

UC Agriculture & Natural Resources

California Agriculture

Title

Letters

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<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/32c219rg>

Journal

California Agriculture, 66(2)

ISSN

0008-0845

Author

our readers, From

Publication Date

2012

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TO OUR READERS: Honoring 150 years of accessible higher education

In 1862, in a nation torn by secession and Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed a visionary law that laid the cornerstone of public higher education. The Morrill Land-Grant College Act gave federal public lands to states, allotting 30,000 acres for each Senator and Representative. The total endowment was \$7.55 million, then the value of 17.4 million acres. Today, more than 100 land-grant universities serve the nation and the world, including what many believe is the greatest public university in the world, the University of California.

On the 150th anniversary of its passage, we pay tribute to this profoundly democratic law, which made higher education available to those in every social class,

and brought practical information to a nation that was then more than 50% farmers. It was followed by other landmark education laws: the 1887 Hatch Act, establishing Agricultural Experiment Stations at universities; a second Morrill Act in 1890, initiating regular funding; the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, establishing Cooperative Extension; and in 1944, the GI Bill. Today, UC's land-grant university thrives as the Agricultural Experiment Stations at UC Berkeley, Davis and Riverside, and in UC Cooperative Extension offices that serve every county.

See pages 40 to 49 for special coverage of the Morrill Act and its role in building the University of California.

— Janet White

Letters**Tips for buying and moving firewood safely**

Re: "California Firewood Task Force's message: Buy it where you burn it" (October-December 2011): Your article was timely! This past December our department collaborated with Janice Alexander of UCCE Marin County to develop a public service announcement



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(PSA) regarding the risks of moving firewood and tips on buying firewood. This PSA, along with a few others can be found at: www.youtube.com/user/maringchannel#grid/user/01156AAE4AB13265.

The movement of firewood has always been a high-risk path to bring invasive and nonnative pests into our backyard. The goldspotted oak borer is

just one more example, and more are on their way. All of us must do our part to help prevent their introduction, or detect an infestation at a very early stage before it becomes too costly or impractical to eradicate. Public outreach and education is vital to ensure that we have the greatest chance of success against this ongoing barrage of unwanted and injurious pests.

Stefan Parnay
Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Director
Marin County Department of Agriculture and Weights & Measures, Novato

Switchgrass clarification

Re: "Switchgrass is a promising, high-yielding crop for California biofuel," by Pedroso et al. (July-September 2011): The article states that switchgrass is no longer listed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) as a noxious weed. This

statement is in error. CDFA has never listed switchgrass as a noxious weed and it has been and remains listed as an agricultural crop seed in regulation. Some county agricultural commissioners wanted it listed as a noxious weed, but that never happened.

Stephen Brown
Special Assistant, Permits and Regulations
California Department of Food and Agriculture, Sacramento

Fritz-Metcalf collection now online

The Marian Koshland Bioscience and Natural Resources Library at UC Berkeley has posted the Fritz-Metcalf Photograph Collection, nearly 9,000 images relating to forestry, conservation and the lumber industry in California and the United States (www.lib.berkeley.edu/BIOS/fmpc).

Emanuel Fritz and Woodbridge Metcalf were among the first to join the faculty of the new School of Forestry at UC Berkeley in the early years of the last century. Together they created an extensive collection of photographs taken between 1910 and 1960, documenting their passionate involvement with forestry and the university. The collection itself covers 1906 to 1984, with contributions from other faculty, students and friends of the School of Forestry.

Norma Kobzina
Marian Koshland Bioscience and Natural Resources Library
UC Berkeley

New URL for California Agriculture

With this issue, *California Agriculture's* online address has changed from ".org" to ".edu", better reflecting its status as a University-based academic journal. The prior URL will still function. The new URL is <http://californiaagriculture.ucanr.edu>.

RSVP**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

The editorial staff of *California Agriculture* welcomes your letters, comments and suggestions. Please write to us at: 1301 S. 46th St., Building 478 - MC 3580, Richmond, CA 94804, or calag@ucdavis.edu. Include your full name and address. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.



The Fritz-Metcalf Photograph Collection features images such as this one of Professor Metcalf leading a forestry class on a 12-mile walk to Camp Calforest at Feather River, in 1921.