



**California/Nevada Section
Bimonthly Update
May 4, 2012
Thirty Eighth Edition**

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* **Agricultural Engineering Bill Challenged – Please help!**

California Farm Bureau Federation (CFBF) and California Agricultural Irrigation Association (CAIA) have been very supportive of Senate Bill 692. SB 692 by Senator Walters would allow agricultural engineers to perform services for which they have been trained and are well qualified. Under the current Professional Engineers Act, only Civil Engineers are allowed to practice engineering on "fixed works", a category that many irrigation systems and their components fall under. This strict requirement means added costs and restrictions on the availability of service in circumstances where an agricultural engineer, who possesses the particular expertise necessary, could do the work.

The opposition, union groups representing primarily civil engineers, continues to present questionable reasons why the bill should not be passed.

If you would like to be licensed as an engineer in any discipline other than a Civil, Mechanical, or Electrical Engineering and have the authority to practice engineering in California, tell your state legislators and the public about it.

For more information, please visit http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=sb_692&sess=CUR&house=B&author=walters

* **Hey, Graduating Students!**

Are you graduating within weeks? Have you checked out the ASABE Career Center at <http://www.asabe.org/membership/asabe-career-center.aspx>? Thinking of graduate school? Have you sent an email to a Section officer who is an affiliated with a school that might interest you?

* **Hey, Professionals!**

Do you have a little time to share with a high school or college student over the summer? Mentoring is key to passing on the knowledge and experience in our profession! Might there be an opportunity for a student to ride along with you to learn about what you do every day as an Agricultural and Biological Engineer? If so, please contact an ASABE CA/NV officer who can put you in contact with an interested student!

* **UCD's new professor, Dr. Stavros Vougioukous**

Bio & Ag Engineering at UC Davis recently welcomed its newest faculty member, Dr. Stavros Vougioukas, and those present at the Section Meeting had an opportunity to meet him. His research interests include: 1) Autonomous vehicles in agriculture: motion planning, control and sensing; 2)

In-field operations planning and logistics for agricultural machines; 3) In-field traceability for manually harvested produce; and 4) Modeling and control of processes in agriculture. Here is a link to "Sensing and Intelligent Automation for Orchard Management", a talk he gave in 2011 while still part of the faculty at Aristotle University in Greece. <http://agri-sensing.technion.ac.il/Lectures%20PDF/Orchards/Vougioukas.pdf> If the link does not work, please let us know as we have downloaded the public pdf file. His LinkedIn page includes the following.

Current: Assistant Professor at UC Davis

Past: Assistant Professor at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Post doctoral researcher at Università degli studi di Parma

Education:

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
State University of New York at Buffalo
Aristoteleion Panepistimion Thessalonikis

Welcome, Stavros!

*** CalOSHA Stakeholders Meeting on On- Farm Transport of Employees**

On March 26 in Modesto, CalOSHA held a public stakeholders meeting on the heavily debated issue of on-farm transport of employees. It was attended by about 50 persons representing a broad spectrum individuals, companies, and organizations. Section members Dr. Richard Cavaletto of Cal Poly and Victor Duraj of UC Davis were panel participants invited by CalOSHA, along with NIOSH's Dr. Tony McKenzie (involved with ASABE standards development) who was brought out from West Virginia, provided a short review of potential ROPS issues, and also participated in the panel and audience discussions. Panel members also included CalOSHA Chief Ellen Widess, her Deputy Chief for Enforcement, Senior Engineers, and Standards Board staff. The on-farm transport issue has garnered much attention in the recent year, although the concept applied primarily to irrigation pipe workers has been in use for many years. Irrigation pipe workers, who lay pipe in up to 1/4 mile linked sections, use tractor integrated or mounted platforms (or trailers) to avoid walking back to start a new section. The platforms (or trailers) may also be being used to transport employees from yard to field, from field to field, and from field back to yard, sometimes several miles long and not on level terrain. CalOSHA has provided altering views on the matter, and is now looking more deeply and technically into the matter. Meanwhile, a regulatory compliance mechanism known as an experimental variance is being offered to farmers to conditionally continue using the 3-pt and trailer systems upon approval of the application form. The variance provides an opportunity to further study the matter, to gather data, to better evaluate the pros and cons, and to inform any future regulatory language changes.

*** Annual International Meeting in Texas!**

Early bird registration has been open for exactly two months, since March 2. Now's the time to get the flight, hotel, and registration all lined up for the AIM in Dallas. From www.asabe.org....ASABE 2012 presents a forum to expand awareness of current industry trends, promote and acknowledge innovations in design and technology, and provide opportunities for professional development - all with a focus on the economic, political and societal impacts facing the industry. Join us for 4 days this summer in Dallas, Texas!

*** Waste-to-Energy**

UCD's Professor Ruihong Zhang is seeing her research go into the marketplace, with the opening of an anaerobic digester plant in conjunction with Clean World Partners who are commercializing the technology. The press release (link provided below) states "the facility will convert 7.5 tons of food waste and 1/2 ton of unrecyclable corrugated materials daily into natural gas, generating about 1,300

kWh per day.The anaerobic digestion facility was first developed and tested as a pilot plant at UC Davis. The university is currently working with Clean World Partners to bring a full-scale biodigester to campus. Though still in the planning stages, that biodigester is expected to help UC Davis West Village, the nation's largest planned zero-net-energy community achieve its goal of generating as much power as it consumes in the course of a year."

http://www.news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=10202

- Bimonthly Update contributors: Carolyn M. Jones, USDA NRCS; Victor Duraj, UCD BAE.
- For previous editions of the Update, please visit www.asabecanv.org.
- If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact Carolyn at 707-678-1655x117 or carolyn.jones@ca.usda.gov.
- If you have ideas for Update items or would like to get involved in the leadership group, please let us know.