

California Farmers Union
“Working Hard for Rural California”

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Rice Producers of California Join the California Farmers Union

TURLOCK, CA (March 10, 2008) – The California Farmers Union is pleased to announce an affiliation with the Rice Producers of California. California Farmers Union President Joaquin Contente and Rice Producers of California Co-Chairmen Greg Massa and Chip Struckmeyer signed the affiliation agreement.

“The California Farmers Union (CFU) is honored to have the Rice Producers of California (RPC) join our organization as an affiliate because of their repeated success in advocating for rice producers at the state and federal level,” stated CFU President Joaquin Contente of Hanford. “As the farm bill debate continues in Congress, it is vital that California producers come together to voice our priorities to lawmakers,” stated Contente. “By joining forces we will have a greater ability to have an impact on future state and federal legislation to ensure that it directs valuable resources to sustain farms and ranches in California well into the future,” he added.

RPC is a non-profit organization and was founded in 1997. It is a grassroots rice producer organization that promotes and advocates for the viability and sustainability of rice farming in California. RPC actively engages in economic analysis, education, collaboration and public outreach work. RPC is a strong and independent voice that speaks only for the interests of California rice farmers.

Brian Gibbs, an RPC Board Member from Butte County, says “The emphasis that the CFU has with assisting the family farmer to address profitability issues is consistent with the RPC Mission”. Ron Phelps, an RPC Board Member from Sutter/Placer County adds “That CFU has as its first priority to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life for family farmers, ranchers and their rural communities”.

CFU supports RPC’s work to protect the livelihoods of rice farmers including the recent efforts to recognize the risk posed by ‘genetically engineered’ rice varieties and market loss. This work led to the California Rice Commission Board unanimously supporting a moratorium on genetically engineered rice variety field trials.

California Farmers Union (CFU), a member organization of National Farmers Union, represents more than 14 groups of commodity producers throughout California. CFU represents the dairy producer members of the California Dairy Campaign (CDC) and the California Dairy Women Association (CDWA). CFU affiliates include the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), the Pacific Coast Commercial Fishermen’s Association (PCFFA) and most recently the Rice Producers of California. CFU advocates policies to state and federal lawmakers on behalf of family farmers, ranchers and fishermen.