

AGNET WEST RADIO NETWORK

LandFlex Opportunities Becoming Available to More Farmers

June 14, 2023



LandFlex opportunities available to farmers and ranchers will be expanding. The program offers incentives to producers to reduce demand for groundwater supplies and help comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). President and CEO of the Almond Alliance of California, Aubrey Bettencourt said the next round of LandFlex has been announced.

“It should be opening on June 14, and it will be opening now to four more districts and basins. We’re excited to see how this works out because a lot of this is going to be in areas that are dealing with a lot of flood protection and flood mitigation issues,” said Bettencourt. “We’re looking at Pixley Irrigation District, Lower Tule Irrigation District, Mid-Kaweah GSA, and Westlands Water District.”

While initially designed with drought in mind, the program is also proving valuable with flood protection efforts. LandFlex is providing farmers with incentive options to help facilitate groundwater recharge and flood mitigation. Bettencourt said LandFlex is the only SGMA compliance tool specifically for farmers. “And to my knowledge, it is the fastest to be deployed. We have resources and dollars on the landscape within 45 days compared to programs that are still pending for their funding to be released that were approved over a year ago,” Bettencourt noted.

The Almond Alliance is one of the four technical assistance providers, which includes the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Self Help Enterprises, and Western United Dairies Foundation. These groups can help growers with determining which type of LandFlex opportunities might be best for their operation. Program information along with resources for the application process is available at LandFlex.org.

“Even if you just have a slight suspicion this might be useful for you, go ahead and apply. There is no penalty for application; there is no penalty for withdrawing an application. It’s a totally risk-free application process,” Bettencourt explained. “But that allows us as technical assistance providers to start working with you and see if it is going to work for you and really maximize the program for you if it does.”