

# No Time Like The Present

## Ranchers lobby for way of life at 50<sup>th</sup> Ag Day

by Stevie A. Ipsen, director of public relations and outreach, California Cattlemen's Association

California cattlemen and women made a trip to Sacramento late in March to lobby on behalf of their industry, to make allies with legislators and to celebrate the bounty of agriculture in our nation's number one food producing state.

The week of March 22 was an eventful one for the nearly 200 producers, who made the trek to the capitol city. The week started with a leadership training at the California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) office for officers and board members from local cattlemen's associations. The training aimed to help leadership throughout the state understand the ins and outs of CCA and get familiar with the staff and the myriad fronts CCA works on.

Following the leadership training, Cattle-PAC members joined up with legislators at Chops Steakhouse in Sacramento. All in attendance at the dinner were members of CCA's political action committee, which benefits legislators who keep cattle ranchers' interests in mind.

The featured speaker at the PAC-200 dinner was Assembly Republican Leader Martin Garrick (R-Carlsbad), who said a top priority for him and many other legislators this year is to make sure small businesses are not the recipients of additional economic burdens.

Garrick said he recognized the importance of keeping small businesses – like ranches – in business and will fight to make sure ranchers can stay economically viable despite the harsh economic and political environment.

The PAC-200 dinner was a great way for many CCA members to speak with legislators and get geared up for the 32nd annual CCA Steak and Eggs Breakfast, which took place at the Sutter Club in downtown Sacramento on March 23. CCA members and

legislators were joined by many regulatory agency staff who work closely with CCA on many issues.

Among the various speakers at the breakfast was Assembly Speaker John Pérez (D-Los Angeles) who, as a legislator from an urban area, said he is working to get to know all facets of the California economy, including farming and ranching. As speaker he said he hopes to help get California back to a strong fiscal status and, to do that, California agriculture needs support from the legislature.

Assembly Agriculture Committee Member Fiona Ma (D-San Francisco) is another agriculture advocate in the state assembly who says despite not having an agriculture background has learned of the state's crucial dependence on the success of farmers and ranchers.

"I recognize some of you after visiting your ranches," Ma said to the large group of ranchers. "I thank you for opening up your land to me so I can see the good that you all do for the land and for California citizens. I hope that in the future you will continue to teach politicians like me by showing them a firsthand account of your livelihood."

Following the breakfast, nearly 25 legislative offices were visited by cattlemen and women as a slew of cowboy hats made their way to the State Capitol building. It was in these offices that ranchers were able to voice their concerns to elected officials and their staff about issues that were on their mind, namely the Williamson Act and other private property issues.

After a morning of making rounds in the capitol, the west lawn of the capitol was filled with booths which supplied endless samples of just a

few of California's more than 300 delectable food commodities.

Members of the California CattleWomen, Inc., handed out more than 300 pounds of Tri-tip, prepared by the Buckhorn Grill in Sacramento, and served in buns to the hungry crowd at the CCA booth.

One special visitor made his way to the CCA booth and, after receiving his Tri-tip sandwich, gave away the bun and told the various news cameras about how good California beef is.

"With beef that good, you don't need bread – you just need the pure protein, with the good fats in it, but no bread. You want to build the muscles, not the stomach," Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (pictured below) said.

With the many positive messages shared about beef production during the day, it was nice to see the governor didn't miss out on the action.

According to **Bert Lamb**, Camarillo, who made his first CCA trip to Sacramento for the week of legislative activities, the event was a priority to him because of the current economic climate for cattlemen in California.

"I have thought about coming to this event a lot," Lamb said. "While I probably should have come a long time ago to participate, I think there is no better time than the present and we need to speak up now more than ever about our way of life."





Joe and Karen Russ, Ferndale, attended the the PAC-200 dinner.



L to R: Dr. Sam and Pam Payen, Loyalton, and Joan and CCA Past President Jerry Hemsted, Cottonwood.



CCA Second Vice President Marty Williamson and wife Cindy, Exeter.



Sarah and Aaron Johnson, Salinas



Ted and Cinderr Witt, Lodi



Bill Talbot, Bishop, with Bill Gregory, Redding, at the annual steak and eggs breakfast.



CCA Treasurer Jack Hanson, Susanville, alongside Past Public Lands Council Chair Mike Byrne, Tulelake.



CCA First Vice President Kevin Kester, Parkfield, with CCA Past President Mark Nelson, Wilton.



CCA Second Vice President Bill Flournoy, Likely, with Sen. Abel Maldonado (R-Santa Maria).



Tony and Cindy Maddalena, Sierraville with CCA Administrative Assistant Annie Maddalena (center), Woodland.



Tehama County Cattlemen (L to R): Tony Turri, Flournoy; Chris Marengo, Red Bluff; Arlo Stroing, Red Bluff; and Steve Zane, Payne's Creek.



CDFA's Bureau of Livestock Identification Chief Greg Lawley, Lincoln, with Johnny Zamrzla, Palmdale.



L to R: Clint Victorine, Hydesville, with California Department of Fish and Game's Matt Robinson, Sacramento, and Chris Donati, Gridley.



CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura, Sacramento, with Tony Turri, Flournoy.



Cattle-PAC Chair John Harris, Sanger, and Sen. Roy Ashburn (R-Bakersfield).



L to R: Tehama Co. Cattle-Women Jean Barton, Red Bluff, and Linda Walker, Proberta.



Assembly Speaker John Pérez (D-Los Angeles) greeted breakfast attendees and spoke about his goals as the newly elected speaker.



Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Cathleen Galgiani (D-Livingston) shared her priorities for the committee at the breakfast.



Assemblymember Fiona Ma (D-San Francisco) addressed members and thanked them for helping her better understand agriculture by opening up their ranches to her.



Assemblymember Tom Berryhill (R-Modesto) spoke of the good cattle producers do and why he is such a strong advocate for California agriculture.

FACING PAGE: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura talk to reporters at the CCA booth during Ag Day after the Governor enjoyed a Tri-tip sandwich, courtesy of the California CattleWomen, Inc., and the Buckhorn Grill, Sacramento.



AT LEFT: During legislative visits, CCA members got to have a one-on-one meeting with several legislator. Pictured here with Sen. Abel Maldonado (third from left) are (L to R) Bert Lamb, Camarillo; Jim Davis, Santa Ysabel; Scott Violini, Salinas; Paul, McEnroe, Buellton; Young Cattlemen's Committee Secretary Kody Kester, Parkfield; Bill Talbot, Bishop; and CCA's Justin Oldfield, Elk Grove.