Letters

Tips for buying and moving firewood safely
Re: "California Firewood Task Force’s message: Buy it where you burn it" (October-December 2011): Your article was timely! This past December our department collaborated with Janice Alexander of UCCE Marin County to develop a public service announcement (PSA) regarding the risks of moving firewood and tips on buying firewood. This PSA, along with a few others can be found at: www.youtube.com/user/01156AAE4AB13265.

The movement of firewood has always been a high-risk path to bring invasive and nonnative pests into our backyard. The goldspotted oak borer is just one more example, and more are on their way. All of us must do our part to help prevent their introduction, or detect an infestation at a very early stage before it becomes too costly or impractical to eradicate. Public outreach and education is vital to ensure that we have the greatest chance of success against this ongoing barrage of unwanted and injurious pests.

Stefan Parnay
Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Director
Marin County Department of Agriculture and Weights & Measures, Novato

Switchgrass clarification
Re: “Switchgrass is a promising, high-yielding crop for California biofuel,” by Pedroso et al. (July-September 2011): The article states that switchgrass is no longer listed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) as a noxious weed. This statement is in error. CDFA has never listed switchgrass as a noxious weed and it has been and remains listed as an agricultural crop seed in regulation. Some county agricultural commissioners wanted it listed as a noxious weed, but that never happened.

Stephen Brown
Special Assistant, Permits and Regulations
California Department of Food and Agriculture, Sacramento

Fritz-Metcalf collection now online
The Marian Koshland Bioscience and Natural Resources Library at UC Berkeley has posted the Fritz-Metcalf Photograph Collection, nearly 9,000 images relating to forestry, conservation and the lumber industry in California and the United States (www.lib.berkeley.edu/BIOS/fmpc).

Emanuel Fritz and Woodbridge Metcalf were among the first to join the faculty of the new School of Forestry at UC Berkeley in the early years of the last century. Together they created an extensive collection of photographs taken between 1910 and 1960, documenting their passionate involvement with forestry and the university. The collection itself covers 1906 to 1984, with contributions from other faculty, students and friends of the School of Forestry.

Norma Kobzina
Marian Koshland Bioscience and Natural Resources Library
UC Berkeley

New URL for California Agriculture
With this issue, California Agriculture’s online address has changed from “.org” to “.edu”, better reflecting its status as a University-based academic journal. The prior URL will still function. The new URL is http://californiaagriculture.ucanr.edu.