

# BizFed Bounce Back



*BizFed members share stories of resilience.*

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*In the face of COVID19, BizFed members bounce back with perseverance, creativity and resourcefulness.*

## REGULATIONS MAKE WATER RUN DRY

Even as COVID-19 dramatically alters our lives, some things never change. To businesses and groups dependent on water in Kern County, the biggest problem is still over-regulation.

Same as it ever was.

The Water Association of Kern County is a membership organization composed of energy companies, water companies, farm bureaus, farmers and other businesses that need water to operate. The association provides education to the public on water usage and how it affects the general public.

According to the association's Second Vice President, Jason Giannelli, the power of unelected boards--air boards, water boards--dominates water usage and often comes from an ill-informed point of view.



Jason Giannelli and daughter out on the farm.

"These people don't have a clue what they're doing," Giannelli said.

### First-Hand Experience

Giannelli is a farmer himself--he works for a farm management company that is a family ran organization one of the things they manage are feed crops for 3 different dairies--growing feed corn, wheat, alfalfa and almonds, while managing three dairies. His own family has been farming for 4 generations in Kern County. He also represents the Kern County Farm Bureau for the association and comes to his knowledge of water from first-hand, real-world experience.

"I farm all year long; 365 days a year," Giannelli said. "The people I grow for and manage for are grinding everyday."

### Sacramento In The Way

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the association has been blessed with few disruptions to their core mission of informing the public. It recently launched a media campaign for #TheMagicOfWater, with banners, posters and even large pictures on water tanks in the most populated drivable areas, along I-5 and HWY 99. But partisan politics and over-regulation remain the biggest issue facing water users. Recently, the federal government authorized more water usage, only to be killed by the state, which reduced allocations. The state has also slow-walked water storage



A fresh crop showcasing the #magicofwater projects, which have already been approved by voters.

"Sacramento is not managing our water correctly," Giannelli said. "People need to have food. So the politicians can play politics, but when people run out of food, that'll hopefully get everyone's attention."

### An Awakening On The Way

That awakening is the one silver lining Giannelli hopes to see come out of the COVID-19 crisis, which, along with creating new problems, has magnified all others.

"I hope people's voting habits change," Giannelli said. "People will start paying more attention once it affects them. Right now, politicians are just going along to get along. We need leadership."

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