

**For immediate release 10-22-18**

**Attn: Local news, health and assignment editors**

**Northern region – Modesto**

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

**Central/Southern regions – Fresno**

Heather Heinks (559) 994-7591

**Spanish-language contact**

Ana Stone (559) 230-5851

## **Replacing and Recycling Old Tractors Benefit the Valley's Air**

*\$108 million to help Valley farmers switch to cleaner farm equipment*

Earlier this year, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) awarded \$108 million to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District as part of the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER) Program to reduce agricultural industry emissions. Through this new funding approved by the state legislature, the FARMER program provides incentives for the replacement of old, high-polluting tractors and other agricultural equipment with the cleanest available new equipment.

“Agriculture is essential to the success of the San Joaquin Valley. The District will continue working with Valley growers, USDA-NRCS, CARB, EPA and other agencies to keep moving forward with clean air efforts and investments in the San Joaquin Valley,” said Samir Sheikh, Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer.

Valley farmers can buy cleaner agricultural equipment with incentives paying up to 60% of the eligible cost, while their older tractors are then crushed under the program. Qualifying farm equipment for replacement includes agricultural pumps, agricultural trucks, electric agricultural utility terrain vehicle (UTV) and pull-behind, engine-driven agricultural equipment.

“Emissions from agricultural equipment are a significant source of air pollution, especially in the San Joaquin Valley,” CARB Chair Mary D. Nichols said. “Instead of waiting for their equipment to wear out, this program makes it possible for farmers to upgrade right now and replace older, dirtier equipment with the latest and cleanest models. That will go a long way to helping improve air quality in the Valley and protect public health.”

Despite decades of progress and significant reductions in air pollution, the San Joaquin Valley continues to face challenges in meeting the latest federal health-based air quality standards due to its unique geography, frequently stagnant weather conditions, and significant impacts from heavy-duty trucks and equipment used in the Valley. These challenges are unmatched by any other region in the nation and, when coupled with the Valley's large number of disadvantaged communities, warrant greater attention and investment by the state and federal governments. Incentive programs like FARMER assist agricultural partners to continue to make strides in lowering emissions and helping improve air quality in the Valley.

“EPA works collaboratively with the state, local, and agricultural community to reduce the public health impacts of diesel emissions from farm equipment and trucks operating in the San Joaquin Valley,” said Mike Stoker, EPA's

Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. “In this past year, we have awarded \$10 million in Diesel Emissions Reduction Act and other grants to support replacing old, polluting diesels with newer, cleaner ones.”

The FARMER Program is one of several programs available to California farmers that use local, state, and federal dollars to help farmers clean up old vehicles and equipment and otherwise transition to more sustainable practices. Other programs include the District’s Agricultural Tractor Replacement Program, CARB’s Carl Moyer Program, the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Healthy Soils Program, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service’s (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), among others.

For more information, call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500) or view the [FARMER fact sheet](#).



The Valley Air District was awarded the \$108 million grant by the California Air Resources Board through California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities like the San Joaquin Valley.