

California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers LEGISLATIVE SNAPSHOT

NOVEMBER 17, 2003 • page 1 of 1



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 22 – 25, 2004

ANLA Management Clinic Louisville, Kentucky

All members are invited to attend The Louisville 500! Start your engines! Don't go into spring without training your team. 72 intensive business-changing workshops in nine critical business categories, including business management for retailers and growers, team building, human resources, and more. To download registration information online, visit www.managementclinic.org, or call (209) 789-2900.

CONGRESS FUNDS GWSS

Efforts to fight the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS) in California appear to be on track next year thanks to federal funding that will likely total about \$22 million, officials said Monday.

The Senate passed an agriculture appropriations bill last week that set aside \$22.5 million for the efforts, while the earlier House version of the bill included \$21.8 million, indicating the final figure will likely be close to that.

Last year, federal funding to fight GWSS was \$17.5 million. California agriculture officials and nursery groups welcomed the increase in federal funding, especially given the state's budget deficit. The budget signed by Governor Gray Davis earlier this year included \$6.4 million to fight the sharpshooter. Since the disease emerged, California has spent some \$135 million in state, federal and industry fighting to stop the sharpshooter.

In an Associated Press report on the funding, Tom O'Brien, representing CANGC and the Nursery Growers Association, said while short of the \$28 million requested, the increase to \$22 million from last year's \$17.5 million was certainly welcome.

A.G. KAWAMURA SELECTED FOR AG SECRETARY

Governor-elect Arnold Schwarzenegger has selected Orange County grower A.G. Kawamura to be the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Kawamura is past chairman of the Western Growers Association and oversees a 600-acre farm in Irvine.

The 47-year-old Kawamura had most recently served as chair of an advisory committee to the U.S. Department of Agriculture on farm exports. He is also a past president of the Orange County Farm Bureau and a past member of the California Strawberry Commission. In addition, Kawamura has recently served on the hand weeding committee at Cal OSHA with CANGC's Executive Vice President Bob Falconer.

The appointment of A.G. Kawamura is a positive move as far as the nursery industry is concerned in that he is very knowledgeable about nursery operations because of his farm's close proximity to several nurseries in Orange County. In addition, Kawamura is personally acquainted with several nursery owners including CANGC's Legislative and Regulatory Committee member Gary Hayakawa. Kawamura has also received an award from the CANGC Orange County Chapter for his efforts spearheading the establishment of Centennial Farm at the Orange County Fair Grounds.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FIRES

CANGC received numerous calls from various press agencies asking if the recent fires in Southern California have damaged nurseries. So far we have heard of several

temporary closures of wholesale and retail nurseries due to mandatory evacuations, closed roads and poor air quality. We heard of one nursery damaged by fire in Ventura County.

If your nursery has suffered fire damage, please contact CANGC with the details. We are in the process of determining if there is disaster assistance to nurseries that have suffered losses.

CANGC FILES COMMENTS ON FEDERAL FUNDING

Last week, Tom O'Brien filed comments on behalf of CANGC and Nursery Growers Association along with the Society of American Florists and the American Nursery and Landscape Association opposing a proposal by the federal Office of Management and Budget. This proposal would have severely threatened the funding, and therefore, the efforts in plant and animal pest emergencies.

The proposed rule would allow the federal government to duck its responsibility and shift more of the burden for pest emergencies to states and other cooperators. The concern lies in the question of what happens when states lack the funds to put up "their share." The likely outcome would be that a pest program would not take place or be delayed.

The comments by the above mentioned signatories point out the dire consequences as well as previous congressional directives indicating the importance and role of the federal government in pest emergencies.

WATER RESOURCE

The Water Education Foundation (WEF) is a non-profit, impartial, tax-exempt organization whose mission is to create a better understanding of water issues and help resolve water resource problems through educational programs. WEF develops and prints numerous publications on all aspects of water, participates in briefings at various conferences and sponsors tours of significant water facilities. To learn more of what WEF offers, visit their website at www.watereducation.org.

CDFA REPORTS INCREASE IN PRODUCTION

According to a recent report from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the value of nursery products in California in 2002 increased from \$2.8 to \$2.9 billion, an increase of 4.8 percent from the last year's report. The value of floral products was \$380 million. Nursery and floral production combined for a total of \$3.3 billion in 2002. A complete Economic Impact Report containing these figures and more will be released in 2004.

The 2003 Economic Impact Report, which included the 2001 figures, was recently mailed with the Buyer's Guide Express to all members. To receive additional copies, contact CANGC's Communications Director Karen LaBrue at (800) 748-6214.