

For immediate release 11-10-15

Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

Northern region – Modesto

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

Central/Southern regions – Fresno

Heather Heinks (559) 230-5898

Spanish-language contact

Maricela Velasquez (559) 230-5849

Air District Receives Nearly \$6 Million in Federal Grant Funding *US EPA grants Valley funds to replace agricultural tractors and residential wood burning devices*

The Valley Air District will augment its highly successful grant program with an additional nearly \$6 million in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) funding to replace old agricultural tractors and dirty residential wood burning devices.

“Grant funds such as these recognize the hard work and sacrifice being made by Valley farmers, businesses and residents to expedite emission reductions in the San Joaquin Valley,” stated Seyed Sadredin, Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. “With these funds the EPA is acknowledging the unique challenges of the Valley and providing much needed financial assistance.”

The nearly \$6 million in funding being announced today is from two federal grant programs; the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program and the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grant Program.

“With this financial assistance, EPA and San Joaquin Valley farmers are working together to improve air quality and promote the use of clean, cutting-edge tractors,” said Jared Blumenfeld, EPA’s Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. “This funding will also help Valley residents replace their old, polluting stoves—allowing them to enjoy the warmth of a fire without filling their homes and neighborhoods with smoke.”

Approximately \$10 million was available nationwide under the competitive Targeted Air Shed Grant Program. The District submitted four proposals and two are being funded, which represents half of the funds available nationwide.

\$2,483,607 of the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program funding will be spent on replacing approximately 2,484 dirty residential wood burning devices with US EPA Phase II Certified wood burning devices or gas devices under the District’s incredibly popular Burn Cleaner Program. Under this grant program Valley residents will contribute an additional \$5.7 million for the purchase of these types of devices and the District will be contributing an additional \$2.3 million to the program for an overall investment of over \$10 million. This funding will reduce an estimated 993 tons of particulate matter (PM) emissions over the project lifetime of 20 years.

An additional \$2,483,607 of the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program funding will be spent on replacing approximately 187 agricultural tractors under the District's very successful Tractor Replacement Program. Under this grant program Valley farmers will contribute an additional \$8.6 million for the purchase of new ag tractors and the District will be contributing an additional \$4.7 million to the program for an overall investment of nearly \$16 million. This funding will reduce an estimated 699 tons of Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) emissions and 139 tons of PM emissions over the project lifetime of 10 years.

An additional \$2.1 million was available through the competitive DERA Program in US EPA's Region 9, serving Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Pacific Islands and 148 Tribal Nations. The District was awarded \$1 million, just under half of the total funding available. Leveraging this grant funding, Valley farmers will contribute an additional \$3.4 million for the purchase of new ag tractors and the District will be contributing an additional \$1.9 million to the program for an overall investment of over \$6 million. The \$1 million will fund the replacement of approximately 75 agricultural tractors and is estimated to reduce 169 tons of NOx emissions and 28 tons of PM emissions over the project lifetime of 10 years.

"Agriculture is doing and continues to do its part to achieve tremendous air quality improvements in our Valley, our State and our Nation, and we want to thank and recognize our partners, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the California Air Resources Board, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (specifically Jared Blumenfeld Administrator for the US EPA Pacific Southwest Region) for believing in Agriculture's ability to be a part of this achievement," stated Manuel Cunha, President of Nisei Farmers League. "We would like to thank Roger Isom of California Cotton Ginners & Growers Associations and Shirley Batchman of California Citrus Mutual and the many other Agricultural Associations and Organizations for developing two groundbreaking voluntary programs the *Agricultural Tractor Replacement Program* and the upcoming *Tractor Trade Up Program*."

To date the District's Tractor Replacement Program has provided over \$80 million to fund over 2,200 Valley-based agricultural tractors. During just the past 2014-15 winter season, under the new program guidelines, the District's Burn Cleaner Program allocated just under \$7 million to replace over 3,947 high-polluting residential wood burning devices.

A complete listing of program requirements for both the Tractor Replacement Program and the Burn Cleaner Program can be found at www.valleyair.org/grants or by calling program staff at 559-230-5800.