Californians Take Pesticide Reform Message to the State Capital

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—One Tuesday morning in March, dozens of Californians huddled in a church basement before walking the halls of the capitol building and state agencies to share their message of pesticide reform. From Los Angeles to Fresno and Santa Maria to Santa Cruz, local advocates came to share their stories of pesticide problems, and opportunities to protect the health of our children and create green agricultural jobs. These people, of different backgrounds and cultures, called on decision makers to take the necessary steps to invest in sustainable agriculture, including prohibiting the use of the cancer-causing strawberry pesticide methyl iodide.

Pesticide Watch continues to sponsor events like this that keep California’s leaders connected to the people most affected by their decisions.

To learn more about our “Healthy Children and Green Jobs” platform for the Brown Administration, visit www.pesticidewatch.org/get-information.
Central Coast Youth Leader

**WATSONVILLE, Calif.** — Joanna De-
lagadillo Magdaleno, affectionately
known as Jojo, is one of Watsonville’s
secret assets. A youth leader, an
activist, photographer and a senior
at Renaissance High School, Jojo is
leading her classmates and commu-
nity members in the fight against
methyl iodide. Not only did she stand
before the Watsonville City Council to
successfully convince them to pass a
resolution against the registration of
methyl iodide last fall, but as part of
a larger campaign to stop the use of
methyl iodide in Santa Cruz County
she has been educating middle school
students and their families about the
hazards of methyl iodide. And Pesticide
Watch has been at her side providing
support in these efforts.

Like many of the high school and
middle school students in the Central
Coast region, Jojo’s family has worked
in strawberry fields for most of her life.
Up until recently, her mother worked
as an inspector for Naturipe Berry
Growers, a job which exposed her to
dangerous pesticides on a daily basis.

“This is one of the main reasons why
I took on the methyl iodide issue,”
explains Jojo. “Growing up, I watched
my mother take care of my sisters and
my sick grandmother for a great deal
of her life. I am an aunt to eight nieces
and nephews and one more on the
way, and it is very important for me
to see them grow up healthy.”

Jojo’s work with youth is directly
connected to a strong campaign in
Santa Cruz County to pass a resolu-
tion that will stop or restrict the
use of methyl iodide. She hopes that
the board of supervisors and the gover-
ornor see that adults and children alike
are aware of the dangers that methyl
iodide poses. Jojo notes, “We do not
want it near our homes. Now it’s my
turn to take care of my family and my
community, as I watched them take
care of me and each other.”

**San Francisco Grows Urban Ag Movement**

**SAN FRANCISCO**—On April 20, 2011, San
Francisco became the first major city in
the United States to change its zoning to
foster more urban farming and to enable
the legal sale of produce and goods from
urban gardens and farms. This effort
was led by the San Francisco Urban
Agricultural Alliance, which was co-found-
ated by former Pesticide Watch organizer
Elizabeth Martin-Craig last summer. The
SFUAA, with over 40 member organiza-
tions and farms, was originally formed to
bring together local urban farmers and
gardeners, food policy advocates and
community members interested in advo-
cating for local food access.

When Little City Gardens co-founders
Paula Gali and Brooke Budner found
they could not legally sell the produce
from their three-quarter acre farm in San Francisco, the SFUAA began their popular campaign to amend the zoning code to expand where different types of gardens are permit-
ted, and to allow for the commercial sale of produce grown on-site. “We firmly be-
lieve that market gardens like ours can
fit into the fabric of residential neigh-
borhoods,” explained Little City Gardens
co-owner Caitlyn Galloway. “With this
new ordinance, we can finally start selling
what we grow to our neighbors and restau-
rants in the city. We look forward to being
able to test the viability of a small urban
farming business here in San Francisco.”

“The Urban Agriculture Ordinance will
allow for greater local food production
within city limits,” said San Francisco
Mayor Edwin Lee. “This legislation will
not only help support our community through
the increased production of fresh, local-
ly grown produce, but will also revitalize
vacant arable land and create green jobs.”

Unfortunately, toxic pesticides are regular-
ly used in schools. Scientists increasingly
find that, even in very small amounts, pes-
ticides have a profound and serious impact
on the health and development of children. Young children are especial-
ly vulnerable during critical windows of
development, when the impacts of pesticide exposure are amplified.

**Pesticide Watch**

**Teachers Say Green Schools Are Within Reach**

**CONCORD, Calif.**—Earlier this year,
Pesticide Watch joined parent, teacher
and health organizations in introducing legisla-
tion to prevent the use of toxic pesticides
on school grounds, while promoting green
pest management. “An apple a day keeps
the doctor away and so does healthy pest
control,” said Paul Tovar, state director of
Pesticide Watch. “Preventing pest problems
without toxic pesticides is good for school-
children, teachers and school budgets.”

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“Preventing pest problems,” said Paul Towers, state director of
Pesticide Watch, “is a matter of keeping students healthy at school.”

Studies released last year by UC Riverside
with five major pest control compa-
nies found that all of the companies
that switched to healthy pest control
retained the same level of customer sat-
sification, revenue flow and number of
service jobs. In addition, a first-of-its-kind
report released last year by landscape-
ning professionals concluded that the
annual cost of maintaining a field using
natural products and techniques can be
as much as 25 percent lower than the
cost of conventional programs using
chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

The newly amended zoning code sets an
important precedent for the region and
country as cities lobby their local gov-
ernments to allow for greater flexibility
with urban gardening and farming,
and provide their residents with local
and non-toxic food options.

For more information, please see: www.sfuaa.org

**Californians Demand Fair Farm Bill**

**WASHINGTON**—The opportunity
to ensure the success of local, organic farms
and safe food for public consumption has
arrived. The federal 2012 Farm Bill is up for
renewal. Albany Programs that support begin-
ing farmers, family farms, research on
organic transitions and wetland conserva-
tion are at risk of receiving very little, if any,
funding in the 2012 Farm Bill.

“Powerful agribusinesses are trying to
control what’s on our tables, threaten-
ing the livelihood of many farmers that
most directly grew our food,” said Dana
Perls, community organizer with Pesticide
Watch Education Fund. Without these
beneficial programs, the large agribusi-
nesses and industrial mega-farms will
receive billions of dollars in benefits, while
organic growers receive a small fraction
of the funds. This could have detrimental
effects on the success of small and medium-
sized farms, and ultimately the public choice
to consume healthy and local produce.

In order to take action and advocate for a
healthy and responsible Farm Bill, Pesticide
Watch and organizations across the state
have joined in coalition with the California
Food and Justice Coalition, Food and Water
Watch, and Environmental Working Group
to advocate regionally, statewide and
nationally for a just and equitable Farm Bill
that directively funds to local and organic
farmers, healthy school lunch options and
conservation programs, which will protect
our soil and water. Stay tuned for how you
and your local organizations can partici-
pate in the fight to preserve healthy food
options and preserve organic farming!

**Contact Us**: Is your neighborhood threatened by pesticide pollution? Are your government officials or company executives not addressing these issues in a timely and effective manner? If so, Pesticide Watch Education Fund and our staff can come to your community and help you. Please contact us at 916.350.0883 or info@pesticidewatch.org.

**Plant the seeds of a healthy California**

You can be remembered as someone who
fought for healthier farms, families
and homes by making a bequest to
Pesticide Watch.

For information, call 1-800-841-7299; or
e-mail plannedgiving@pesticidewatch.org.