

CALIFORNIA  
**food**  
PRODUCER

Coping  
with  
Change & Uncertainty

Food Companies Thriving  
with Eyes on the Next Normal  
CLFP Helps Companies Cope  
with Change and Uncertainty  
California Food Banks Respond  
with Resilience to COVID-19  
Recollecting: Looking Back  
at the 1918 Pandemic

**EDITION 2, 2020**

Produced by the California League  
of Food Producers (CLFP)

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The California League of Food Producers is an association representing the interests of both large and small food and beverage processors throughout California and works to help ensure a favorable and profitable business environment for its members and the food processing industry.

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EDITION 2, 2020

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# President & CEO Message

## CLFP Helps Members Cope with



*“We hope that 2020 is also remembered by CLFP members for all that the association did to help them cope with uncertainty and these difficult times.”*

~ Rob Neenan  
President/CEO

**This year will be remembered for many things; the COVID-19 pandemic, record heat, rampant wildfires, closed schools and restaurants, recession-level unemployment, international trade disputes and endless political fighting about the future of the state and the nation.**

California is a challenging place to conduct business in the best of times, and the events of 2020 put food processors and other businesses to the test. However, we hope that 2020 is also remembered by CLFP members for all that the association did to help them cope with uncertainty and these difficult times.

CLFP worked with the California Energy Commission and our members to help food processors across the state receive \$118 million in Food Production Incentive Program grants. The funds were used for 48 energy efficiency projects that will save money, and reduce greenhouse gas and criteria pollution emissions, reducing their environmental compliance costs. This was a win-win for everyone involved and staff will continue to help members access energy efficiency funding for energy projects.

CLFP worked with the California Office of Emergency Services to

distribute over \$2 million worth of free personal protection equipment to CLFP members. This included 830,000 free face masks, 90,000 face shields and 7,500 gallons of hand sanitizer. This effort helped to bridge critical supply gaps and to keep essential workers safe.

CLFP worked with West Hills Community College to launch their new Food Safety/QA Technician Apprenticeship Program. The classes are free and taught online and will provide a strong technical foundation that can be applied to the workplace. This program will provide a great opportunity for employees to upgrade their skills and receive a state apprenticeship certification. *For more information, see article on page 16.*

CLFP, in conjunction with top legal and public health experts conducted regular briefings for members about COVID-19 regulations, compliance issues, and best practices. The



# th Change and Uncertainty

requirements were a moving target and members needed timely information about how to comply with regulations and protect workers. Due to the success of this series, CLFP will continue to provide webinars on a wide range of topics for our members.

CLFP hosted a successful Food Processing Expo in Santa Clara, providing members with a venue to network with suppliers and industry colleagues. The event included a Food Safety Workshop and attracted some non-member companies from the Bay Area who were new to the Expo, expanding our business network.

CLFP member contributions funded \$27,000 worth of student scholarships and university food science club donations to support the hard-working families who are employed in this industry.

CLFP was actively engaged in a number of contentious and important legislative and regulatory issues, representing the interests of our members and the rest of the industry. Labor, energy, and packaging issues were at the forefront and CLFP worked with other stakeholders to inform legislators and push back on some very bad ideas that were proposed in the Capitol.



CLFP Member Leprino Foods Company employees wearing PPE provided via CLFP.

CLFP publications kept members informed of these issues, and staff is currently working on some ideas to enhance our website to expand our information offerings.

We hope that our efforts made a real difference to our members. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support, and we look for your input as to how we can continue to best serve your operations. If you are not a member, now is the time to consider becoming part of the CLFP team. You need an advocate and advisor on your side in Sacramento and to be kept abreast of issues that will affect your business and your pocketbook. We look forward to working with our members in 2021 and to better days ahead.

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For more information, visit [clfp.com](http://clfp.com), call 916-640-8150 or email [rob@clfp.com](mailto:rob@clfp.com).

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# Food Companies Thriving with Eyes on the Next Normal



*Last spring, unprecedented market disruptions upended just about everything in the food production system. As those disruptions work their way through the value chain, companies can now shift attention from “What now?” to “What’s next?” Diverse thought leaders, representing segments as different as pizza, flour and leafy greens, share their insights on what the next normal means.*

## **MEETING THE NEEDS OF HOME-BOUND WORKERS**

At Palermo’s Pizza, teams started preparing early for long-term shifts in their business based on what they were hearing in the marketplace. “Our retail partners predicted fall months ago,” says Giacomo Fallucca, chairman and CEO of the Wisconsin manufacturer of nationally distributed frozen pizza products.

Fallucca and his team viewed people permanently working from home as potential new customers, asking: “What are the products in our line that would appeal to them?” The answers involved meeting the needs of those customers and finding voids Palermo’s Pizza could fill.



By **MARK GALE**, CEO of C.O.nxt

“We believe a large percentage of restaurants will suffer permanent change, as sad as that is. This will create opportunity for take and bake,” Fallucca says.

His advice for companies serving retail with ready-made products? Reconsider product mix, line extensions, day parts and customer convenience for individuals working out of home offices.

### **GETTING FUNDAMENTALS RIGHT**

For emerging companies, COVID-19 driven adversity has caused some to fail while energizing others, says Katie Mleziva, a food and beverage strategist and host of the podcast, Real Food Brands. Mleziva works with startups and those wanting to scale to a different level.

“A lot of new companies have launched. People have focused on their side gig while their regular industry job is slowing,” Mleziva says. “I’ve seen more startups pushing the gas pedal.”

With work-from-home time on their hands, smart entrepreneurs are taking time to get fundamentals right. “Many coming to me realize that it’s the right time to finally get those foundational pieces of their brand strategy and story in order, along with their financials and sales plans,” Mleziva says.

Mleziva adds that emerging companies are also leaning heavily on adapting to the pressures that consumers are experiencing.

“Kids are also in the kitchen more... there could be some easy recipes or healthy snack ideas,” she says. “A breakfast brand I’ve worked with



has shifted its message from combatting a hectic morning routine to a focus on starting the day right.”

### **BAKING BOOM LEVELING OFF**

More time at home also led to a boom in baking, observed Dave Sheluga, director of consumer insights and marketing at Ardent Mills. The Denver-based milling company accounts for more than a third of the nation’s flour supply. Ardent Mills ships flour by the rail car and giant tote for manufacturing, but also provides smaller packages for retail.

He says the flour business settled to a new normal faster than some industries: “The increase at grocery compensated for the decrease in restaurants.”

*continued on page 8...*



## Next Normal ...continued from page 7

“There was definitely a surge,” Sheluga says, referring to the at-home baking boom. “However, a five-pound bag of flour goes a long way.”

Ardent Mills continues to focus on long-range issues as consumers grow ever more sophisticated on issues related to diet and health.

“Gut health, which helps strengthen our immune system and helps us fight off viruses, is going to become a bigger topic in the food industry,” Sheluga predicts.

### **EMBRACING THOSE WHO WANT MORE FROM FOOD**

Kerry, a global supplier of taste and nutrition solutions, also takes a long view while meeting customer needs during today’s pandemic challenges. Although some Kerry products go directly to consumers, the company also plays heavily in the ingredient space, working with customers and up and down the value chain.

According to Jim Egan, director of corporate affairs and communications, Kerry embraces the “and consumer”—defined as someone who expects more from food.

Customers now expect food to taste great and to be good for them, Egan says. “That same consumer has concerns over environment and sustainability causing us to ask: ‘How do we

source it responsibly? How do we manufacture it with less waste?’”

Kerry expects to accelerate this concept, Egan says. “The consumer today is saying, ‘I want a little more ownership of my choices.’ There is heightened interest in nutrition and, especially, in the pro-active (health) space. We are partnering with our (food industry) customers to nourish this future.”

### **FOCUS ON THE HUMAN ELEMENT**

As COVID-19 shone a spotlight on the fragility of the supply chain, the importance of people rose to the top at AeroFarms. The company grows leafy greens using aeroponic technology and LED lighting in urban settings ranging from Seattle to Saudi Arabia.

“While much is automated, with safety protocols inherently built into the system, essential workers still play key parts,” says Marc Oshima, AeroFarms co-founder and chief marketing officer. He adds that employees have risen to the occasion, “The responsibility of nourishing the community has been a mantle to wear.”

Oshima calls concerns for employees “the very human element” of the operation.

He adds that AeroFarms’ mission has expanded beyond growing food to sell at retail or into



foodservice. The company's experience in controlled environment agriculture — a track record with some 800 varieties — has raised larger possibilities, including “How do we generate the best plant possible for the betterment of humanity?” Oshima says.

To that end, the company has partnerships and programs in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and The Foundation for Food and Ag Research along with university research efforts at Cornell and Rutgers.

### **BE SMART WITH SEGMENTATION**

Industry researcher, analyst and speaker Maeve Webster of *Menu Matters* advises food manufacturers and marketers to consider targeting specific age group segments as they move beyond the pandemic.

“Certainly, there continues to be pent up demand for in-restaurant occasions, driven largely by younger consumers, who both miss socializing and are in a far lower risk group than other demographics,” Webster says. “This challenges menu development. Restaurants have to meet the challenge of creating both in-person meals and dishes that travel well for carryout.”

These same consumer desires create retail opportunity, she explains. “On the flip side, the shift to at-home also gives retailers and manufacturers opportunities to design products that leverage the best of restaurants in an off-the-shelf or prepared-in-store format.”

Gen Z will be at school or entering the workforce with a desire to socialize at home if restaurants

“*The shift to at-home gives retailers and manufacturers opportunities to design products that leverage the best of restaurants in an off-the-shelf or prepared-in-store format.*

 Maeve Webster

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are not available. Meanwhile, many millennials are solidly involved with family life, Webster says. “They’ll be raising their kids to be as trend-forward and experimental as they were. They won’t be looking for meatloaf and more classic options, but rather unique foods or classic options made new.”

### **ANSWERING: WHAT’S NEXT?**

Whether it’s innovating the sales process, focusing on fundamentals, addressing new consumer demands, or smartly segmenting audiences, successful food production companies will answer the question: “What’s next?” by moving forward into a new normal.

*C.O.next is a 100 percent employee-owned communications agency full of foodies and farm kids delivering fresh and unexpected solutions to help brands stand out in the food and agriculture industries. Author Mark Gale has spent his career providing insights and building marketing strategy for some of the top brands in food and ag.*



# Legislative Update

By TRUDI HUGHES  
CLFP Government Affairs Director

*The final five months of California's 2019–20 Legislative Session were heavily impacted by COVID-19 with the Legislature taking several unexpected breaks and the introduction of bills requiring businesses and employers to provide additional coverage, protections and benefits to their employees.*

The Legislative Session adjourned at midnight on August 31, 2020. CLFP was successful in stopping some critical opposed bills affecting the food processing industry from passing in the final days and hours, while others made it out of the Legislature and are on the Governor Gavin Newsom's desk. Veto request letters were sent on all CLFP-opposed bills that moved out of the Legislature. Newsom had until September 30 to sign or veto these bills. The Legislature will begin its 2021–22 Legislative Session in January.



## Plastic Recycling Mandate Bill Stopped

**Senate Bill 54** and **Assembly Bill 1080**, mirror bills that would have required single-use plastic packaging to be recyclable and compostable by 2030, as well as required onerous new recycling rates to be met, failed passage on the final few minutes of the Legislative Session on August 31.



CLFP and a large coalition strongly opposed these bills as they would have created an unworkable product regulation in California that would have increased the cost to manufacture and ship consumer products sold in California by providing CalRecycle with broad authority to develop and impose costly and unrealistic new mandates on manufacturers of all single-use packaging and certain single-use plastic consumer products. The bill's requirements also would have created an unrealistic compliance time frame to implement these requirements and failed to address California's lack of recycling and composting infrastructure.

This issue will resurface in the 2021–22 Legislative Session. CLFP will engage with stakeholders over the interim to hopefully develop a more workable proposal.

## Ratepayer Funded Wildfire Prevention Bill Stopped

**Assembly Bill 1659**, which was amended in the final days of the Legislative Session and strongly opposed by CLFP and other ratepayer groups, failed to move out of the Legislature. The bill would have created a new \$3 billion fund for "wildfire prevention" paid for by ratepayers.

Last year the Legislature enacted **AB 1054**, which authorized an almost \$1 billion in infrastructure improvements to be funded by a permanent, non-fixed volumetric charge to ratepayers. Ratepayers knew they would be paying for these rate increases for decades to come. However, California's ratepayers groups reluctantly acquiesced to this substantial cost because it was directly tied to improvements in utility infrastructure that were to be approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and necessary to address utility-caused wildfires. This bond will not be paid off, nor will charges be removed from ratepayers' bills until the year 2035.

As a last-minute "gut and amend" bill with only five days left in the Legislative Session, **AB 1659** would have created another \$3 billion bond fund paid by ratepayers, which would not be paid off until the year 2050. Although some of the funding was directed toward the service territories of the state's largest utilities, the proposed bond was not tied to utility infrastructure improvements to prevent wildfires, nor was it to be directed by the CPUC. Instead, the money would have been directed to various agencies and issues, including workforce development, the creation of career pathways to the air resources board for greenhouse gas reduction programs, cooling centers, water infrastructure upgrades and settlement of litigation with the Natural Resources Defense Council.

### **Protected Family Leave Passed to Governor and Signed into Law**

**Senate Bill 1383**, which significantly burdens employers by requiring them to provide eligible employees with 12 weeks of mandatory family leave, passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor. **SB 1383** allows this leave to be taken in increments of one to two hours and threatens employers with costly litigation if they make any mistake in implementing this mandate.

CLFP and the business coalition argued that this 12-week leave of absence on employers cannot be viewed in isolation. It must be considered with regard to all of the other California-specific requirements. Even though the leave required in **SB 1383** is unpaid, that does not mean the employer will not endure added costs. The leave is "protected," meaning an employer must return the employee to the same position the employee had before going out on leave. This means holding a position open for three months or more.

The bill is enforced through a private right of action that includes compensatory damages, injunctive relief, declaratory relief, punitive damages, and attorney fees. Any employee who believes an employer did not properly administer the leave, interfered with the leave, or denied the leave, can file litigation.

The Governor has made it clear that this issue is a priority of his Administration and he will likely sign the bill.

### **Workers Compensation for COVID-19 Passed to Governor and Signed into Law**

**Senate Bill 1159** passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor. CLFP opposed this bill as it establishes a largely unworkable rebuttable workers' compensation presumption for COVID-19 that will "trigger on" based on the number of infections at a specific place of employment over a rolling 14-day period. This presumption mechanism is overly complex and burdensome, will lead to litigation and increase costs across the entire workers' compensation system and will be on the books for four years.

### **Reallocation of CPUC Energy Efficiency Funds Passed to Governor and Signed into Law**

CLFP opposed **AB 841**, which passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor. The bill inappropriately strips funds from ratepayer funded energy efficiency programs at the CPUC to pay for school infrastructure projects.

Ratepayers have been paying into these energy efficiency programs for years while developing projects that would qualify for funding under this program, but would not have the opportunity to access a large portion of these funds going forward if **AB 841** passes.

Further, the expansion of this program called for by the bill would result in approximately **half a billion dollars in rate increases** during a time when ratepayers can least afford it. California's electricity rates are already, on average, more than double the national average and rising five times faster than other regions of the country. These high costs not only impact food processors and other businesses' ability to compete in regional, national and international markets, but greatly harms employees and their families.





# Regulatory Report

By JOHN LARREA  
CLFP Government Affairs Director

*CLFP continues to be involved in multiple regulatory issues impacting California's food processing industry, including being actively engaged with PG&E in an effort to keep CLFP member companies informed of potential power shutoffs related to their wildfire protection efforts during the wildfire season. Following are updates on some of the key regulatory issues CLFP is addressing on behalf of the industry.*

## **Food Production Investment Program**

In 2017, the state Legislature authorized \$60 million in funding to establish the Food Production Investment Program (FPIP), administered by the California Energy Commission (CEC). FPIP is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, FPIP is designed to provide funding for drop-in and emerging energy technologies at food production facilities in California with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

However, Governor Gavin Newsom did not provide additional program funding for the 2020-21 budget year. In light of this, CLFP is working with the CEC to amend the program and get the program refunded in the next budget cycle.

By any measure, CLFP members did well under the program. Eight CLFP members garnered nearly \$45 million in FPIP grants for 15 projects. Overall, 25 projects were submitted by CLFP member companies. Eight of the awards were Tier 1 awards for off the shelf technologies. Seven were Tier 2 awards, featuring new and emerging technologies.

## **California Air Resources Board (CARB) Governor's Executive Orders**

Governor Newsom's recent Executive Orders (EO) on mobile sources and Climate Change will have the effect of altering agency goals and affecting ongoing proceedings. While the Governor's EOs lack specifics, the state agencies will be tasked with implementing these orders, either by incorporating them into existing proceedings or initiating new rulemakings.

Briefly, **EO N-82-20** tasks the state agencies with identifying near- and long-term actions to accelerate natural removal of carbon and build climate resilience.



***CLFP members did well under the Food Production Investment Program. Eight members garnered nearly \$45 million in FPIP grants for 15 projects. Overall, 25 projects were submitted by CLFP members' companies.***



The EO orders agencies to establish the CA Biodiversity Collaborative. It also orders CARB to refocus the next Scoping Plan to add emphasis on the natural and working lands sector to help achieve the State's Carbon neutrality goal.

**EO N-79-20** is solely focused on transitioning away from fossil fuels (whether mobile sources or stationary operations) in pursuit of the state's goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 (off-road vehicles to reach 100% zero emissions by 2035). All relevant agencies have been ordered to develop a market strategy for zero-emissions vehicles by 2021. Of course, CARB is supposed to implement these programs with an eye toward technological feasibility and cost-effectiveness, and they will be looking at zero emission vehicles including heavy-duty trucks.

Meanwhile, CLFP continues to be actively engaged in the following CARB proceedings:

- **Transport Refrigeration Unit (TRU) Rulemaking:** Regulation is being designed to reduce emissions at various facilities. The goal is to force electrification of all TRU traffic in state.
- **Renewable Natural Gas:** The state regulatory agencies are moving on various fronts to promote renewable natural gas (RNG) as a cleaner alternative to natural gas in California.
- **AB 2588 Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Emission Inventory Criteria and Guidelines Regulation:** CARB is in the process of updating the Guidelines to provide direction and criteria to facilities on how to compile and submit air toxics emission data. CARB staff has proposed a two-phase approach to implementing the new reporting requirements. The Guidelines need to

be updated to accommodate the addition of nearly a thousand new chemical substances being added to the program. CLFP is involved with a coalition on this matter as the new chemical substances reporting requirements overwhelmingly impact small commercial businesses located in urban areas.

- **Community Air Monitoring (AB 617):** CARB recently approved SW Stockton as one of two new communities eligible for AB 617 focus. While no CLFP members are located within the community boundaries identified by CARB, a few are close enough to warrant additional scrutiny in case the boundaries are expanded. CLFP will be participating in the Steering Committee meetings. Additional reporting requirements will fall on businesses and industrial facilities which are located within the final boundary and will be subject to stricter Best Available Retrofit Control Technology (BARCT) rules. CLFP is actively involved in the development of the reporting requirements for AB 617.

### **San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District New Boiler and Small Flare Rules**

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District have held a series of public workshops to present, discuss, and receive feedback on proposed amendments to District Rules 4306, 4320 (Boilers), and Rule 4311 (Flares). The proposed amendments to the rules will tighten NOx emissions. Under PM2.5 plan, the air district is obligated to do an evaluation of the rules to determine if any more emission reductions can be obtained. Under the proposed rules, units >75 MMBtu/hr would be required to reduce NOx emission to 5 ppm by December 31, 2023. However, units greater than 75 MMBtu/hr, currently permitted at 7 ppm or less, will have until December 31, 2029 to meet the proposed 5 ppm standard.

Currently, the District has authorized a Socioeconomic Impact Analysis to determine the impacts of the proposed rule changes on the Valley economy.

*continued on page 15...*





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The District indicated the proposed goals will be dependent upon technology being capable of reaching that standard at a reasonable cost. Therefore, the availability of technology capable of these reductions will be important.

### **Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)**

#### **New Time of Use (TOU) Rates**

PG&E plans to roll out new TOU rates beginning March of 2021.

The new rates were previously scheduled to take effect in November, but the deadline was pushed to March of next year to accommodate affected ratepayers. PG&E is currently engaged in an outreach program to advise its ratepayers of the changes and approaching deadlines. CLFP has been working with PG&E to keep CLFP members informed of the upcoming billing changes and the current early adoption program.



Other changes PG&E anticipates rolling out early next year include Flat Rate and Peak Day Pricing (PDP) programs. Flat Rates for Ag will move to TOU by March of next year. It is uncertain what impact this will have on our members yet. Also, PDP is the subject of a Commission decision due in November. The decision is looking at the default status of PDP. The program is currently Opt-In but the Commission favors an Opt-Out version. PG&E wants to maintain the current Opt-In version.

#### **Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS)**

Over the last few years, California has experienced increased wildfires in Northern and Southern California accounting for significant loss of life and billions of dollars in damage to property and infrastructure.

According to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), electric utility infrastructure has been responsible for less than ten percent of reported wildfires. However, fires attributed to power lines comprise roughly half of the fires in California.

In 2012, the CPUC ruled that California Public Utilities Code Sections 451 and 399.2(a) give electric utilities authority to shut off electric power to protect public safety. This allows the energy companies (SDG&E, PG&E, SCE, etc.) to shut off power for the prevention of fires where strong winds, heat events, and related conditions are present.

CLFP has been actively engaged with PG&E to keep CLFP member companies informed of potential power shutoffs. CLFP has made it clear to PG&E that food processors need sufficient advanced warning of scheduled shutdowns due to ongoing processing.



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# West Hills Community College Partners with CLFP Apprenticeship Program

*Editor's Note: CLFP worked with West Hills Community College to launch a new Food Safety/Quality Assurance Technician Apprenticeship Program. Several employees from CLFP-member companies have enrolled in the program. We asked Apprenticeship Coordinator Nickolas Trujillo to answer some questions about the program.*

## **Tell me about West Hills College Coalinga.**

For more than 80 years, West Hills Community College District has had a rich history of serving the educational needs of the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. It began as the Coalinga Extension Center for Fresno State College in 1932. The Center ended formal ties with Fresno State in the 1940s operating under the Coalinga Union High School District until 1956 when a new 40-acre campus opened in Coalinga. It formally separated from the high school district in 1961 and in 1969 become known as West Hills College. West Hills Community College District was created as the college expanded into surrounding communities, including the North District Center in Fire-



baugh in 1971 and a sister college in Lemoore. In order to differentiate the two colleges, West Hills College became: West Hills College Coalinga (WHCC).

## **Explain the Food Science and Safety Program.**

The program was created in response to the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which became a law in 2011. WHCC had the foresight to see the need for technicians that understood sanitation, quality assurance and best practices in food safety. Working with area processing food partners, the focus for development became high level education concentrating on the incumbent worker wanting to upskill to a food safety career. It also became evident that accessibility was an issue, so the program was developed for online access.

*This apprenticeship structure is unique to West Hills. The CLFP Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship is able to accept new employers and their referred apprentices at any time.*



The end result was a Certificate of Achievement (COA) that can be completed fully online, and an Associate of Science Degree that includes additional science and general education courses. Major courses cover: fundamental concepts of food safety, auditing and sanitation and laws and regulations; detailed knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP); and their application to field production and processing plant operations. While the COA can be completed online, two courses that provide chemistry and microbiology lab skills require onsite face-to-face coursework and is recommended for those students without prior college in these areas. The COA has been approved by the state of California, however the Associate Degree is in the final approval process.

## **Is the Food Safety Technician Apprenticeship Program part of the Food Science Program? Please explain.**

The California League of Food Producers (CLFP) Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship currently leverages six of the eight available courses in the Food Science and Safety curriculum offered at WHCC. The reason the apprenticeship program leverages these specific courses is to provide accessibility as online courses to any apprentice throughout California. These courses also align with WHCC Food Science and Safety Program, ensuring apprentices receive college credit and a Certificate of Achievement. In addition they can leverage these courses as transferable to California state universities, should the

# Program Launched

apprentice wish to continue on a formal educational pathway in Food Science and Safety. Apprentices who complete the entire apprenticeship program (on-the-job-training and related supplemental instruction) will also receive a journeyman level credential from the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards certifying them as a journeyman level worker in Food Science and Safety.

## How long has the Apprenticeship Program been in place?

The CLFP Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship was approved by the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards in March of 2020. While the program was recently approved, the development of the program took over a year with discussion and input from local Food Science and Safety employers to ensure the on-the-job-training components of the apprenticeship were in line with industry needs. WHCC also included faculty in the curriculum development of the Food Science and Safety courses, course offerings, course modalities, viability and sustainability of the Food

Science and Safety Program. With the recent approval, WHCC is able to begin offering new cohorted apprentices courses under a state registered apprenticeship. On November 6, 2020, we launched our first cohort of Food Science and Safety Apprentices at WHCC.

## Is this Apprenticeship Program unique to West Hills? Do other colleges in the area have such a program?

Yes, this particular apprenticeship structure is unique to West Hills. There is another college in the Central Valley that offers a Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship. However, due to funding issues, they were not able to develop the necessary Food Science and Safety curriculum for their program. The CLFP Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship was developed to serve the entire State of California and WHCC faculty developed these Food Science and Safety courses to run online even before COVID-19. The CLFP apprenticeship program is approved by the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards, has full time WHCC staff dedicated to

*continued on page 18..*





## Apprenticeship Program ...continued from page 17

employer and apprentice success and leverages grant funding to ensure the program can be offered and is sustainable. The CLFP Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship is able to accept new employers and their referred apprentices at any time due to these program successes.

### How is the Apprenticeship Program affiliated with the California League of Food Producers?

The Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship was recently resubmitted to be renamed the California League of Food Producer Food Science and Safety Apprenticeship Program. CLFP President/CEO Rob Neenan has been a stalwart champion of the apprenticeship program and our biggest supporter. WHCC believed renaming the apprenticeship program would credit Mr. Neenan with the efforts he was putting into reaching out to his members and employers in the Food Science and Safety industry. WHCC also believes our partnership with the CLFP will bring the program clout and better legitimize the apprenticeship program to employers throughout California.

### Who is eligible to participate in the program?

To be eligible to participate in the program, candidates need to be at least 18 years of age and be referred by their employer. This program currently runs based on employers referring their employees to participate in the apprenticeship program. Employers who are interested in upscaling their Food Science Technicians (or the equivalent title at their specific company) should contact WHCC. Employees who are interested in getting more course work under their belt, or would like to participate in the apprenticeship program, should speak to their supervisor and human resources department and have their human resources department reach out to WHCC for more information.

### How long does the program take and what is the cost?

The California League of Food Producers Food Safety Apprenticeship combines 4,000 on-the-job-training hours and 306 hours of related supplemental instruction. This breaks down to two years of full time on-the-job-training and six courses to be taken at West Hills. Because the Food Science curriculum is new, West Hills College Coalanga typically offers three courses in the academic year for the apprenticeship program. The courses could be completed faster, however we want to ensure apprentices can be successful since they are working full time. WHCC will be able to offer more consistent cohorted courses for apprentices, especially once demand for the program begins to increase.

WHCC currently has partnerships with the Division of Apprenticeship Standards and the California Community Colleges Chancellors Office through a California Apprenticeship Initiative grant focused on Agriculture-related apprenticeship programs. WHCC also has a USDA NIFA AFRI grant focused on Agriculture apprenticeships. These grants allow us to offer courses at no tuition cost to apprentices and employers. A few of the Food Science courses may have textbook expenses, but apprentices are encouraged to apply for financial aid to receive additional support.

### What types of courses are part of the program?

There are six courses outlined in this apprenticeship program. The courses were selected by getting industry partners involved in the program's creation, and faculty highlighting what courses would lend themselves well to theoretical training in Food Science. These courses include: Principles of Food Science, Agriculture Laws and Regulations, Audits and Preventative Controls and Food Safety, Principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control, Food Safety Management Applications to Production and Facility Food Safety Management. The courses are all offered online, and the apprenticeship program is approved to be offered throughout California.

### What types of food industry jobs or promotions does the program facilitate?

The CLFP Food Science and Safety Program was written with Food Science Technician jobs in mind. This classification comes from The Occupational Information Network (O\*NET), is written into the apprenticeship standards and was approved by the CA Division of Apprenticeship Standards. The Food Science Technician O\*NET classification includes: Central Lab Technicians, Lab Technicians, Lab Assistants, Operation Technicians, Quality Analysts, Quality Assurance Technicians, and Quality Control Technicians. If an employer doesn't use these titles for their Food Science and Safety workers, they can contact WHCC and still be a part of the apprenticeship program if they agree to the on-the-job-training components and related supplemental instruction courses.

### How can CLFP members and their employees get involved in the program?

For additional information, contact the Apprenticeship Coordinator, Nickolas Trujillo, at 559-934-2707, email [apprenticeship@whccd.edu](mailto:apprenticeship@whccd.edu) or visit [westhillscollge.com/employers/westside-works](http://westhillscollge.com/employers/westside-works).

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# California Food Banks Hit Hard by COVID-19 Responding *with Resilience*

**Like many businesses and non-profit organizations, food banks have been hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. But many have also demonstrated resilience by changing the way they operate in order to continue serving their communities.**

A relatively new organization formed in 1998, the California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) represents over 40 food banks joining with 6,000 charities to provide food, in a regular year, to two million Californians in need.



According to CAFB Director of Communications Lauren Lathan Reid, the organization works to support food banks in a variety of ways, including providing resources and support to help feed Californians in need, especially now.

“The ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused millions more people to become food insecure,” Lathan Reid said.

She added that food insecurity generally means that “you don’t know where your next meal is coming from” and that current food insecurity rates could last long after the pandemic.

“We are used to short-term disasters like floods, fires, power shutoffs,” Lathan Reid said. “With COVID-19, many people lost their jobs and schools were shuttered. We understand it is going to be a long recovery.”

The pandemic doubled and sometimes tripled the amount of need from food banks which, early on in the crisis, simultaneously saw a large drop in volunteers who often were older adults and corporate groups. These volunteers were sheltering in place, unable to provide assistance.

Lathan Reid said they had to completely change operations at many of the distribution points such as local pantries and senior centers which had shut down or moved to other locations.

In many parts of California, as well as other states, the National Guard stepped in to help distribute food alongside the Red Cross and other organizations. Lathan Reid said that food bank staff also showed their dedication by stepping up their game and working hard. Lathan Reid called them “super staff and one of the beautiful things to come out of the disaster.”

Staff from local county agencies also provided assistance as some were not able to work at their normal jobs due to the pandemic.

One of the key tasks that volunteers performed was repacking smaller quantities of foods in boxes for use by families. New distribution points also were added.





By LISA JAGER,  
CLFP, Marketing &  
Communications Director



*“The ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused millions more people to become food insecure.”*

*Lauren Lathan Reid*

At the start of the pandemic, in response to the skyrocketing demand for food, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) created the Emergency Food Box program and tapped CAFB to help them execute it. The emergency food boxes aim to feed 3–4 people for 3–4 days, and come fully packaged with shelf stable starches, proteins, fruits and vegetables. On March 21, CDSS delivered the first of the boxes headed for 51 locations throughout the state (food banks plus CDSS partner organizations). Right now, at the direction of CDSS, CAFB delivers to more than 60 locations including 10+ tribes.

## CAFP Farm to Family

*CLFP members Del Monte Foods, Inc. and Pacific Coast Producers currently participate in the Farm to Family Program.*

California grows more fruits and vegetables than any other state. Yet for many low-income households, fresh produce is simply out of reach. The California Association of Food Bank Farm to Family program bridges this gap.

Farmers, ranchers, packers and shippers throughout California have found Farm to Family to be a meaningful market alternative that helps recoup costs for product that is unmarketable or may otherwise go unused, and supports those in their community who may need a little help. Food allocated to the Farm to Family program helps provide a solution for individuals, families and children to alleviate hunger, and ultimately strengthens communities.

More than 100 farmers participate in this program. New donors are always welcome.

*For more information visit [cafoodbanks.org](http://cafoodbanks.org).*





## ★RECOLLECTING★

# Looking Back at the 1918 Pandemic

## Food

Purchasing and consumption of food during the Spanish Flu pandemic, which raged throughout the world for several years from approximately 1918–20, was largely affected by policies implemented during World War I.

During the War, the U.S. Food Administration was formed to manage the supply, conservation distribution and transportation of food. Americans were encouraged to voluntarily limit their consumption of meat, wheats, fats and sugar, and increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. The government promoted “Meatless Tuesdays” and “Wheatless Wednesdays.” Local food boards were formed to help people adjust to the suggested food changes, and classes were held demonstrating canning techniques and offering recipe suggestions using alternative ingredients.

The government also promoted home growing of vegetables and fruits through the cultivation of “war gardens,” changing the name to “victory gardens” after the War was won.

In addition to maintaining an adequate food supply in the U.S., these measures also allowed the country to export much needed food to allied countries in Europe, where large areas of farmland had been decimated by the War. These shipments were continued after the War ended to help feed the multitudes of starving people in Europe.

Perhaps due to these rationing and home growing efforts that continued after the War ended and continued during the pandemic, widespread food shortages reportedly did not occur.

Obtaining food from a grocery store during the 1918–20 pandemic presented some obstacles in some parts of the country. Ordering groceries to be picked up or delivered was common until 1916 when the very first self-service stores opened. However, during the Spanish Flu pandemic Americans were encouraged to avoid crowds and begin ordering their groceries again. Sadly the Red Cross reported that many people died not from symptoms of the disease, but from starvation when people grew too afraid to deliver food and grocery stores closed.



## Restaurants

In addition to schools being closed during the Spanish Flu pandemic, venues attracting large crowds were also closed, including theaters, dancehalls, poolhalls, moving-picture shows and saloons. However, unlike the current COVID-19 era, most restaurants did not close. In 1918, large restaurant density was highest in big cities, where many residents lived in board housing or studio dwellings (home ownership was not



## LATEST NEWS IN PICTURES—LOCAL AND WORLD EVENTS



common) and relied on restaurants for their meals. Take-out was not widely available at the time, resulting in mostly in-restaurant dining. Government health officials did have some concerns about restaurant patronage numbers and encouraged residents to frequent restaurants if it was their only way of obtaining a meal.

## Masks

Just like today, the government encouraged mask wearing and masks were met with some resistance with some people saying it infringed upon their civil liberties. Mask wearing ordinances were most common in Western states, where many people did comply. At least one Red Cross chapter in the region called people who wouldn't wear masks dangerous slackers. Both surgical masks (the N95 mask had not yet been created) and masks for the masses were often made out of gauze. It was debatable whether or not the gauze material was effective in helping to prevent the spread of the virus and the masks were definitely compromised when people cut holes in them so they could smoke. Newspapers published instructions on making home-made masks. Fashionable masks in some cities such as Seattle, were made of fine gauze and chiffon.

Punishment for not wearing a mask ranged from fines, prison sentences and your name being printed in the newspaper. And in one case a man not wearing a mask was shot by a public health official.



### ARTICLE & PHOTO SOURCES:

**Food Rationing in Wartime America**, The History Channel  
**How Did We Can: The Evolution of Home Canning Practices**, United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Library  
**Pandemic Parallels: The History of the Grocery Cart**, Medium  
**1918 Flu Pandemic: What Were Americans Eating?**, One Table, One World  
**Why Did So Many Restaurants Stay Open During the 1918 Pandemic?**, Literary Hub via Harvard University Press  
**When Mask-Wearing Rules in the 1918 Pandemic Faced Resistance**, The History Channel

*Lower left: Alberta Board of Health, Public domain.*

*Top right: SF Examiner Oct 24, 1918*

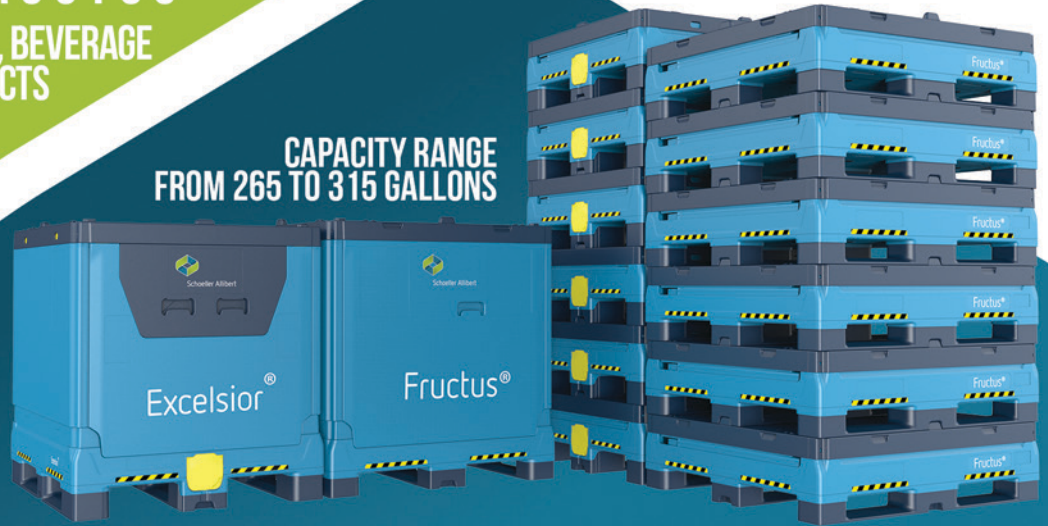
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# CLFP Board Votes to Not Hold Expo 2021

CLFP held a virtual Fall Board of Directors Meeting on October 22. The board made the difficult call to not hold an in-person Food Processing Expo in 2021. The decision was made due to regulations and restrictions regarding conducting large meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. CLFP is continuing with plans to hold an in-person Food Processing Expo in 2022.

This was the first board meeting presided over by CLFP 2020–21 Chair Michael Mariani of Mariani Packing Company, Inc. The board received updates on legislative and regulatory issues from CLFP Government Affairs Directors Trudi Hughes and John Larrea. Detailed reports on these important areas being addressed by CLFP are included in this issue of the *California Food Producer*.

CLFP President/CEO Rob Neenan presented information about CLFP's Webinar Series focusing on industry issues. Five webinars were held in 2020 with more planned for 2021 (see article below).

The board received a report on the CLFP 2020–21 Scholarship Program. A total of 33 applications were received for the program. All applicants were food processor member companies. Families of member companies served an average of 20 years in the Industry. There were no submissions from Supplier Host Council member companies. The board approved: awarding 16 scholarships to food processor member applicants totaling \$14,000; donations to eight university food science and engineering clubs totaling \$12,000; and two junior college scholarships totaling \$1,000.

The next CLFP Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2021.



**Food Processing Expo 2022 will be held February 15–16 in the newly renovated SAFE Credit Union Sacramento Convention Center. We hope to see you there!**

## CLFP Launches Industry Issues Webinar Series

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Join Jeremiah Szabo, Safe Food Alliance's Vice President of Professional Services, with over 16 years of food industry experience, for this one hour educational webinar!

**Wednesday, September 30, 2020 at 10:30 AM PDT**

As the world of food safety is ever-changing, it remains vital to stay current on the FDA's approaches and regulations.

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We will discuss recent enforcement results and key takeaways from these organizations.

As we approach a "New Era" of food safety in a post-FSMA world, it will be even more important to stay informed so you can prepare for what the future holds.

For further information, please [click here](#).  
Questions? Contact Trudi Hughes at [trudi@clfp.com](mailto:trudi@clfp.com) or 916-640-8150.

**JOIN CLFP & INDUSTRY PARTNERS IN A SERIES OF FOOD PRODUCTION ISSUES WEBINARS**

**UPCOMING WEBINARS...**

- ▶▶▶ Wed., October 14 - Presentation by Cal Chamber JobsPAC on 2020 Election Update
- ▶▶▶ Thu., October 29 - Partnering with Jacobson James & Associates on CV-Salts
- ▶▶▶ November TBD - Partnering with Fisher Phillips, LLP, on Labor Law Updates
- ▶▶▶ December TBD - Partnering with Arnold Porter on Labeling Law Updates

In September, CLFP began holding a series of Industry Issues Webinars in partnership with CLFP affiliate members and industry organizations. The webinars have focused on topics that are top of mind in the food processing industry. To date, interest in the webinars has been high and topics have included:

- **Food Safety Regulatory Update**  
Partner: Safe Food Alliance
- **2020 Election Update**  
Partner: Cal Chamber JobsPAC
- **CV-SALTS New Wastewater Discharge Regulations**  
Partner: Jacobson James & Associates
- **Labor Law Updates**  
Partner: Fisher Phillips, LLP
- **Food Labeling Updates**  
Partner: Arnold & Porter

Additional webinars are being planned for 2021. They will be announced via CLFP publications, marketing emails and will be posted on [clfp.com](http://clfp.com).



# Managing Risks

**A critical piece of any controlled process—whether manufacturing a product, processing food or providing a service—is verification. We verify to ensure that the complicated programs we have created work successfully because, as food producers, it is our job to manage risks as much as possible.**

Even with the advancements that the food system has made, the CDC still estimates that “48 million people get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from foodborne diseases each year in the United States.” Stats such as these show that the risks are still significant when it comes to creating safe food. Verification is part of the solution.

A company cannot implement a food safety program without proper verification; it’s how we make sure that implementation is consistent. It also happens to be the 11th step in the HACCP process and integrated throughout any GFSI food safety certification program. In times of change, it becomes imperative that we take a measured approach to modifying our food safety programs, verifying implementation as we make adjustments.

## **ROUTINE VERIFICATION**

We always say that, on a day-to-day basis, verification is that ‘second set of eyes’ on any process. The most common example of this routine activity is reviewing records by a qualified individual, ensuring you fully and effectively implement the program. But verification can also take other forms such as laboratory testing or having a second person perform the same task to confirm process results.

As many companies have implemented new sanitation and personnel practices due to COVID-19, we have seen daily verification of these activities help confirm the changes work.

### **Common Gaps in Routine Verification:**

- Records not in the HACCP plan are overlooked for consistent verification and signature (e.g., sanitation, maintenance, and calibration records).
- Records are reviewed, but there are gaps not identified during the review.
- Only one qualified individual is assigned to a verification activity, and when they are out, it gets forgotten.

## **CONFIRMING OUR ASSESSMENTS (COA) THROUGH TESTING**

When it comes to testing, laboratory analysis’ power is that it generates essential food safety data. Environmental monitoring for pathogens, spoilage organisms, or allergens gives critical information on the effectiveness of your sanitation programs, both on a routine basis and as a means of validating your procedures. Testing raw ingredients as a part of supplier



# Through Program Verification

By JON KIMBLE and TOM JONES. Safe Food Alliance

*A company cannot implement a food safety program without proper verification; it's how we make sure that implementation is consistent.*



verification and analyzing the finished goods you produce are also vital steps. Both are essential tools for confirming that your hazard analysis is valid, and the processes you have identified to control these hazards are working as intended.

Analyzing and trending these test results are a key part of the verification process. They allow you to investigate gradual increases in microbial numbers such as a buildup in sanitizer resistance or reduced equipment function due to wear and tear. You can easily spot patterns such as seasonal spikes in ingredient/product contamination that require corrective action or a change in your process. Each new piece of information allows you to make data-driven decisions that can be tracked down to the decimal. Although laboratory testing is no substitute for a robust food safety plan, it provides the raw data to verify that your processes are in control and validate that your system works.

## USE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE

Record review *is* what most people think about when it comes to verification. But it is much more than that. Each company has other critical indicators of process performance that cannot be overlooked. Your company's verification and validation of its processes should include



consideration of every piece of information you have related to the process:

- Product testing results
- Internal, external, and regulatory audit results
- Customer feedback
- Trends in process performance, such as defect rates, process variability, changes in efficiency, or equipment breakdowns
- Environmental monitoring, to identify any unknown vectors of contamination, as well as sanitation effectiveness
- External information sources, such as FDA recall notifications, regulatory changes, and industry information from trade associations

Each of these sources provides essential information, and taken together as a whole, will allow you to thoroughly and completely verify your food safety program.

*continued on page 29...*



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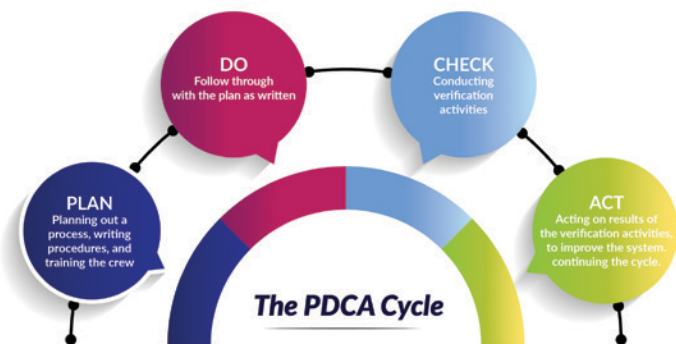
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## ONGOING VERIFICATION

Beyond daily verification of one specific process, your team needs to monitor each of these processes actively, to keep an eye out for any trends or issues that may arise.

- Identifying a key person for each program who is responsible for monitoring the system and reporting to the team
- Consistently compiling data and trends such as in a spreadsheet or other electronic system. This may involve specific types of data analysis where necessary.
- The management team meets to review trends. Trends can surface during weekly production meetings, a monthly food safety meeting or some other regularly scheduled forum.
- Internal audits are conducted by trained staff to 'dig deeper' into the implementation of each program.



## THE PDCA CYCLE

A standard concept taught in the quality management system is the idea of the PDCA Cycle:

- **Plan:** Planning out a process, writing procedures and training the crew.
- **Do:** Follow through with the plan as written.
- **Check:** Conducting verification activities, as described in this article.
- **Act:** Acting on the results of the verification activities to improve the system. The team circles back to the 'plan' step here, adjusting the plan as needed, and continuing the cycle.

For some companies, applying this process to changes made during COVID-19 made the difference between 'stumbling in the dark' and making measured changes.

**Whether it is business as usual or a global pandemic, consistent processes and verification enable food companies to succeed.**

*The Safe Food Alliance is a technical service provider focused on addressing the needs*



*of the food industry. As consumers, regulators, and retailers continue to further advance food safety, we help companies become more proactive in their facility practices in order to meet the needs of the industry. Safe Food Alliance offers a full suite of food safety services to growers, packers, processors, and food manufacturers to aid in their efforts to maintain the highest standards in food safety. Partner with a food safety company who cares about your business.*

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# Welcome New Members

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jschaefer@aquasystemsusa.com  
Phone: 805-489-9250  
aquasystemsusa.com

Aqua Systems is the largest independent provider of cleaning and sanitation products to the hospitality, healthcare, and Food Processing industries in California. Our products and service give our customers superior value, service, and results. We are proud of our corporate culture and commitment to our customers. Our staff is comprised of trained and experienced service technicians with an average employee tenure of more than 15 years. With our proven track record and expertise, we provide the quickest response time in every region we service. Don't take our word for it, listen to our clients.

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Lindsay Neff,  
Marketing Manager  
info@birkocorp.com  
Phone: 303-289-1090  
birkocorp.com

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9330 Zionsville Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
Tanner Keeton,  
Associate Territory Manager  
custserv@corveva.com  
Phone: 833-267-8382  
corveva.com

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### FIREFLY BUSINESS GROUP

PO Box 51014  
Albuquerque, NM 87181  
Keith Barr,  
Director of Business Strategy  
keith@fireflybusinessgroup.com  
Phone: 877-589-8677  
fireflybusinessgroup.com

Firefly provides an ERP software solution to the food production industry that is built on the Acumatica platform.

### HMI INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTORS

3899 Security Park Dr.  
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Dan Ravetto, General Manager  
dan.ravetto@hmiindustrial.com  
Phone: 916-386-2586  
hmiindustrial.com

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vickie@cprtrainingforlife.com  
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Director of Sales  
jgiordano@ljstar.com  
Phone: 330-405-3040  
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### PACIFIC PALLET LTD.

28686 Fraser Hwy.  
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Steve Mungari,  
West Coast Lead Sales Manager  
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### SUMMIT AGRO USA

240 Leigh Farm Rd., Ste. 415  
Durham, NC 27707  
Mary DeMers,  
Marketing Manager  
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# CLFP Announces 2020-21 Scholarship Recipients

At the CLFP Fall Board of Directors Meeting, the 2020-21 Scholarship Program recipients were announced.

A total of 33 applications were received for the program. All applicants were food processor member companies. Families of member companies served an average of 20 years in the Industry. The board approved a total of \$27,000 in scholarship funding, awarding 16 scholarships to food processor member applicants totaling \$14,000; donations to eight university food science and engineering clubs totaling \$12,000; and two junior college scholarships totaling \$1,000.



## PROCESSOR MEMBERS

- Monica Jeronimo, *Campbell Soup Supply Company*
- Jazmin Escutia-Santos, *Del Mar Food Products Corp.*
- Estefania Palomarez, *Del Monte Foods, Inc.*
- Innara Medina-Vargas, *Ingomar Packing Company, LLC*
- Alex Walker, *Leprino Foods Company*
- Yenifer Ramirez Paz, *Liberty Packing Company*
- Byron Solorio, *Los Gatos Tomato Products*
- Michael Lin, *Musco Family Olive Co.*
- Zalma Godinez, *Pacific Coast Producers*
- Simranjit Kaur, *Pacific Coast Producers*
- Sydney Eredia, *Sunsweet Growers, Inc.*
- Tiffani Sandoval, *SupHerb Farms*
- Liliana Magana, *Musco Family Olive Co.*
- Cora Gascon, *Sunsweet Growers, Inc.*
- Paige Gascon, *Sunsweet Growers, Inc.*
- Victor Meraz, *The Morning Star Packing Company*

## UNIVERSITY DONATION / DISTRIBUTION

### University Donations: Food Science Clubs (Programs)

- Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
- Cal Poly, Pomona
- California State University, Chico
- California State University, Fresno
- University of California, Davis
- Chapman University

### University Donations | Engineering Clubs

- California State University, Chico
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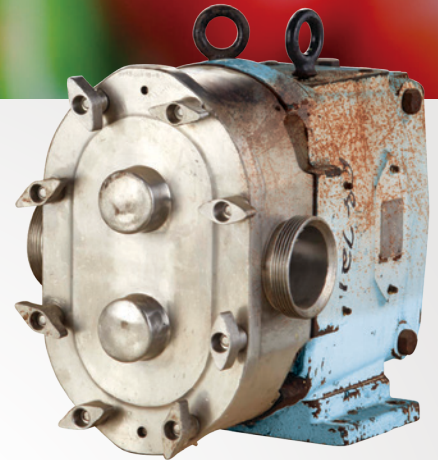
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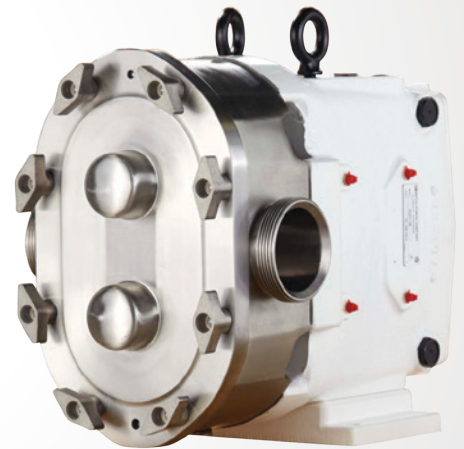
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