



*Happy New Year and Welcome to 2016*

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It's 2016, hard to believe that Y2K and all the doom that was coming was 16 years ago. Unlike the build up of a potential challenge like Y2K, the challenges we face going into 2016 are very real. Water, labor, new pests, new plant diseases are a few. We went to sleep 12/31/15 and woke up 1/1/16 and they were still there. No answers for a lot of them yet. Most of these challenges will require us to look at things differently, the way we did things 16 years ago are probably not relevant anymore. Those who change and are able to think outside of the box will do so. We are in that group and the next 16 years will be rewarding.

In this newsletter we have articles on some fungicides from BASF. One of them, Headline, we are looking at in some citrus trials. David Holden provides us with his column and we learn more about a local grower and an AG RX employee.

In this newsletter we also introduce a new column, *What's in your backyard*. Every newsletter we will visit a business in our area and tell and show what they do. There are a lot of interesting things going on in our backyards and we would like to showcase them.

Finally, a big thank you to all of our customers for your business this past year. We look forward to partnering up with you in 2016.



**Chris Oliva**  
Sales Manager

*Crop and Livestock Report for 2014 from the Office of Agricultural Commissioner*

After a very tough couple of years (actually four) it is a good thing to look back to see what we accomplished and look forward with hope to the future. I recently picked up Henry Gonzales annual report on the state of Agriculture here in Ventura county. It was released November 3, 2015. If you have not seen it, go by the Ag Commissioner's office and pick up a copy. It will make you proud to be farming in our little corner of the state. I am a real numbers person and I think you will find the numbers encouraging.

We ended 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 with 20 and 27 inches of rain and then started our drought for the next four years with a total of 30 plus inches of rain. In that same time period we were able to outpace inflation with our

production increasing on a dollar basis almost 16 percent or 4 percent per year. From a state and national perspective our little county of approximately 95,000 irrigated acres ranks as the tenth richest county in the nation, ninth in California! These are figures to be very proud of. The front of the Crop and Livestock Report for 2014 says "Resilience During Drought." You can sure say that!

Some more numbers of great interest. Our wettest year on recorded history was 1997-98 at almost 50 inches of recorded rain and our driest year was 2012-13 with only 5.26 inches of rain recorded. Number one market value crop for 2014 was (and is no surprise to most of us) strawberries at almost \$628,000,000 in value, followed by the perennial favorite, Lemons at \$269,000,000. But the

surprise to me was Kale at the 10th. spot worth almost \$36,000,000. Livestock and Poultry sales were worth almost \$8,000,000 and organic certified farming at \$122,000,000.

Let us now hold out hope for a better than average rain and snow year with some strong reservoir and ground water recharging occurring over the next three months. You all have done a great job utilizing the limited water resources we have had the past four years. Now go out and keep up the great work!



-Dave Holden

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Citrus & Avocado Seminar**  
 Santa Paula  
 Community Center  
 February 23, 2016

**Worker Safety & Pesticide Training**  
 Goleta Store  
 March 4th, 2016



Merivon® Fungicide is a combination of Xemium® and pyraclostrobin or F500®. This combination delivers more consistent disease protection and potential Plant Health benefits for healthier, higher-quality fruit.

**Disease Control**

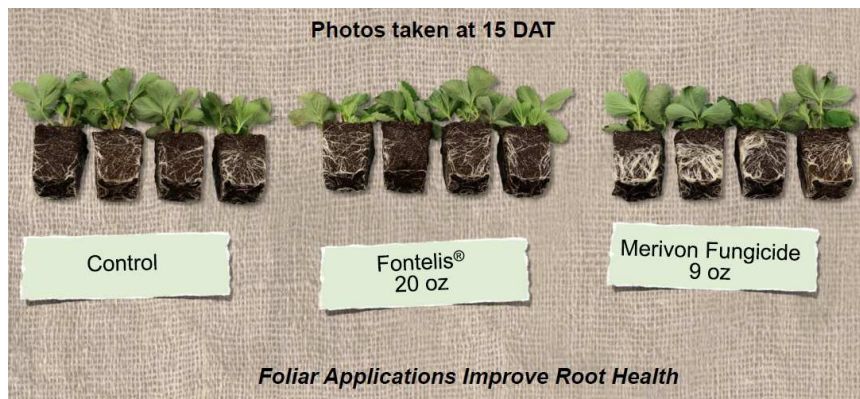
Merivon fungicide is powered by Xemium, an innovative active ingredient that continuously distributes its chemistry throughout the leaf to deliver more consistent disease protection. Merivon fungicide protects plants from a variety of troublesome diseases that can impact Plant Health and yield potential. When crops are affected by disease, they can't produce the strongest possible yields or high-quality fruit. Merivon fungicide has proven to be effective in controlling and stopping the most common diseases, like powdery mildew and Botrytis, which can prevent strawberries from reaching their full potential.



Berries were placed in incubator at 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Photos taken 5 days after harvest. Trial conducted by BASF.

**Photosynthesis and Enhances Growth**

The active ingredients in Merivon fungicide inhibit the mitochondrial respiration in fungal disease cells and plant cells. In plants, the mitochondria are only partially affected and this can lead to enhanced levels of nitrate reductase. Higher nitrate reductase can then enable the plant to retain and use more nitrogen for growth, development and maximum yield. F500 also triggers a series of positive reactions in the physiology of the plant, including elevated levels of antioxidants and a reduction in stress hormones that can suppress a plant's growth potential. Merivon fungicide improves a plant's photosynthesis efficiency – allowing more energy for robust growth and development.



2013 BASF greenhouse study. Foliar application in 50 gpa. No disease inoculations or symptoms observed. Photos taken 15 DAT.

Field trials have demonstrated that Merivon consistently delivers high-quality disease control and the potential for Plant Health benefits in target crops. Merivon is currently registered for use on strawberries, pome and stone fruit, tree nuts, grape, leafy, bulb, cucumber, and root vegetables.

# Headline® Fungicide

Headline® fungicide is the top choice for many growers in America. Not just because it controls diseases, but also because of the potential Plant Health benefits that F500®, its active ingredient can provide.

### Controlling Diseases and Strengthening Plant Defenses

Headline fungicide is a fast-acting, broad-spectrum fungicide that delivers a high level of activity on many major diseases that can threaten yield and crop quality. F500 is the single most-researched fungicide active ingredient on the market. F500 works to inhibit respiration in fungal mitochondria and results in death of the fungus. When crops are affected by disease, they can't produce the strongest possible yields.

### Photosynthesis and Enhanced Growth

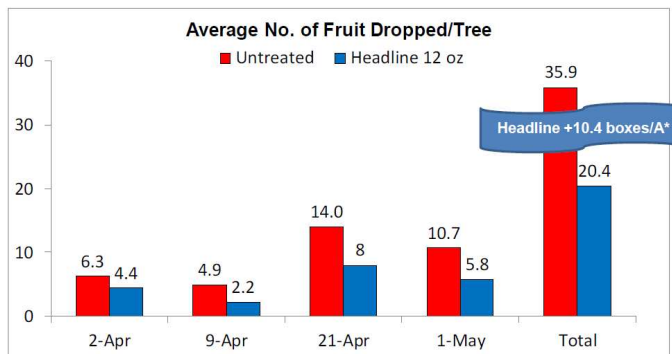
The active ingredient in Headline fungicide inhibit the mitochondrial respiration in fungal disease cells and plant cells. In plants, the mitochondria are only partially affected and this can lead to enhanced levels of nitrate reductase. Higher nitrate reductase can then enable the plant to retain and use more nitrogen for growth, development and maximum yield. Headline fungicide has also been shown to sometimes improve a plant's photosynthesis efficiency – allowing more energy for robust growth and development.



Grafted citrus trees obtained from a Florida nursery were grown in Redi-Earth for a month. Plant roots were washed and pruned to similar size and volume and replanted in Redi-Earth. Three days later, treatments were applied (Two foliar sprays, 14 day interval) Plants were evaluated 14 DALT for root growth.

### Stress Tolerance

Headline fungicide maximizes yield potential by helping plants increase tolerance to stressful weather conditions. In addition to disease control, the success of your crops also depends on the capacity to withstand extreme weather conditions, including excessive heat and drought. When using fungicides with F500, growers report that their crops show an improved ability to withstand extreme conditions. Heat can place plants in a stressed state and compromise their growth efficiency. In times of extreme or prolonged heat, plants elevate their production of the hormone ethylene, which enables the plant to shed leaves, pods and flowers to protect itself. One of the consequences of this is yield loss. F500 increases the activity of nitrate reductase and reduces the production of stress ethylene.



2014 Valencia block. Application of Headline at 12 oz/A to 20 mature Valencia trees on March 19, 2014. Twenty trees were left untreated. All dropped fruit removed from all trees on Mar 15 and then dropped fruit was counted April 2 (14 DAT), April 9 (21 DAT), and on May 1 (43 DAT). Headline yield advantage assumes 151 trees/acre and 225 fruits/90 lb box as fruit size. Estimated incremental gross profit of \$52.30/A from Headline spray.

In 2014, California field trials showed an increase in yield, size and utilization rates in Clemenules and Murcotts in the San Joaquin Valley. Currently trials are being conducted on those varieties as well as in Coastal lemons.

### What's in Your Backyard

For our first field trip we went to Brokaw Nursery. Brokaw Nursery was founded in 1956 by Hank and Ellen Brokaw and is still a family run business today. They have been at their current location in Ventura for 5 years having previously been located in Saticoy. The facility is on 45 acres, 5 acres of growing grounds. They also have nurseries in Spain and Morocco. They specialize in growing avocado and citrus trees as well as other subtropicals and kiwi vines. They grow over 250,000 trees a year.

We met up with Jorge Rodriguez who is the Compliance and Facilities Manager, Purchasing for Brokaw and Alex Grenados a Subforeman with Brokaw for 12 years. They were going to be our tour guides. We were very interested in learning about grafting of trees and seeing how it is done. Grafting basically is inserting a shoot of a plant into a slit on another plant in which it will continue to

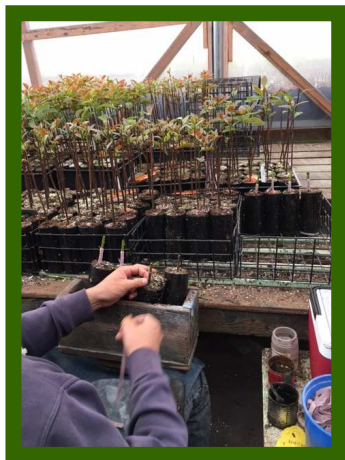
grow from. It sounds simple enough but it is a delicate process and truthfully is an art form that you have to master. In various types of horticulture people will graft for a specific root stock, a specific fruit variety or a specific variety/color of flower. At Brokaw they are grafting for several different types of root stock in both citrus and avocado. Some root stocks perform better in different soil types or conditions, like disease, than others. Onto this root stock they will graft many different fruit varieties

As we moved from greenhouse to greenhouse we met up with Roberto Raya who is the Propagation Specialist with Brokaw for 16 years. Roberto is their clonal specialist. Yes that's right cloning, asexual reproduction. No seeds.

Amazing.

Then the waiting game starts. First for all the grafts to take. Then for the plants to become big enough to move outside and then finally big enough to be planted in the ground. A process that takes a year from start to being ready to be planted in an orchard. What an unbelievable process. So as you drive around and come across a new planting of avocados or citrus, think about the time and nurturing it took to get there. Like caring for a baby until they are ready to go out into the world on their own.

Thank you Jorge, Alex and Roberto for our tour of Brokaw Nursery.



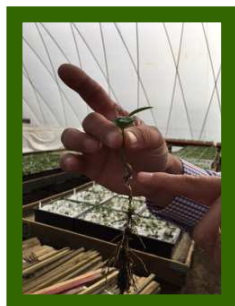
Inserting the graft



Grafted for Rootstock



Alex



Citrus seed



Grafted for fruit



## *I AM AG RX– Tom Paul*



AG RX's customer service centers are an important part of our business. To us and more importantly our customers. They provide a place to pick up product or get information. Tom and John understand the value of these centers to our customers and the service they provide. Thank you Tom and John for making our customer service centers something we can all be proud of.

### **What is your background?**

I have worked in the food industry as a warehouse manager, held various retail management jobs, worked for the county agricultural department and had my own nursery business. My education was in finance, but I took many courses in agriculture and found I had a greater interest in that area.

**How did you get started in this business?** Originally, I took courses to become a PCA, but my sister got me involved in her nursery business. From there, I joined the county agriculture department, worked part time for Home Depot in the garden department and finally AG RX.

**What are some of your greatest challenges you face in your field?** We are always at the mercy of the weather in this business. We need to keep products in stock and learn new products to keep the growers well serviced.



**What are your favorite aspects of your job?** I enjoy the interaction with our customers and getting the products they need for their livelihood. It is very important to keep a good rapport with the public, the warehouse, the sales department and the support staff.

**What are some of your interests?** I enjoy gardening, reading and walking our dog.

and ability to assist customers. I honestly enjoy all aspects of my job.

### **What are some of your interests?**

I enjoy spending time with my beautiful wife of 20 years and my family. I like traveling and all sports.

## *I AM AG RX– John Castaneda*

**What is your background?** I grew up locally and went to all local schools. My background began as a warehouse person and moved up to branch manager, eventually owning my own flower wholesale/importer business.

**How did you get started in this business?** With the economy struggling I felt inclined to see what was available in the industry and that's when I can across AG RX, I knew I would be well suited for this new exciting opportunity.

**What are some of your greatest challenges you face in your field?** The drought and the restrictions it is having on our industry. Causing less use of fertilizers and other materials.

**What are your favorite aspects of your job?** Having the knowledge, education





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[www.agrx.com](http://www.agrx.com)

**Providing our Customers with Information, Products and Services for Quality Plant Growth in a Safe and Environmentally Sound Manner while providing a Safe and Productive Work Environment for our Employees.**

### Visit us at any one of our locations

**OXNARD -Main Office** –751 South Rose Avenue, Oxnard, CA 93030  
Store (805)486-5788 Fax (805)240-1737

**Store Hours: M-F: 7am-5pm Sat: 7am-12pm**

**FILLMORE-** 186 East Telegraph Road, Fillmore, CA 93015  
(805)524-2687 Fax (805)524-1412

**Store Hours: M-F: 7am-4pm Sat: CLOSED**

**SOMIS** - 3250 Somis Road, Somis, CA. 93066  
(805)386-2674 Fax (805)386-1234

**Store Hours: M-F: 7am-4:30pm Sat: 7am-12pm**

**GOLETA** - 6150 Francis Botello Road, Goleta, CA. 93117  
Store (805)681-1686 Fax (805)681-1689

**Store Hours: M-F: 7:00 am-4:30pm Sat: CLOSED**

**SANTA MARIA** - 609 South Depot, Santa Maria, CA. 93456  
(805)925-2463 Fax (805)928-5329

**Store Hours: M-F: 7am-5pm Sat: 7am-12pm**

### *I Grow with AG RX—Paul Van Leer*

I had the opportunity to sit on the Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau board which is how I initially met Paul. I was working for a different company when the opportunity to work for Ag Rx knocked at my door and Paul was one of the first individuals I looked at for guidance. Paul is a very detail-oriented grower and we do our best to meet his needs. I am very grateful that I have the opportunity to work with him and be a part of his success.

**-Danny Cavaletto**

**How did you get started in this business?** As a child I was raised on El Capitan Ranch. During High School I worked on the ranch after school and on the weekends, one of my duties was to take care of the Avocado's. During the Summers I work on a commercial fishing boat. After high school I went up north for a few years to work on a large cattle ranch, then got an offer to manage a ranch with 20 acres of avocado's at the EC subdivision, I also did some consulting on neighboring ranches, at the same time, with the same owners on a just purchased 2,400 acre ranch in Los Ala-

mos, I planted and managed 40 acres of wine grapes, developed the rest of the ranch, as well as ran a cow herd.

After working for that family for ten years, I received a job offer to Manage the Las Varas Ranch, which currently has 165 acres of avocado's and 30 acres of lemons planted, and have been doing so for 16 years now.

**What are some of your greatest challenges? What concerns you most?** Free trade, specifically Mexico inundating the market, leaving little room for Ca Fruit to capitalize on the market. Costs of doing business: Regulations, labor, and shortage of legal workers, fertilizer, and restrictions, water quality, and availability.

**What agricultural groups are you a part of?** Director of Farm Bureau, Committee member of the County Agriculture Advisory Committee

**What hobbies/activities do you like to do with your spare time?**  
Going Fishing

**What does AG RX do well?** Customer service, flexible, will customize to your needs.

**If you were not in farming what would you be doing?** Commercial Fishing

