



# VINEYARD TEAM

Promoting Sustainable Winegrowing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **The 12th Annual Sustainable Ag Expo Returns to San Luis Obispo**

*With the implementation of recent laws and regulations and other challenges affecting the California agricultural community, the Sustainable Ag Expo's educational seminars, knowledge-sharing platforms, and innovative product exhibition will empower and equip farmers to successfully navigate the challenges they face.*

August 30, 2016 (San Luis Obispo, Calif.) — The California agricultural community faces some of its most difficult challenges to date. To help growers address these challenges the Vineyard Team presents its annual Sustainable Ag Expo in San Luis Obispo this November 14-16.

[VineyardTeam.org](http://VineyardTeam.org)

Held at the Madonna Inn Expo Center, the Sustainable Ag Expo is a multi-day symposium that features an innovation tradeshow and educational seminars highlighting the latest in farming research, resource issues, and business trends related to sustainable agriculture for farmers, ag professionals, and pest control advisors. Last year, attendees represented more than 225,000 acres of row crops, vineyards, and orchards.

The seminars are designed to provide agricultural professionals with the best and most current information and tools to help meet the challenges California farmers face as well as look to the future by addressing water quality, air quality, labor issues, plant disease management, and more.

“All sectors and regions of California agriculture are facing some of the toughest challenges in their history, including impending labor shortages, new environmental regulations, as well as worsening crises in water supplies, pest control, and crop viruses and diseases,” says Dr. Craig Macmillan, Technical Program Manager for the Vineyard Team. “The aim of the Sustainable Ag Expo is to inform, educate, and prepare the industry with the know-how and tools to tackle these challenges successfully.”

With over 65 exhibitors, the tradeshow will feature the latest innovative technologies and products including cutting-edge mechanization equipment, fertilizers, environmental monitoring technologies, remote sensing technologies, among others.

The seminars and break-out sessions include:

### **Keynote Speaker: Brian Leahy**

As director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation, Mr. Leahy oversees all the programs and regulations that govern the use of pesticides in California.

### **The End of Farm Labor Abundance**

Experts will present the latest information on the political, economic, and demographic factors that affect the future of the farm labor supply in the United States.

### **Next Steps in the Mechanization of California Agriculture**

Growers from different crops will describe how they have mechanized some of their farming practices. Scientists and engineers will talk about the new technologies they are developing, giving a peek into the future.

### **Detection of Fungal Diseases**

Powdery mildew attacks many crops including both strawberries and grapes. Researchers have developed a technique for trapping powdery mildew spores in the field, detecting them in the lab, and testing them for resistance to FRAC 11 group fungicides.

### **Remote Sensing**

Scientists and engineers are finding new ways of collecting, interpreting, and applying Normalized Vegetative Density Index (NDVI) information to a variety of crops.

### **Update on the Red Blotch Virus and Grapevine Trunk Diseases**

The prevalence and spread of Red Blotch virus and Grapevine Trunk Diseases will be discussed in the context of managing these diseases and limiting their economic impact.

### **Environmental Policy and Agriculture: Water Supply, Stormwater, and Greenhouse Gasses**

Policy makers and regulators from the state and regional level will give a briefing on the current status of laws and regulation affecting grower in the areas of sustainable groundwater management, stormwater run-off, and greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

### **Laws & Regs**

Topics include personal protective equipment (PPE), changes to pesticide handler and worker protection standards, and the ag/urban interface.

Speakers and seminar leaders include some of the most experienced and knowledgeable experts in California agriculture, including presenters from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, NASA, the USDA Agricultural Research Service, universities both inside and outside of California, and respected industry leaders.

“This is one of the most crucial times we’ve ever faced, so we encourage all agriculture professionals to attend,” says Macmillan. “Our future is being shaped now as an industry, and the Sustainable Ag Expo has never proven to be more vital.”

For more information on attending or exhibiting at the **12<sup>th</sup> Annual Sustainable Ag Expo** please visit [VineyardTeam.org](http://VineyardTeam.org).

### **About the Vineyard Team**

The Vineyard Team is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable vineyard practices such as water conservation, protection of water quality, integrated pest management, habitat diversity, and human resources. Established in the mid-1990s when the term “sustainable,” was far less mainstream than it is today, the Vineyard Team has enjoyed an impressive track record, earning awards and recognition from a wide variety of entities including the Environmental Protection Agency and California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Visit [VineyardTeam.org](http://VineyardTeam.org) to learn more about the Vineyard Team and its SIP (Sustainability in Practice) Certified Program. The Vineyard Team can be reached at 805.466.2288.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Mike@ParkerSanpei.com

Parker Sanpei

805.543.2288