



For Immediate Release

The ICA Visits Yuma County

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In 2016 the Industrial Commission of Arizona started a tradition of holding a Commission meeting outside of Maricopa County once a quarter. The Commissioners and the Director of the ICA, James Ashley, believe wholeheartedly that meeting stakeholders face-to-face and answering their questions or addressing their concerns is not only good for the stakeholders but also for the Commission which continuously works to reduce workplace injuries and improve collaboration.

This quarter the Commissioners traveled to Yuma County.

On Wednesday, March 6th, the Commissioners and the ICA Director met with Mark Smith, the President of Smith Farms. There was a detailed presentation highlighting what Smith Farms and the agricultural community in general is doing to prevent workplace injuries. The Commission was also shown the state of the art technology used in Yuma to monitor water-use, soil salinity, and the use of drones for monitoring crops. With help from the University of Arizona, Yuma has become a leader in agricultural research and data collection.



ICA Commissioners and Director meeting with Smith Farms

Later that day the Industrial Commission met with members of the Arizona Western Growers Association which has worked closely with the ICA and specifically the Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health (ADOSH). The Yuma County agricultural industry is vibrant and well-managed but also one of the more high-risk industries in Arizona. Because of this, the Western Growers have put an emphasis on working collaboratively with ADOSH to prevent injuries before they happen. The discussion included our Heat Stress Prevention program which is extremely important in Yuma where temperatures exceed 105 degrees most summer days. The importance of reiterating water, shade, and rest to workers was emphasized.

Early the next morning the ICA Commissioners and the Director made their way down to the border to visit the San Luis Port of Entry which processes thousands of people a day, many who are coming into Yuma to work in the agricultural industry for the day.



The ICA Commissioners touring Mellon Farms

Following the tour at the port of entry the Commission met with the Yuma County Water Users' Association. The Commission was given an extensive explanation on how water usage is planned and distributed to the farmers in Yuma. Using the proper amount of water is extremely important because any water supply the farmers do not use cannot be saved for a later date.

That afternoon the ICA Commission visited Mellon Farms to watch the harvesting of iceberg lettuce. The process of removing the produce, bagging it, and sorting it out in the fields is impressive, efficient, and highlights the importance of vigilance to workplace safety.




The ICA Commission touring Mellon Farms

The day was rounded out at a lunch meeting with stakeholders and a public Commission meeting held at the Yuma City Council Chamber.

Media Contact

Name: Trevor Laky
Title: Chief of Legislative Affairs and Public Information Officer
Phone: 602-542-4478
Email address: trevor.laky@azica.gov

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