

University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
*Making a Difference for California*

Spring 2023

# Livestock, Range, & Watershed

San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Monterey Counties

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

350 North Main St. Ste. B  
Templeton, CA 93465  
Phone: 805-434-4106  
Email: relarsen@ucanr.edu

EXECUTIVE EDITOR:

Royce Larsen  
Natural Resource/Watershed  
Advisor

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Range Improvement Association Annual Meeting and Dinner

The California Rancher Self Assessment Tool

Pasture Seeding Trial

Ag Pass



## San Luis Obispo County Range Improvement Association Annual Meeting & Dinner



Each year the San Luis Obispo County Range Improvement Association holds an annual meeting and dinner. This year the meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 11, 2023, starting at 6 pm, in the Arroyo**

**Grande Association Hall, 707 Huasna Rd., Arroyo Grande.** Election of Board Members and Officers will take place.

Guest speakers will include: Mark Mankins, Range Improvement Association; Karl Tupper, Air Pollution Control District; Jon Gee & Dave Erickson, Cal Fire; Dan Turner & Skip Dyke, Fire Safe Council; Kevin Jensen, USDA Agriculture Research Service.

Topics that will be covered include current conditions for the upcoming fire season, and planned prescribed burns. In addition, information from the Air Pollution Control District will be presented. We will also hear from the Range Improvement Association, and the Fire Safe Council. Then a guest speaker from the USDA Agriculture Research Service will briefly discuss a pasture seeding trial.

**PLEASE RSVP: Dale Evenson**  
**805 467-3772**  
**daleevenson50@gmail.com**

# CRSA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

## California Rancher Sustainability Assessment

**A tool developed by California ranchers  
for California ranchers**

The CRSA provides a self-assessment questionnaire and library of science-based information that ranchers can use to evaluate their current management practices. In this way, the CRSA provides a guide that can help ranchers decide where improvements can be made and, over the longer term, evaluate how the changes are increasing the sustainability of the ranching operation and ranch resources.

### ***Find out how sustainable your ranching practices are!***

The CRSA allows ranchers to evaluate multiple aspects of their operation to help ensure the sustainability of production, lands, and families. Modules in the self-assessment include forage management, soil health, wildlife management, drought management, and generational succession.

### ***Access A Learning Library with Guidelines, Videos, and More...***

The CRSA provides one-click access free, timely, and relevant information on best practices for managing soils, forages, and drought conditions, estate and financial planning, and a wealth of other topics.

### ***Give feedback!***

Comments and contributions from ranchers are vital to ensure that the CRSA is functional, accessible, and useful. The CRSA includes links for ranchers to comment and help direct the future of the CRSA.

**Access the CRSA today: <https://crsa.cnr.berkeley.edu/>**

***“The CRSA helped me figure out what I was doing well and what I needed to pay more attention to on my ranch. I found out I was using strong soil and forage practices but needed to think more about drought planning. The expansive library allowed for a deeper understanding of what I can do better and how I can do it.” - Blake Duncan, rancher in San Mateo County***

# Irrigated Pasture Seeding Trial

Royce Larsen

The University of California Cooperative Extension is collaborating with the USDA ARS, Forage and Range Research Lab (FRRL), Logan UT, and the Avenales Cattle CO, and Barenbrug USA testing some new grass and legume varieties in an irrigated pasture in Central San Luis Obispo County. This project began in 2021. and will continue for 2-3 more years.

The FRRL is composed of a multidisciplinary team that has developed the critically important plant materials presently used on Western U.S. rangelands. The FRRL is recognized as the international center of excellence for integrated research in breeding, genomics, and ecological applications of perennial plants for dry temperate environments. Research is accomplished



through the combined efforts of plant breeders, molecular geneticists, and ecologists to enhance plants and associated agronomic practices for range and pastures and is specifically organized to develop and test new plant selections for future marketing.

This trial includes varieties from the FRRL and Barenbrug USA. We are testing grass/legume entries including new plant materials along with check cultivars with 89 different cultivars/germplasms, representing 25 different species.



We used a Hege Cone-Seeder, and seeded the plots February 2022. We are not using any herbicides for weed control. This has also been a very wet winter, where the plots were submerged for a few days during the months of January and March. So, this trial is testing all these different varieties against each other, and under some extreme conditions.



Each of these forage entries will be tested for production and quality. We will test each of the species and varieties for total biomass, crude protein, neutral detergent fiber, acid detergent fiber, digestible neutral detergent fiber, and *in vitro* true digestibility. We have some varieties that should do well through the winter, and others through the summer.

We will be announcing a field day to show the results of this trial in the near future.

The screenshot shows the top portion of the County of San Luis Obispo website. At the top left is the county logo. To its right are navigation links for DEPARTMENTS, JOBS, NEWS, ACCESSIBILITY, and TRANSLATE. Further right is a search bar with the text 'ENHANCED BY Google'. Below these are five main navigation buttons: Popular, Apply, Payment, Find, and Contact. The main content area features the title 'Agriculture / Weights and Measures' and the subtitle 'County of San Luis Obispo'. A breadcrumb trail at the bottom of the header reads: Home > Departments > Agriculture / Weights and Measures > Services > Ag Pass.

## Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures Update - April 25, 2023

DEVELOPMENT OF AN AG PASS PROGRAM IN SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY  
CONTACT: Ian Landreth, Agricultural Resource Specialist – 805.781.5914

On April 4, 2023, the County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors voted to adopt an Agricultural Pass Program (AG Pass) for the purpose of issuing identification documents granting any qualifying agricultural producer, or a managerial employee, access to the qualifying producer’s farm or ranch property during a flood, storm, fire, earthquake, or other disaster. In accordance with AB1103 which was passed on October 7, 2021, the purpose of creating a county based Ag Pass Program is to provide a uniform way to identify vetted commercial farm and ranch owner-operators and their employees to firefighting personnel, California Highway Patrol officers, Sheriff’s deputies and other law enforcement officers, and other emergency personnel for the purpose of allowing them access to their agricultural land. Possession of an Ag Pass card does not grant special rights or privileges and does not necessarily mean the cardholder will be able to pass through road closures to get to their farm or ranch. If there is imminent danger, front-line emergency personnel are empowered to use discretion when it comes to protecting emergency crews and the public from unnecessary exposure to risk. However, in those cases when the boundaries of the closure area include agricultural land not deemed at imminent risk, the cards may allow owners or employees access to the agricultural property, at the discretion of front-line emergency personnel. Training and card issuance will be facilitated by San Luis Obispo County Fire/Cal Fire. For further information, please visit: [Ag Pass - County of San Luis Obispo \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov/ag-pass)

### Resources

[Interactive SRA San Luis Obispo County Map](#)

### Sponsors

The Ag Pass program is a coordinated program that is made possible to San Luis Obispo County residents through the sponsorship and coordination of the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures Office, San Luis Obispo County Fire Department, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, San Luis Obispo County's Sheriff's Office, and the California Highway Patrol.

# Weather Update

Royce Larsen

We have just experienced a very wet winter. Even though there has been a lot of flooding, erosion and damage, we were in desperate need of a wet winter. So just how does this year compare with other years? Selected weather stations from the SLO County Public Works Department (SLO), and Interagency Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) show that we were about 186% above average, see table 1. There was 241% above normal precipitation at Rocky Butte weather Station. Hog Canyon was only 138% above normal. Paso Robles had

Table 1. Precipitation from some selected weather stations, July 2022 —April 25, 2023. Rainfall data is from San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department (SLO) and Interagency Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS).

Location	PPT (inch)	% of Normal (%)
San Simeon (SLO)	34.6	144
Rocky Butte (SLO)	96.28	241
Hog Canyon (SLO)	22.05	138
Shandon (SLO)	19.62	164
Atascadero (SLO)	28.8	160
Santa Margarita (SLO)	47.25	197
Los Osos Landfill (SLO)	34.13	190
SLO Reservoir (SLO)	52.16	217
Arroyo Grande (SLO)	32.73	182
Nipomo East (SLO)	37.16	207
La Panza ( RAWS)	24.1	224
Carrizo (RAWS)	14.69	165

28.71” (192% above normal), see figure 1. For Paso Robles, this is the third highest recorded amount of rainfall since 1887. The highest recorded rainfall in Paso Robles was during the 1968 -1969 water year and there was 31.25”. The graph below shows the average, some wet years, and some dry years at Paso Robles for comparison.

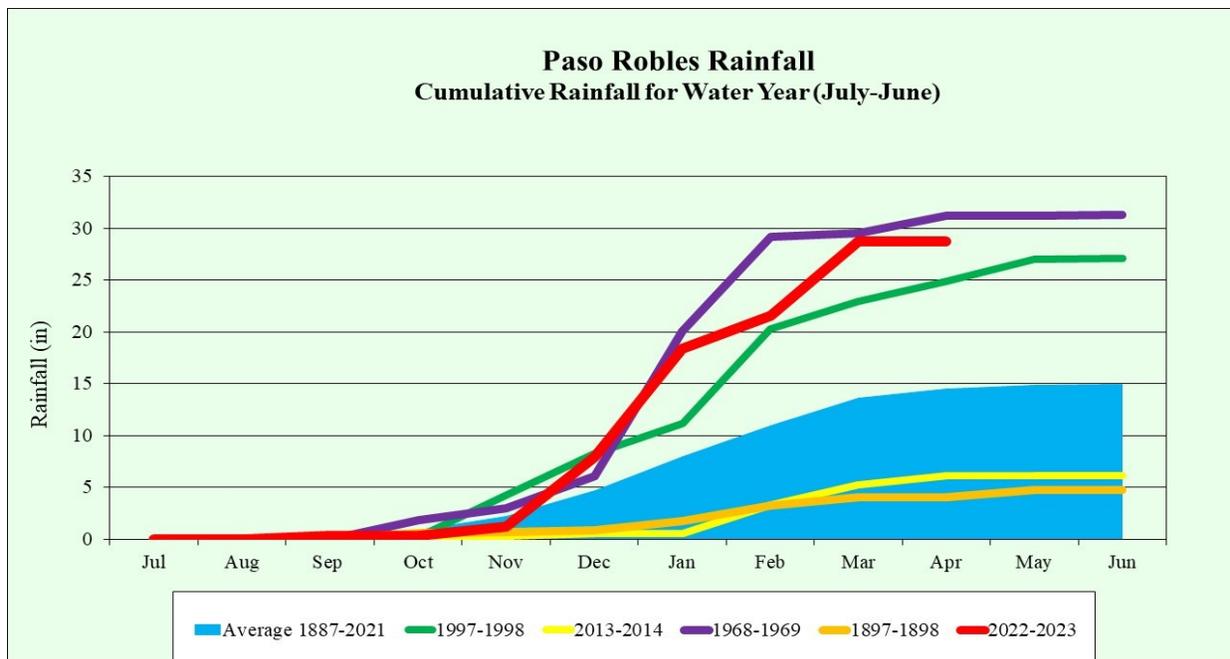


Figure 1. Cumulative rainfall for Paso Robles. Data from the City of Paso Robles.



Stream Crossing on Shell Creek Road., April 4 , 2023



Flowers near Shell Creek Road, April 4, 2023.

*Royce Larsen*

Watershed / Natural Resource Advisor  
350 N. Main Street, Suite B  
Templeton, CA 93461  
(805) 434-4106  
relarsen@ucanr.edu  
<http://cesanluisobispo.ucanr.edu/>

It is the policy of the University of California (UC) and the UC Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources not to engage in discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities ( Complete nondiscrimination policy statement can be found at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/files/169224.pdf>). Inquiries regarding ANR's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Linda Marie Manton, Affirmative Action Contact, University of California, Davis, Agriculture and Natural Resources, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616, (530)752-0495.