



Dennis Fuller: Embracing the Diverse Demands of the PCA

By CAPCA Staff

Dennis Fuller obtained his PCA license in 2013, but has been involved in many aspects of California agriculture since growing up on a family farm near Riverdale. He attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Ag Science and minor in Ag Business. Following college, he combined a passion to help people with his background in agriculture to become a high school ag teacher at Hanford High School, before making a career change.

He cites his time on the family farm as a part of shaping his career path. "It gave me the work ethic needed to be a part of agriculture." Primarily, the farm produces walnuts and almonds, but when he was younger his family grew mostly cotton and alfalfa. He recalls running the module builder and even hoeing cotton as a kid, and a conversation with a PCA named Randy Davis. "I thought everyone took July 4th off," Fuller recalls. "But Randy asked me 'Do you think crops get the day off?' so I worked all day in over 100-degree heat. It was miserable. That's when I realized there was something different about people in this business." The mentality that "crops never take a break" is a large part of his work ethic.

Throughout high school and college, he'd considered becoming a PCA. It wasn't until working as an intern for Helena that his eyes started to open: "I was always under the impression that a PCA was just a bug checker. But after those summers I found out there was much more to be being a PCA." When looking to transition from teaching, Fuller became even more aware of the types of jobs available. "I didn't realize being a PCA was so broad."

"After 5 years [of teaching], I was ready for a career change. This is where I found the manufacturing side of being a PCA," Fuller says. "This job allows me to teach my peers – or more times than not my peers teach me – about chemistry while helping farmers make decisions that will directly affect production."

Now, in his current position with ADAMA, he has the privilege of being involved in a large array of crops from asparagus to walnuts. He prefers working in almonds and walnuts, but still really enjoys looking at cotton. Until recently, his area covered Hanford down to San Diego out to the coast. With the wide variety of crops grown throughout such a diverse geographical area, Fuller has gotten good at research and developed a strong network of resources to support the PCAs he works with. "When I first started, I got a phone call about dill – I had no idea what dill looked like in the field," he recalls laughing. "That was part of why I joined CAPCA – for the networking."



DENNIS FULLER

CAPCA Chapter: Tulare-Kings

Education: Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Year of PCA License: 2013

Employer: ADAMA



Fuller currently serves as the Tulare-Kings Chapter Vice President and State Board Director. “I volunteered to be a part of this organization because I believe in the goals and understand that no one person can do what CAPCA does by themselves... I realized CAPCA has a lot of things to offer and without an organization backing our license we would be fighting the fight as individuals.”

When talking about the satisfying highlights of being a PCA, Fuller remarks that in his position he doesn't hear the ultra-success stories or get many thank you's. “But you can't be in it for the thank you... I enjoy seeing other people have success. Whether that is a farmer protecting his crop or a PCA trying to solve a problem, it's fun to watch people succeed.”

He and his wife Emily have a toddler named Jax, and are expecting another child in June. Outside of work, he enjoys hunting and riding standup jet skis. ■

