



**California/Nevada Section  
Bimonthly Update  
March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Forty- Ninth Edition**

- \* **ASABE CA/NV Meeting Success**
- \* **Serendipity – A Global Assignment in Sri Lanka & India – Dr. Balaji Sethuramasamyraja, CSUF**
- \* **Pi Day! March 14<sup>th</sup>**

\* **ASABE CA/NV Meeting Success**

The CA/NV Section welcomed about 130 members to the Southern California Edison Energy Education Center in mid-February. Meeting highlights included posters from Cal Poly, CSU Fresno, and UC Davis; an update on ASABE going on by President Elect Terry Howell, Jr.; and a presentation on the opportunities and roles for engineers in soil health and no till farming by UC Davis extension specialist, Jeff Mitchell. Two new officers were elected – Tyler Niday of Orchard Machinery Corporation is our new Career Development Officer and Dr. Balaji Sethuramasamyraja of CSU Fresno is our new Awards Chair! Welcome to the leadership team! I hear an event north of Sacramento is in the planning stages...

\* **Serendipity – A Global Assignment in Sri Lanka & India – Dr. Balaji Sethuramasamyraja, CSUF**



**Tea Harvest and Weighing in Central Hills of Sri Lanka  
(Nuware Eliya)**

California and San Joaquin Valley (Central California) Agricultural Industry in 2008. This fortuitous happenstance lead to my first visit as an international academic delegate to Sri Lanka visiting their rice, coconut, and tea plantations besides animal farming and dairy activities in 2009.

Sri Lanka, a small tropical island in the Indian Ocean, is just a stone's throw away (<20 miles) from the southernmost tip of India across the Gulf of Mannar. For centuries, Sri Lanka was known as Serendib (origin of the word serendipity) meaning “unexpected discovery” as described by sailing Arabs in ‘The Three Princes of Serendip’. It was indeed serendipity when I had the opportunity to meet and accompany the Honorable Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Hemakumara Nanayakkara of Sri Lankan national parliament, who visited Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, California State University (CSU) Fresno’s facilities, the World Agricultural Exposition in Tulare, and

In 2010, I was invited by the Department of Agricultural Biology & Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka for a visiting professorship. I took the offer and explored the application of geospatial technologies like Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in identifying spatial trends and inferences related to correlation between spatial distribution of cadmium toxicity (in northern province of Sri Lanka – Anuradhapura) and chronic renal failure (public health issue due to agricultural practices). I also conducted workshops on active teaching-learning strategies for faculty in agriculture. In 2011, I was again invited by the Industrial Development Board of Ceylon, Sri Lanka as an international consultant to provide site-specific management strategies in agro-chemical application for weed control based on unique aspects of Sri Lankan production agriculture and potential match with local economical technology. In 2012, I was invited by Anna University of Technology, India to share my expertise for

local entrepreneurship initiatives in agricultural technology implementation, which I gladly pursued until 2013.

This global exchange opportunity cherished me with explorations of crop production systems in tropical Sri Lanka in contrast to Mediterranean climate in northern Central Valley in California. For more information, I can be contacted at [balajis@csufresno.edu](mailto:balajis@csufresno.edu).

**\* Pi Day! March 14<sup>th</sup>**

Did you know that the number pi has been calculated out to the millionth decimal place and there is no perceivable pattern? It's time to celebrate all things geometrical and agricultural with a celebration over the lunch table on March 14<sup>th</sup>. It being 3-14, it's Pi Day! Pi-zza pies, fruit pies, shepherd's pies, pi-stachios, quiche pies, pi-neapples, cream pies, pi-ckles, mincemeat pies, and all things circular, cylindrical, conical, and spherical are inspiration for participating in a celebration at your workplace. For goodness sake, you could even host a pi-cnic! Or go as far as to celebrate at 3-14 at 1:59pm! For ideas and interesting highlights, visit [www.piday.org](http://www.piday.org). Report back and we'll feature your Pi Day celebration in the next issue of our Update!

**\* A Note**

Your officer team apologizes for not delivering a January 1 Update.

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- Bimonthly Update contributors: Balaji Sethuramasamyraja, CSU Fresno.
- For previous editions of the Update, please visit [www.asabecanv.org](http://www.asabecanv.org).
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- If you have ideas for Update items or would like to get involved in the leadership team, please let us know.