

Work Authority #1469-85
 Project #97-N20
 Project Name: The BIOS/LFN Strategy - Reduction of Synthetic Pesticides Fertilizers in Five California Counties
 Recipient: Community Alliance with Family Farmers

Budget Year: 1999
 Statement Quarter: 3

Total Estimated Cost of Phase 1 \$1,680,631
 Funding from Federal Bay-Delta Account \$1,680,631

Total Project Estimated Completion Date: 3 years

	PHASE 1 (Quarterly Budget)				PHASE 1 (FY '98 Budget)			PHASE 1 (Three Year Budget) FY '98 - FY '01		
	Budget	Accrued Expenditures	Variance	**	Budget	Accrued Expenditures	Remaining Balance	Budget	Accrued Expenditures	Balance to Complete
Task 1: Plan intensive campaign to enlist farmers in CAFF's program	\$23,538	\$18,486	\$5,050	1	\$106,819	\$101,769	\$5,050	\$106,819	\$101,769	\$5,050
Schedule FY '98 through FY '99										
Percent Work Complete for Task 1: 100%										
1a Hire Communications Director	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$5,029	\$5,029	\$0	\$5,029	\$5,029	\$0
1b Hire a public relations firm	\$1,915	\$1,915	\$0		\$6,124	\$6,124	\$0	\$6,124	\$6,124	\$0
1c Develop targeted outreach strategy	\$2,933	\$2,933	\$0		\$31,182	\$31,182	\$0	\$31,182	\$31,182	\$0
1d Create and improve outreach materials	\$18,690	\$13,640	\$5,050		\$64,484	\$59,434	\$5,050	\$64,484	\$59,434	\$5,050
Task 2: Unify CAFF's various databases and purchase network	\$53,285	\$40,981	\$12,304	2	\$80,296	\$67,992	\$12,304	\$80,296	\$67,992	\$12,304
Schedule: FY '98 through FY '99										
Percent Work Complete for Task 2: 100%										
2a Hire consulting firm to unify databases	\$26,359	\$16,119	\$10,240		\$40,908	\$30,668	\$10,240	\$40,908	\$30,668	\$10,240
2b Purchase computer equipment and software for database upgrade	\$21,153	\$19,089	\$2,064		\$33,447	\$31,383	\$2,064	\$33,447	\$31,383	\$2,064
2c Purchase computer equipment and software for Lighthouse Farm Network	\$5,773	\$5,773	\$0		\$5,941	\$5,941	\$0	\$5,941	\$5,941	\$0
Task 3: Increase the capacity of the Lighthouse Farm Network	\$70,574	\$56,444	\$14,130	3	\$145,367	\$131,237	\$14,130	\$145,367	\$131,237	\$14,130
Schedule: FY '98 through FY '99										
Percent Work Complete for Task 3: 100%										
3a Hire and train two LFN coordinators	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$7,675	\$7,675	\$0	\$7,675	\$7,675	\$0
3b Initiate and hold monthly LFN events in new location	\$9,719	\$7,928	\$1,791		\$10,826	\$9,035	\$1,791	\$10,826	\$9,035	\$1,791
3c Continue monthly LFN meetings, field days, tours	\$22,114	\$18,796	\$3,318		\$37,296	\$33,978	\$3,318	\$37,296	\$33,978	\$3,318
3d Develop relationships with local community leaders, farmers	\$28,038	\$22,967	\$5,071		\$46,348	\$41,277	\$5,071	\$46,348	\$41,277	\$5,071
3e Hold regional planning meetings	\$2,381	\$877	\$1,504		\$15,679	\$14,175	\$1,504	\$15,679	\$14,175	\$1,504
3f Produce monthly LFN newsletter, The Foghorn	\$5,649	\$3,798	\$1,851		\$18,943	\$17,092	\$1,851	\$18,943	\$17,092	\$1,851
3g Collect and analyze information from LFN farmers	\$2,673	\$2,076	\$595		\$8,600	\$8,005	\$595	\$8,600	\$8,005	\$595
Task 4: Reporting	\$18,195	\$14,235	\$3,960	4	\$57,852	\$53,892	\$3,960	\$178,375	\$53,892	\$124,483
Schedule: FY '98 through FY '01										
Percent Work Complete for Task 4: 30%										
4a Submit quarterly narrative and financial reports	(\$1,640)	\$7,232	(\$8,872)		\$12,572	\$21,444	(\$8,872)	\$38,764	\$21,444	\$17,320
4b Bookkeeping services	\$19,917	\$5,758	\$14,159		\$43,658	\$29,499	\$14,159	\$134,611	\$29,499	\$105,112
4c Administrative upgrade	(\$82)	\$1,245	(\$1,327)		\$1,622	\$2,949	(\$1,327)	\$5,000	\$2,949	\$2,051
Task 5: Biological Farming Promotion	\$57,403	\$44,427	\$12,976	5	\$78,962	\$65,986	\$12,976	\$383,721	\$65,986	\$317,735
Schedule: FY '99 through FY '01										
Percent Work Complete for Task 5: 17%										
5a Implement 1999 Biological Farming Production Campaign	\$57,403	\$44,427	\$12,976		\$78,962	\$65,986	\$12,976	\$157,923	\$65,986	\$91,937
5b Implement 2000 Biological Farming Production Campaign	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$166,944	\$0	\$166,944
5c Implement 2001 (first six months of year three) Biological Farming Production Campaign	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$58,854	\$0	\$58,854
Task 6: Continue to coordinate BIOS in San Joaquin, Madera and Colusa Counties through the growing season	\$88,376	\$76,503	\$11,873	6	\$186,082	\$174,209	\$11,873	\$372,164	\$174,209	\$197,955
Schedule FY '99										
Percent Work Complete for Task 6: 47%										
6a Hold frequent on-farm field days in all three counties, hold the BIOS Farm Tour, use management team to provide grower support, continue publishing newsletters, conduct survey of grower practices and program eval. and provide weekly orchard monitoring info. to enrolled farmers	\$88,376	\$76,503	\$11,873		\$186,082	\$174,209	\$11,873	\$372,164	\$174,209	\$197,955

Task 7: Plan the transition of BIOS projects to local leadership	\$12,684	\$6,179	\$6,505	7	\$22,823	\$16,318	\$6,505	\$45,645	\$16,318	\$29,327
Schedule FY '99										
Percent Work Complete for Task 7:										
7a Build relationships with local stakeholders in Colusa, Madera and San Joaquin counties. Develop options for future activities and prepare written transition plan	\$12,684	\$6,179	\$6,505		\$22,823	\$16,318	\$6,505	\$45,645	\$16,318	\$29,327
36%										
Task 8: Evaluate pesticide use changes as a result of the BIOS project	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$80,000	\$0	\$80,000
Schedule: FY '99 through FY '01										
Percent Work Complete for Task 8:										
8a	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$80,000	\$0	\$80,000
0%										
Task 9: Use the Lighthouse Farm Network to offer consistent technical support to farmers	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$237,964	\$0	\$237,964
Schedule: FY '99 through FY '01										
Percent Work Complete for Task 9:										
9a	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$237,964	\$0	\$237,964
0%										
Task 10: Implement the transition of BIOS projects to local leadership	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,280	\$0	\$50,280
Schedule: FY '00 through FY '01										
Percent Work Complete for Task 10:										
10a	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,280	\$0	\$50,280
0%										
Phase 1 Total:	\$324,055	\$257,257	\$66,798		\$678,201	\$611,403	\$66,798	\$1,680,631	\$611,403	\$1,069,228

EXPLANATIONS OF VARIANCES IN TASK BUDGETS:

- Task 1 is 100% complete as of 6/30/99, under budget by approximately \$5,050 (see variance above). This variance will be transferred to a remaining appropriate task.
- Task 2 is 100% complete as of 6/30/99, under budget by approximately \$12,304 (see variance above). This variance will be transferred to a remaining appropriate task.
- Task 3 is 100% complete as of 6/30/99, under budget by approximately \$14,130 (see variance above). This variance will be transferred to a remaining appropriate task.
- Task 4 is -30% complete as of 6/30/99, overall under budget by approximately \$3,960 (see variance above). Both positive and negative variances within subtasks will be adjusted during the completion of this task.
- Task 5 is -17% complete as of 6/30/99, overall under budget by approximately \$12,976 (see variance above). The positive variance will be used to complete the remainder of the task.
- Task 6 is -47% complete as of 6/30/99, overall under budget by approximately \$11,873 (see variance above). The positive variance will be used to complete the remainder of the task.
- Task 7 is -36% complete as of 6/30/99, overall under budget by approximately \$6,505 (see variance above). The positive variance will be used to complete the remainder of the task.

QUARTERLY PROGRAMMATIC REPORT

Program Manager Spencer Shepherd
Project Manager Judith Redmond
CALFED Project # 97-N20
Quarter Ending June 30, 1999

Introduction: In the first year of the 97-N20 contract, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) undertook a range of discrete tasks, from internal organization building to external media outreach. We launched a multi-tiered effort to enlist the support and participation of growers and decision makers in CAFF's programs, the Lighthouse Farm Network (LFN) and Biologically Integrated Orchard Systems (BIOS), which are effective at reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers in the Sacramento and San Joaquin watershed. This report outlines the progress toward the fulfillment of our agreed objectives over the first year of the grant period, emphasizing our work in the last quarter, April through June 1999. The momentum achieved by this progress will enable CAFF to implement the next phase of strategies through July 2000.

Task 1: Plan an intensive media campaign to enlist farmers in CAFF's pesticide reduction programs and to influence other agricultural decision-makers

Subtasks and Deliverables:

1a. Hire a Communications Director

CAFF began the hiring process for a Communications Director August 1998 and hired an interim Communications Director from October through January 1999. CAFF filled the position with a permanent staff person on February 1, 1999. The Communications Director is responsible for the development, supervision and implementation of Task 5.

Percent of work completed: 100%

1b. Hire a public relations firm

CAFF sought a public relations consultant to assist with implementation of the outreach campaign. In February 1999, CAFF contracted with Sunflower Strategies, a California-based agricultural marketing firm.

Percent of work completed: 100%

1c. Outreach strategy

CAFF worked with Sunflower Strategies to develop a strategy and work plan for the outreach campaign. The final plan, completed in the last reporting period, encompassed goals and objectives, statement of strategy, implementation phase

(capacity building, marketing and communication activities), timeline and action items, and a budget. The plan was circulated to leaders of the almond industry for comments.

Percent of work completed: 100%

1d. Create outreach materials

CAFF enlisted the services of a design consultant to develop outreach materials. Since the project began, CAFF created new organizational and program fact sheets and a new business system (letterhead, envelopes, business cards, etc.).

This final quarter realized key tools to be implemented in our public outreach campaign. Both the campaign press kit and the new CAFF brochure were completed in May.

The final element, CAFF's inaugural Annual Report, is slated for distribution in early July. CAFF hats were completed and distributed to prominent attendees at the Biological Farming Promotion Campaign Kick-Off on April 23. All items feature CAFF's new logo, the primary organizational identifier that appears throughout CAFF's external communications.

Deliverables: Logo
Brochure
Annual Report (under separate cover)

Percent of work completed: 100%

Task 2: Upgrade CAFF's databases and computers

Subtasks and Deliverables:

2a. Coordinate CAFF's databases

To allow for efficient outreach and public relations, CAFF conducted a complete overhaul of our computer information systems, created a main CAFF database and fully integrated it with our pre-existing program databases. The integration has allowed greater ease in tracking and updating information for members, media lists, project farmers, and supporters. Key staff members were trained in using the new system, and protocols were established for levels of access and use of information.

This quarter CAFF engaged in the upgrade of our computer network, which was necessary to facilitate the use of the newly consolidated database system. This entailed the purchase of equipment, the design and construction of the network, and the upgrade of operating systems and software on key database terminals. These individual-terminal and system-wide adjustments have increased efficiency and reliability in computer communications and daily communications tasks.

Percent of work completed: 100%

2b. Purchase computer equipment

The computer needs of CAFF's Davis-based and field staff in addition to the requisite adjustments to the database led to a prioritization of computer purchases. Hardware and operating systems were updated to handle the large volume of information flowing between the database server and individual computers. New hardware was also purchased to supply additional workstations, both fixed and portable.

Deliverable: List of equipment purchased

Percent of work completed: 100%

2c. Purchase computer software and hardware

In January, CAFF purchased two computers for the Lighthouse Farm Network. One is used by field staff and the other is used for the production of *The Foghorn*, the monthly newsletter of the LFN.

Percent of work completed: 100%

Task 3: Increase the capacity of the Lighthouse Farm Network (LFN) to offer consistent technical support to farmers

Subtasks and Deliverables:

3a. Hire and train two LFN coordinators

CAFF hired a new coordinator to lead LFN events in Yolo and Solano counties in September 1998. In February, CAFF filled the second of these positions with a regional coordinator to direct activities in Merced and Stanislaus counties. Both staff members continue to take on increased responsibilities for event planning, meeting facilitation and community outreach.

Percent of work completed: 100%

3b. Initiate and hold monthly meetings in one new location

A new LFN meeting was initiated in Ripon, San Joaquin County in April. Participants defined goals and objectives for the new chapter and suggested that future subject matter mirror the diversity of crops and people in San Joaquin County. Proposed topics cover broad issues that affect a variety of farmers such as estate planning and property transfer, soil building, farm sustainability, and the future of family farming. The second meeting in May centered on farmland preservation, easements and trusts.

However, in response to low turnout at the initial Ripon meetings, the June discussion, "Rodent Control," was strategically relocated to Stockton. The central location succeeded in drawing a greater number of participants but, attendance was still relatively low. The LFN program coordinator and the regional coordinators of San Joaquin and Madera counties met to develop area-specific workplans to attract

more people. Given that San Joaquin County already boasts a very active community of BIOS growers, its LFN chapter will broaden its palette to feature workshops that appeal to local growers of various cropping systems.

Deliverables: Meeting announcements and sign-in sheets

Percent of work completed: 100%

3c. Host meetings, field days, farm tours in Madera and Yolo-Solano counties
Since the inception of this project, the LFN has hosted 20 meetings, providing technical information and support to those interested in biologically based farming methods. This quarter, nine workshops were held in the Madera and Yolo-Solano regions.

April meetings took place in Woodland, Modesto and Livingston. Growers met in Woodland to discuss cover crop methods and benefits as well as a recent study on cover cropping in a processing tomato-wheat rotation. The meeting was coordinated with the Yolo RCD and the UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE). Paul Robins of the Yolo RCD, Gene Miyao from UCCE, and the CAFF regional program coordinator led talks about primary issues regarding cover cropping: the importance of soil building, the carbon nitrogen cycle, and how the effective use of cover crops can help harness nutrients in the orchard soil.

On April 20, presenter Max Stevenson, staff scientist at CAFF, introduced his nitrogen budgeting worksheet in Modesto to help growers balance the nitrogen sources and tree needs of their orchards. Over-application of fertilizers and the resulting problem of nitrate contamination in groundwater can be radically reduced by careful assessment. Many of those who participated brought irrigation water samples for free on-site nitrate testing. Several growers were surprised by the level of nitrates in their irrigation water. Participants could see mathematically that in many instances they were over-fertilizing, thus spending too much money and endangering local water resources.

The April meetings in San Joaquin and Madera centered on pest and disease control. The LFN breakfast meeting in Madera addressed "Insect and Disease Control in Vineyards." Ken Schneider, a member of the BIOS management team, informed growers about controlling powdery mildew in grape systems. Merced County farm advisor Lonnie Hendricks was the speaker at the discussion, "Alternatives for Scale and Peach Twig Borer Control," in Livingston. Hendricks showed samples of almond branches displaying different types of damage. He urged growers not to disrupt beneficials by spraying chemicals harmful to them.

"Disease Update and Biological Farming Label for Almonds" were the topics for the meeting in Modesto on May 18. Growers discussed *Alternaria*, a fungal disease responsible for leaf drop and defoliation in orchards. Afterwards the discussion, led by Michael Dimock of Sunflower Strategies, centered on the potential impact on the

marketplace of a special marketing label for almonds. The standard of "biologically integrated almonds" for marketing purposes is being defined by industry stakeholders and growers. Special labeling for alternatively grown almonds could bolster the benefits of almond growers already participating in the BIOS program and act as an economic incentive to attract new growers.

On May 27, Jon Holmquist, PCA and Farm Manager for Canandaigua Winery in Madera, presented the winery's strategy for pest management that yields a high quality wine, while rendering a low impact on the environment. Meanwhile, the meeting that same day in Livingston, asked the question "What do you want to do with your farm after you've finished farming it?" Growers and other participants learned how farmers can keep their land in agricultural production, create financial security, and provide ownership opportunities for aspiring farmers.

The June sessions informed participants of the advances made in building institutional support for biological farming in higher education and the industry. Ron Alves was the featured speaker to the well-attended meeting in Modesto. A professor of agriculture at the Modesto Junior College, Alves has succeeded in incorporating concepts of sustainable agriculture and biological farming techniques into both the agriculture curriculum and in extracurricular activities on campus. On the industry front, speakers at the Livingston meeting related the series of events that led to the formation of the Almond Pest Management Alliance (PMA). The Almond PMA marks the first time that diverse forces, among them the Almond Board of California and CAFF, are united. The PMA is dedicated to educating the media, growers, general public and trades people through field days, newsletters and news releases about alternative solutions to chemically intensive almond production practices.

Deliverables: Meeting announcements and sign-in sheets

Percent of work completed: 100%

3d. Develop relationships with local leaders

CAFF invited many leaders of the agricultural community to our planning and workshop events. Speakers in our workshops and field days regularly included researchers from the University of California's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, representatives from the Walnut Marketing Commission, UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisors, influential walnut growers, and pest control advisors. We continue to expand our outreach to community and agricultural leaders through our regular LFN and BIOS events throughout the geographic region of this project.

The Southern Sacramento Valley regional coordinator continued to collaborate with the UCCE, UC Sustainable Agriculture Farming Systems project and the Yolo RCD and NRCS, sharing mailing lists, seeking their input as speakers and advice in gauging the needs and priorities of the local agricultural community. She also

engaged in outreach to the community through two school projects – the Garden Program in Sacramento and the F.A.R.M.S. program, funded by NFWF and California Agriculture in the Classroom. Her active presence in both projects opened up avenues for broader education and outreach for sustainable agriculture in the local urban community.

In June, the Madera regional coordinator reaped the benefits of the many phone calls and meeting attempts made earlier in the year to Madera RCD members. Local RCD and NRCS representatives turned out in good force at the June field day, among them members of the Madera NRCS Board of Directors. Madera RCD representatives offered project evaluation and grant application assistance for growers interested in engaging in sustainable agriculture or environmentally friendly projects.

This quarter, the San Joaquin coordinator forged a partnership with the local 4H Club to incorporate small agricultural projects into 4H's youth development programs. He and 4H are planning a series of fall and winter activities to increase education about sustainable agriculture practices to local youth.

Percent of work completed: 100%

3e. Regional planning meetings

All CAFF staff from the Central Valley as well as invited collaborators participated in the regional planning meeting on April 12. Areas of responsibility were delineated for regional and project coordinators and chapter leaders. Participants generated a long-term vision for CAFF activities in the San Joaquin Valley prior to updating fellow staff on current resources and programs underway in the region. Work plans and priorities were established for the next quarter. The next regional planning meeting is scheduled for July 26.

Deliverables: Announcement, agenda and minutes from planning meeting

Percent of work completed: 100%

3f. Monthly LFN newsletter

CAFF produced monthly issues of *The Foghorn*. The voice of the LFN, this newsletter is now distributed to over 945 farmers, researchers, agricultural professionals and others in the greater Central Valley, and 2,697 statewide – an increase of over 1,200 recipients since September 1998. Ninety percent of Central Valley respondents to the 1999 LFN year-end survey rated *The Foghorn* a valuable, information rich newsletter.

Deliverables: *The Foghorn*, May through July, 1999

Percent of work completed: 100%

3g. Collect and analyze information

In January 1999, CAFF distributed a year-end survey to participating Lighthouse Farm Network growers to gauge the program's impact on their farming practices. To expedite data entry and analysis, the LFN assistant overseeing the survey reduction was trained in the software program MS Excel 4.0.

One-third of the total survey respondents reside in the Central Valley. Nearly three-quarters of them are farmers. Survey responses emphatically showed that LFN forums are helping growers adopt alternative methods. One-hundred percent of Central Valley respondents answered "yes" when asked if information from LFN meetings and field days proved helpful in moving them toward a biologically integrated approach. As a result of participating in the LFN, a majority of farmers adopted several techniques that help build soil, a cornerstone for biological farming practices. (See attached survey summary.) These include the use of cover crops, compost and soil analysis. Through LFN sessions, farmers also began to use alternatives to chemical pesticides such as monitoring and releasing beneficial insects, and using owls and raptors for rodent control. Moreover, over half of these growers have shared the knowledge that they have gained from LFN meetings with neighbors and other farmers.

The survey also revealed practices about which CAFF can provide more information. These include foliar nutrient sprays, soft insecticides and erosion control.

CAFF seeks to expand the scope of LFN to reach an expanded set of growers and agricultural professionals. With the impetus of the biological farming campaign, we aim to educate and motivate a new corps of farmers to become leaders and spokespeople for sustainable agriculture.

Deliverables: Summary of survey results

Percent of work completed: 100%

Task 4: Reporting

Subtasks and Deliverables:

4a. Quarterly narrative and financial reports

Percent of work completed: 33%

4b. Bookkeeping services

Invoices through May 1999 have been submitted.

Percent of work completed: 28%

4c. Administrative upgrade

On the recommendation of our accountant, CAFF purchased and installed new bookkeeping software, Fund E-Z. This quarter CAFF purchased additional hardware to support the new software. Key staff were trained in using the software.

The transfer of the books to the new system was completed.

Percent of work completed: 85%

Task 5: Implement Media Campaign

Subtasks and Deliverables:

5a. Implement 1999 (year one) activities of the Biological Farming Promotion Campaign

CAFF publicly launched the Biological Farming Promotion Campaign on April 23, 1999. From February until the launch, we were putting the campaign's pieces together — press list, press kit, message points, print and radio ads, event coordination, etc.

In March, we added an interim half-time Communications Assistant. We also set up a print clipping service and a toll-free line so farmers could request information kits about biological farming.

CAFF successfully launched the Biological Farming Promotion Campaign on April 23 at the 1999 CAFF Farm Tour. A press conference during the tour featured two growers and a pest control advisor speaking about their experiences with biological farming in almonds, walnuts and winegrapes. The event was picked up by a major valley television network, ag trade press and local media. See the attached evaluation brief for a more in-depth discussion of implementation of the media and advertising strategies.

Internally, a number of capacity building steps have been taken to better coordinate and enhance staff outreach efforts. In early June, CAFF held a marketing training session for staff. The fruits of the workshop will allow CAFF to extend our communications tool belt and enhance the organization's ability to advance the promotional campaign. The four basic principles covered were improving external communications, transmitting consistent messages, creating an organizational identity, and identifying the right message for each of our target audiences. A dozen staff across departments attended. For those who could not attend, materials and a videotape were made available.

A master calendar of CAFF events and operation timelines is up and running and posted in a central location of the headquarters. The calendar features activities for the current month, the following month and a quick look for the rest of the calendar year. The calendar provides a comprehensive look at CAFF activities and will be continuously available to field staff.

As part of promoting a consistent image, CAFF created an Identity Kit to help unify and strengthen written and visual communications. The kit contains written protocols for logo use, layout and design formats, and editing style sheets. All staff members responsible for external communication received kits and a kit is centrally located for general reference.

In June, CAFF worked with the Pest Management Alliance to conduct a baseline phone survey of 400 almond growers valley-wide. The resulting survey information will allow us to identify grower production practices and information sources and to discern changes in growers' familiarity with CAFF and BIOS after the first wave of media hits.

A Media Task Force was created to define CAFF's protocols for working with the media. The first meeting was held on June 24. The second Creative Team meeting is scheduled for July 13.

Deliverables: Message Points
Direct mail advertisement
Biological Farming Promotion press kit
Press contact list
Media coverage list
Media clippings
Marketing workshop materials
Table of Contents: Identity Kit
Agenda of Media Task Force
Evaluation brief

Percent of work completed: 35%

5b. Implement 2000 (year two) activities of the promotion campaign

Percent of work completed: 0%

5c. Implement 2001 (first six months of year three) activities of the media campaign

Percent of work completed: 0%

Task 6: Continue to coordinate BIOS in San Joaquin, Madera and Colusa counties

Subtasks and Deliverables:

6a. Hold frequent on-farm field days in all three counties
BIOS is recognized by growers, farm industry leaders and policy makers for its demonstrated ability to use voluntary, technical support programs to reduce organophosphate use in almonds. By promoting practices that reduce pesticide use and thus the potential for runoff of pesticides and fertilizers, BIOS helps to diminish the risk of agricultural contamination of waterways. Field days provide a venue for farmer-to-farmer information exchange, encouraging greater input from farmers and pest control advisors (PCAs). They are consistently ranked by growers in program evaluations as a primary source of information about the newest technologies in biological farming.

Since January, the beginning of the BIOS segment of the CALFED project, BIOS held 12 field days and 18 associated planning and evaluation meetings in San Joaquin, Madera and Colusa counties. This quarter the events were as follows:

EVENT	COUNTY	DATE
Nitrogen Budgeting Workshop	San Joaquin	April 8
Cover Crop and Soil Building Field Day	Colusa	April 20
1999 BIOS Farm Tour	San Joaquin	April 23
Maximize Your Cover Crop	San Joaquin	May 12
Insects in Your Orchard	Madera	May 13
New Alternatives for Summer Orchard Management	Colusa	June 3
Rodents, Raptors and Mice	San Joaquin	June 23
A Softer Approach to Summer	Madera	June 29

The showcase event of the season was the 1999 BIOS Farm Tour. On April 23, over 70 guests including growers, agricultural professionals, funders, government personnel and the media toured three nut orchards in San Joaquin County. Farm tour participants were educated in the biological farming practices such as beneficial insect releases and soil building. Participants learned firsthand from growers the importance of the adoption of alternative methods, the challenge and the long-term benefits to be had without compromising the farm's economic viability. The Farm Tour also featured a discussion panel and press conference that launched our three-year campaign promoting biological farming, targeting thousands of almond growers in the Central Valley.

All of the field days featured farmer-to-farmer interchange. Whether learning to distinguish pests from beneficial insects, how to combat summer dust pollution or how to determine nitrogen needs for their orchards, participants came away with specific practices they can use in their own orchard.

Management teams typically met after each field day to evaluate the day's event and to coordinate local BIOS activities for the upcoming month. The combined knowledge and experience of the management team members span all aspects of biological farming techniques for almonds. The San Joaquin and Madera project coordinators participated in management team farm visits during this quarter.

A core feature of the BIOS program is regular in-field monitoring performed by BIOS field scouts. Field scouts help growers to better identify pests and beneficial insects and to recognize early signs of disease in their orchards. Working with their field scouts, BIOS growers have become more skilled in the practice of orchard monitoring and are increasingly able to use monitoring data to make timely, effective management decisions.

Among their monitoring tools is *BIOS Field Notes*. Published monthly, *BIOS Field Notes* is a compilation of field scout data and observations of pest and beneficial insect populations, disease levels and predictions of regional pest activity. According to grower evaluations, most growers read *BIOS Field Notes* cover to cover.

The spring issue of the *BIOS Update* was released in June. This publication was received by over 3,100 people statewide. This issue included articles on the BIOS transition project and the 1999 BIOS Farm Tour.

Deliverables: Calendar of BIOS activities, January-June, 1999
Field Day fliers, agendas, sign-in sheets, evaluation summaries
Management team agendas and meeting notes
BIOS Field Notes
BIOS Update

Percent of work completed: 50%

6b. Provide support for the San Joaquin walnut project funded by UC SAREP. Cover crops and soil building were the main topics of the April 8 field day held at the Cooperative Extension office in Stockton in conjunction with the Biologically Integrated Farming Systems (BIFS) walnut project funded by UC SAREP. In this and other events, the BIFS team has called upon the combined expertise of the San Joaquin BIOS management team to act as speakers, host field days and provide event planning and outreach assistance. CAFF's regional coordinator has also provided training to BIFS project growers in meeting facilitation.

A two-way information exchange has been established between BIFS and BIOS. CAFF informs the growers and pest control advisors on the SAREP mailing list of biological practices through our newsletters throughout the year. In return, CAFF receives and includes observations from their field scout and a summary of their monitoring results in *BIOS Field Notes* for 1999. This approach offers readers from both projects broader information on insect populations and pest control.

On June 1, the San Joaquin BIFS walnut growers visited several farms with established hedgerow plantings in Yolo County. Two of those farms were part of the walnut BIOS project, which operated in Yolo/Solano from 1995 to 1998. Staff from BIOS, the Yolo County Farm Advisor's office and the Yolo RCD led the tour. Nut growers were able to see firsthand the potential benefits of hedgerows and the preparation necessary for planting them.

Task 7: Plan the transition of BIOS projects in Colusa, Madera, San Joaquin and Yolo/Solano counties

Subtasks and Deliverables:

7a. Build relationships with local stakeholders in Colusa, Madera and San Joaquin counties

CAFF is proactive about getting local agricultural leaders involved in our programs. We invite University of California researchers and farm advisors, and Natural Resource Conservation Service representatives to participate on management teams and to give presentations at our educational field days. We also ask farm suppliers to demonstrate new equipment at our field days, such as chippers and shredders that transform orchard brush into mulch, which is used as a soil amendment. As BIOS seeks to transfer some of the responsibility for county projects to local leadership, we also seek local institutional partners who can carry on aspects of the original program that local growers value most. Establishing and building relationships among these leader-partners is essential to implementing transition activities.

CAFF is a participant in the Almond Pest Management Alliance, a partnership formed by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Partners are the Almond Board of California, the Almond Hullers and Processors Association, UC Statewide IPM and local UC farm advisors. The Alliance was formed to provide information to growers about reduced risk farming practices. CAFF is working with the Alliance to conduct a statewide survey of almond growers to determine grower practices and their sources of information when making pest management decisions. CAFF is a member of the multi-organization coalition that forms the Almond PMA.

A stakeholders meeting was held following the June field day in Colusa featuring the Colusa management team, local growers and representatives from the local NRCS and RCD. Attendees discussed program strengths, changing levels of grower interest in BIOS, organizational resources in the county, and the status and interest of the Colusa RCD in assuming greater collaboration.

On June 23, transition coordinator, Mark Cady, met with program directors, regional coordinators, and management team members from Merced and Stanislaus counties to discuss strategies on how best to sustain the BIOS project in the future. There is a great deal of interest in continuing BIOS activities in this area. The transition coordinator will prepare possible strategies for presentation at a future planning meeting. One of the proposed alternatives is to provide a schedule of

rotating field days county by county, month by month in lieu of separate concurrent projects in the participating counties.

For the first time, NRCS representatives attended and participated in the May Madera field day. Tom Caudill and other NRCS staff members turned out to share with growers their current soil re-classification project. At the June field day, Alex Lehman, a member of the Madera RCD Board of Directors, continued to build upon the relationship by speaking at Sherman Thomas Ranch. Lehman discussed the availability of money from USDA EQIP to fund innovative projects directed to saving or preserving wetlands, protecting watersheds, and promoting resource or environmental conservation. He invited growers to consult the RCD or NRCS for grant project evaluation and application assistance.

The San Joaquin project coordinator attended a two-day conference in late June hosted by the Committee for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA). Participants include growers and local stakeholders interested in sustainable agriculture. BIOS staff assisted with event and meeting setup. The conference focused on soil fertility and pest management. The BIOS coordinator was able to meet future field day speakers and gain valuable information on soil fertility that can be passed along to BIOS growers.

7b. Plan and implement the walnut BIOS transition

The monitoring program continued this quarter for 10 BIOS growers. Two field scouts check pest monitoring traps and assess orchard status once a week. All enrolled growers receive monthly reports on their respective orchards in addition to *BIOS Field Notes*. Monitoring services will continue throughout the 1999 growing season and are paid for in part by the growers.

In late June, the Southern Sacramento Valley regional coordinator conducted phone surveys of enrolled growers regarding these monitoring services. These interim evaluations will serve to fine-tune the second half of the program and provide information that can be used in future transition programs. If this transitional monitoring program is successful in the South Sacramento region, it may be implemented in other regions as an option.

The South Sacramento Valley region advisory team met on April 27 to discuss continued plans for the BIOS transition and other regional activities. The group developed a timetable and list of educational outreach meetings that could use the LFN to cover topics of importance to walnut growers and other local crop farmers. The group also recommended several non-production topics such as labor issues, which would be of interest to both BIOS walnut growers and LFN growers of other crops.

Deliverables: Agenda and minutes Advisory Team Meeting

Percent of work completed: 50%

Projected expenses for the coming quarter:

Month 1: \$70,000

Month 2: \$70,000

Month 3: \$70,000

Total for quarter: \$210,000