA. Claude's leadership in helping organize the program led to a series of lectures, presentations, and educational excursions that set a new standard. Highlights included a reception and presentations at UC Davis' Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science, a talk by UC Davis' Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences given at the offices of Capitol Public Radio in Sacramento, a short address by CA Secretary of Agriculture A. G. Kawamura at the California Department of Food and Agriculture building in Sacramento, lecture presentations and dinner at the California Farm Bureau Federation, a bus tour of the Sacramento San Joaquin River Delta with commentary by water rights attorney Tom Shepherd, and a dinner at Ironstone Vineyard in Murphys, CA, hosted by owners John and Gail Kautz. The approximately sixty CAST members and spouses were undoubtedly provided as full an exposure to California agriculture as possible in the limited time available, since a myriad of business and workgroup meetings also had to be attended to.

ASABE participates in CAST as a professional society, which includes a seat on the Board of Representatives. Claude Brown held this position until this last meeting at which he joined the Board of Trustees and had to step down as ASABE Representative. ASABE's interim representative, in part by virtue of proximity to the meeting, was Section member and ASABE E-07 Issues Management & Social Action Committee Vice Chair Victor Duraj. ASABE will soon be selecting a permanent representative to complete the current 3-year term. Currently, CAST membership includes 19 ASABE members who maintain a paid membership to CAST and participate at various levels.

CAST is "The Science Source for Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Issues." The primary work of CAST is the publication of task force reports, commentary papers, special publications, and issue papers written by scientists from many disciplines. The CAST Board is responsible for the policies and

procedures followed in developing, processing, and disseminating the documents produced. These publications and their distribution are fundamental activities that accomplish our mission to assemble, interpret, and communicate credible science-based information regionally, nationally, and internationally to legislators, regulators, policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public. The wide distribution of CAST publications to nonscientists enhances the education and understanding of the general public.

CAST is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization composed of scientific societies and many individual, student, company, nonprofit, and associate society members. CAST's Board is composed of representatives of the scientific societies, commercial companies, and nonprofit or trade organizations, and an executive committee. CAST was established in 1972 as a result of a 1970 meeting sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council.

CAST addresses issues of animal sciences, food sciences and agricultural technology, plant and soil sciences, and plant protection sciences with inputs from economists, social scientists, toxicologists or plant pathologists and entomologists, weed scientists, nematologists, and legal experts.

For more information, visit <http://www.cast-science.org/>.

*** UC launches new conservation tillage website**

Conservation tillage advances, resources and guidance have been aggregated in a new website launched today at <http://ucanr.org/ct>. The site will help farmers investigate cropping management systems that have been shown in research and in practice to increase profits, reduce dust, conserve water and sequester carbon on the farm.

Soil tillage in agriculture goes back thousands of years and was considered a necessary part of farming. However, the combination of intense tillage, drought, crop failure and wind led to the 'Dust Bowl' in the early 1930s, raising national awareness about the need for improved conservation methods.

With conservation tillage, plant residue from an earlier crop or a cover crop is left on the soil when a new crop is planted. A variety of techniques can be used, including no-till, a system in which the soil is not disturbed between crops; strip-till, in which a thin strip is tilled for a seed bed; and ridge-till, with cultivation at the top of the planting bed, but not in the furrows.

"In many parts of the United States and the world, conservation tillage is already widely implemented," said Jeff Mitchell, UC Davis Cooperative Extension cropping systems specialist and chair of the Conservation Tillage and Cropping Systems Workgroup. "Conservation tillage is now catching on in California."

Currently, about 2 percent of California farmland is managed under conservation tillage techniques. The rest continues to be managed with systems that have changed very little since irrigation and cropping intensification began in the region more than 65 years ago.

The new website is designed to arm farmers with information that will help them set aside the common conventional practices of annual plowing, disking, ripping and chiseling. Website visitors will find a research archive, radio podcast, video library, photo gallery, news feed, CT partners, CT vendors, and contact information. For more details, please visit <http://ucanr.org/ct>.

*** Ag Alert Article on Tractor Safety includes ASABE & ROPS Landmark**

An October 2010 edition of Ag Alert, the weekly newspaper published by the California Farm Bureau Federation, included an article on reduced tractor-related deaths and injuries over the last couple of decades. Section member Victor Duraj was quoted in the article several times, and provided information leading to mention of the current 25th Anniversary of the ASABE Historic Landmark for the Roll-Over Protective Structure (ROPS) and the plaque at UC Davis' Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering recognizing the department's role in the initial development of ROPS.

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- For previous editions of the Update, please visit www.asabecanv.org.
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- If you have ideas for Update items or would like to get involved in Section leadership, please let us know.