

## AG DIGEST

### Salinas featured in PBS NewsHour segment

Salinas was featured in a recent PBS NewsHour video segment, part of a weekly series that looks at leading science and technology.

PBS correspondent Cat Wise traveled to the area to explore how technology innovations are used during crop production. She showcased HeavyConnect, a new mobile app intended to help farmers monitor equipment and worker hours using iPad technology and interviewed city manager Ray Corpuz, who affirmed his support of the city's efforts to bring technology and the new jobs that come with it to fields and farms.

Wise filmed part downtown, at the Western Growers Center for Innovation and Technology, where staff members spoke about efforts to bring together the best minds in technology and agriculture in Salinas.



Salinas Californian obituaries also appear on [www.thecalifornian.com](http://www.thecalifornian.com) and on [Legacy.com](http://Legacy.com), the largest provider of online obituaries.



The full PBS Newshour segment can be found online at: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/californias-salad-bowl-cultivating-crops/>.

— *Aylin Woodward*

### EPA seeks comments on chlorpyrifos ban

The Environmental Protection Agency has reopened comments on its proposal to revoke all tolerances on the pesticide chlorpyrifos after releasing a statement this November.

In a new human health risk study, the EPA found that chlorpyrifos residues on food and in drinking water are higher than the amount allowed under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

The pesticide can be toxic to humans and has also been found to affect childrens' mental development when their mothers are exposed to chlorpyrifos while pregnant, according to the Center for Health Assessment of Mothers and Children of Salinas study.

The EPA's proposal would completely ban the use of chlorpyrifos in the U.S. Chlorpyrifos is already restricted to agricultural uses. In 2015, it was added to California's restricted materials list, meaning that people who want to use the pesticide must acquire a permit from their county agriculture commissioner.

Monterey County applied 12,372 pounds of chlorpyrifos on crops in 2014, including Brussels sprouts, strawberries and wine grapes, according to California's pesticide use reporting database. This is much

lower than the nearly 50,000 pounds applied in 2010.

Comments will be accepted through Jan. 17, 2017 at <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0653-0402>

The EPA is expected to make its final decision on the proposal by March 31, 2017.

— *Sarah McQuate*

### State's tomato processing moves north

Since 2012, the state's primary processing tomato production has moved north from Fresno county to the Sacramento Valley, according to Bob Johnson of Ag Alert.

Six counties in the Sacramento Valley increased their combined tomato production by almost a million tons over the past four years, while Fresno County – the current top processing tomato location – underwent a 25% decline. Fresno's 2016 harvest of about 4 million tons was down nearly 1.5 million from 2012, according to data from the Processing Tomato Advisory Board.

The shift can be attributed to water availability: Growth areas are shifting from drought-ridden Fresno toward more water-secure counties farther north, according to Johnson.

This year's processing crop saw a decrease from the two previous harvests – from 14.4 million tons to 12.6 this year alone. Growers have seen lower crop yields thanks to disease and recent drought, and the president of the California Tomato Growers Association, Mike Montna, expects an even further reduction in 2017.

— *Aylin Woodward*