



AG COUNCIL HOSTS SUCCESSFUL 107TH ANNUAL MEETING

Ag Council hosted its 107th Annual Meeting in Napa March 11-13 in conjunction with CoBank's Pacific West Customer meeting. The event featured updates regarding federal policy, a look into the State Senate, and a discussion with California Air Resources Board (CARB) leadership.

This year's event began with Ag Council's annual welcome reception where attendees heard from State Senator Christopher Cabaldon (D-West Sacramento). Senator Cabaldon highlighted the importance of agriculture to the state's economy and rural communities.

Ag Council President, Emily Rooney delivered her annual address during breakfast the following morning. Rooney discussed the challenges facing the industry in the regulatory agencies, specifically highlighting the state's new Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program regulating plastics. Despite challenges, Ag Council has seen some recent political success, which Rooney said created a "window of opportunity" to potentially affect legislative and regulatory outcomes in the future.

Ag Council's general session kicked off with an update on federal policy and politics on Capitol Hill from President and CEO of the National Council of Farm Cooperatives Duane Simpson. He highlighted the challenges and opportunities of the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement, which is heavily influencing food and agriculture policy in Washington, D.C. Following the federal update, Rooney held a discussion with California Air Resources Board (CARB) Chair Lauren Sanchez and CARB board member Lynda Hopkins to discuss critical issues under CARB's authority. The panel focused on reauthorization of the Cap-and-Invest program (formerly Cap-and-Trade) and a lack of funding for successful Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) programs that benefit agricultural regions. The general session closed with a one-on-one conversation with State Senator Anna Caballero (D-Merced) hosted by Ag Council Chair Melissa Frank.

The Annual Meeting concluded by recognizing former CEO of Sunsweet Growers Dane Lance as the Cultivator Award recipient. He served as Sunsweet's president & CEO from October 2013 to March 2024. He previously served in multiple roles at Sunsweet including director of international marketing, vice president of global sales and marketing, and chief operating officer. In addition to his work at Sunsweet, he also served on the Executive Council for NCFC from 2013-2024. The Cultivator Award is given to those who go above and beyond to serve the agricultural sector.

Ag Council would like to thank each of guests and sponsors who helped make this year's event a success.

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