2018 USDA AGRICULTURE PROMOTION GROUPS’ EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASE
15 Innovations Made Possible by Agriculture Promotion Groups
ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

The California almond community is leading the charge for sustainable farming, from recharging aquifers to more precisely managing nutrient inputs. In addition to working with research institutions like the University of California, the Almond Board of California is forging unconventional partnerships with organizations like the Environmental Defense Fund to research and develop practices that help growers increase yields and profitability while minimizing environmental impact.

www.almonds.com/growing-good
American Egg Board’s Egg Nutrition Center provides funding for independently conducted nutrition research at top universities into the dietary impact of eating eggs—with significant benefits to the scientific community and the public. ENC efforts have led to discoveries that changed the view of dietary cholesterol relative to heart disease risk, and to USDA’s removal of a limit on cholesterol intake in its 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. ENC currently is exploring benefits of egg consumption on neurocognitive development. Nutrients in eggs, such as choline and lutein, have been discovered to contribute to cognitive function and child development.

Visit www.eggnutritioncenter.org
Chefs and their customers are more and more interested in where their food comes from and how it has been raised. Lots of chefs want to work directly with local farmers and ranchers to source their ingredients. The American Lamb Board’s Shepherd to Chef program helps connect chefs with small local lamb producers throughout the U.S. The program also works to educate chefs about the American lamb industry’s production practices, butchery techniques and creative ways to utilize the whole carcass.

www.americanlamb.com
As a new program, the American Pecan Council (APC) had to start from scratch when compiling industry data. Although numerous pecan industry associations exist, the APC is the only program that speaks on behalf of the 15 states producing and processing pecans. Through mandated reporting, the APC is the first program to compile industry information and provide a clear picture on crop size. While the industry’s number one request has now been fulfilled, there’s more data to come as the APC positions itself as the program to turn to when it comes to domestic and international pecan statistics.

www.americanpecan.com
In recent years, the increasing cost and uncertainty of labor have adversely affected California’s competitiveness in the table olive market. Consequently, research attention has been devoted to the mechanical harvest of table olives, a practice more common in the olive oil industry.

Mechanizing the harvest of table olives presents some unique challenges. The tree canopy and trunk must be adapted to the interface with the harvester, avoiding damage to the tree, and the fruit must be collected with minimum bruising. However, trunk shaking technology has shown to be feasible for table olive harvest thus far and has inspired fabricators to continue improving upon the technology, offering hope for long-term industry sustainability.

www.calolive.org
Plant-based eating is on the rise in the U.S., and California walnuts have been central in this growing trend. From chili and tacos to hummus and creamy soups, California walnuts give plant-based meals texture, flavor and good-for-you polyunsaturated fats. Walnuts’ ability to pair with a variety of flavors and mimic the savory umami tastes of animal protein have made it a perfect ingredient for plant-based meals. California walnuts have been on the forefront of plant-based eating product development with 11 protocepts, some of which have fully evolved into consumer packaged goods available today in stores around the U.S.

www.walnuts.org
CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

With two promotional campaigns under its belt and more than 15.5 million people reached with the “It’s Christmas. Keep it Real” campaign, the recently formed Christmas Tree Promotion Board (CTPB) is bringing new insights to the market. Extensive research shows that even people who buy artificial trees understand the benefits of a real tree, but prefer the price and convenience of artificial trees. Building long-term demand for real trees isn’t a matter of arguing for those benefits, it’s about increasing perceived value. Therefore, CTPB is focusing on highlighting the memory-making experience of finding a real Christmas tree, especially for young families who are just beginning to form their holiday traditions.

www.itschristmaskeepitreal.com
In 2014, the Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC) created a one-of-a-kind online member portal, revolutionizing the way they manage the vital industry data that helps them succeed. Required handler forms are submitted electronically. The robust reporting system efficiently compiles data from more than 60 handlers into comprehensive reports. Growers log in to view reports, access historical data and update company information. The time savings from this process help CMC operate successfully on a limited budget. Certain reports, such as sales, production and inventory comparisons by cycle or crop year, automatically generate for public viewing.

www.reports.uscranberries.com/TheCranberryStory/ReportingSelfServiceCenter/
The Mushroom Council’s work to create a new use for the mighty mushroom is netting meaty results. The organization collaborated with The Culinary Institute of America to develop a new culinary concept known as The Blend, which combines chopped mushrooms with meat. The Blend is appearing on menus across America, including 1,000 restaurants through a partnership with James Beard Foundation, 250 K-12 school districts via foodservice management company Sodexo and recently as a limited-time offer at Sonic Drive-In’s 3,400 locations. The Blend supports many large volume operators’ nutrition and sustainability goals, while satisfying consumer cravings for flavor and healthy eating. Supermarket RDs at Albertsons/Safeway are recommending The Blend to shoppers systemwide.

www.mushroomcouncil.com/the-blend/
The National Honey Board, Almond Board of California, Project Apis m. and CollaborateUp united to illuminate the symbiotic relationship between honey bees and the agricultural industry in the inspiring new documentary “The Job Swap Experiment.”

The film puts almond growers and beekeepers in each other’s shoes, offering a firsthand look at what each industry does to protect bees. The film features growers, beekeepers, crop advisors and hive management advisors who use their expertise in insects to provide insights into pollinators and all that they do for our food.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aryarv2N_U
Gut health has emerged as a dominant nutrition trend, leading to the growth of fermented foods, probiotics and prebiotics. The National Mango Board, recognizing this trend, is collaborating with chefs to bring delicious and nutritious mango-inspired innovations to the foodservice industry and at-home chefs. From kombucha and Israeli-inspired condiment amba to traditional pickled mangos, these innovative recipes prove that what tastes good can also be good for you. With a combination of polyphenols and fiber, mangos are among the “foods with naturally functional benefits” that American consumers enjoy. Research in this area is ongoing with Texas A&M University.

www.mango.org/blog-gut-health/
For a generation, parents avoided feeding peanut foods to young children for fear of causing a peanut allergy. In 2015, the groundbreaking LEAP study, partially funded by the National Peanut Board, showed that early introduction of peanut foods to infants reduced development of peanut allergy by 86 percent. Then in 2017, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases published new guidelines encouraging parents to prevent peanut allergy by introducing peanuts to children as early as four to six months.

www.preventpeanutallergies.org.
With nearly every sale starting with a simple search, it is critical that the National Pork Board understand how consumer searches impact pork buying decisions. Beginning with Google, the Pork Checkoff used digital technology to research consumer pork buying habits, then translated this information into consumer-focused campaigns through influential YouTube content creators. These YouTube stars - with a combined following of nearly 25 million - shared their take on pork. Topics ranged from how to cook/grill pork chops to education on the ideal end-point cooking temperature (145° F).

Future YouTube Campaigns will leverage porks’ major retailers to grow pork sales.

www.youtube.com/user/nationalporkboard
Did you know 100 percent of the watermelon is usable, even the rind? Using the whole watermelon is good for your health, your budget and the environment. That’s why National Watermelon Promotion Board is educating key audiences on ways to “Use the Whole Watermelon.” The education campaign features a consumer recipe contest featuring the use of the flesh, juice and rind. Retail partnerships with Nutrisavings and the board’s annual retail display contest reinforce using the whole watermelon. Foodservice decision-makers are also learning to reduce food waste in commercial kitchens by using the whole watermelon.

www.watermelon.org/Use-The-Whole-Watermelon
Like the widely adopted advice to walk 10,000 steps or drink eight glasses of water per day, the Paper and Packaging Board introduced 15 Pages A Day inviting people to pledge to make reading on paper a daily habit. P+PB’s annual Paper and Productive Learning report shows that in a connected world where 59 percent of people report suffering from “digital overload,” paper provides a welcome respite. The data tells a story about the many benefits of reading on paper including improved memory, focus and language development. Educators (92 percent) and parents (90 percent) alike agree that reading 15 pages a day on paper has positive benefits.

www.howlifeunfolds.com/15pages