

AFBF ANNUAL MEETING - January 2015 Workshop  
By: Sharon Furches

***Managing Water Availability for the Future***

Panel:

Robert W. Johnson, EVP, National Water Resources Association

Paul Wenger, President, California Farm Bureau Federation

Dr. Maurice Hall, Senior Hydrologist, California Water Program, The Nature Conservancy

Moderated by Ryan Yates, Director, Congressional Relations, AFBF

"Managing water requires stakeholders and local leaders to balance the needs of agriculture with growing competition from municipal and conservation demands within a complicated legal framework. Increasing water demands present challenges to water managers, local farmers and ranchers and developers. How can we find innovative solutions to address growing competition for groundwater resources? Gain perspectives on water issues facing agriculture from a national, ecological and grower viewpoint."

Sharon's notes:

Robert Johnson remarks...the problem: declining supplies due to drought and climate change. How will states be affected by climate change in the 21st century? Had a map of the runoff change; KY was in the middle with not much change expected. Most western states expect drastic changes.

Midwest and Eastern regions' focus will be on flood control not long term drought.

The southeastern region shows reductions in water but not arid issues; should be solvable with infrastructure.

Tools needed are conservation and re-use. Solutions take time; major infrastructure issues or improvements take 20-30 years to actually implement.

Relationships are important among water users. Leadership is critical.

Maurice Hall remarks: his training is as a Water Resource Engineer - Managing water for the future of people and nature. Huge efforts are western states to *move* water. Depend heavily on storage and conveyance.

To be dependable, our water supply must be stable and reliable.

New approaches make us uncomfortable but are drastically needed.

We need to manage proactively in wet years to prepare for dry years - don't wait for the crisis to occur.

Paul Wenger remarks: CA issues have primarily come from mismanagement. They have had adequate supplies but did not manage properly.

*Environmentalism* is a luxury...we can only initiate successful studies when we have plenty. Too late to study when crisis occurs.

It takes 850-1200 gal. of water to produce a 1200 calorie diet. Can minimize personal use, toilets, etc. but we *must* grow food.

Conservation only isn't enough; must address infrastructures, many of which date back to post WWII days.

**\*\*Must get people in the room that are saying "Yes We Can", find solutions, not just announce problems.\*\***