



Fresno County Sheriff – Coroner's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner

September 27, 2016

News Release

Tony Botti – Public Information Officer
Office: (559) 600-8137
Cell: (559) 977-0379
E-Mail: tony.botti@fresnosheriff.org

Runaway Tractors Damage Thousands of Dollars Worth of Crops

Detectives with the Fresno County Sheriff's Ag Task Force are searching for the person(s) who stole two tractors and used them to destroy thousands of dollars in crops. The crimes are believed to have occurred between the hours of 5:00 pm on September 15 and 7:00 am on September 16.

Around 8:00 am on September 16, 2016, deputies responded to a farm located at Brannon and Nees Avenues in Firebaugh. A New Holland T6020 tractor was stolen from this location. The suspect placed the tractor into "creeper mode" and then jumped out of the cab. Creeper mode allows the tractor to crawl at a slow speed and is often utilized when towing trailers carrying workers who are harvesting crops. The unoccupied tractor traveled east through fields for approximately six miles before finally coming to a stop in a dry canal near Nees and Jerrold Avenues. The tractor plowed through fields belonging to several different property owners. It destroyed crops such as tomatoes, cotton, asparagus, peppers and pistachio trees. The tractor, which was not damaged, was recovered and returned to its owner.

On this same day, at around 10:00 am, deputies also responded to a report of a stolen John Deere tractor at the corner of Fairfax and Nees Avenues. The tractor was used to run over some pistachio trees recently planted on the farm. The tractor was later found pinned up against a bulldozer. The John Deere suffered about \$2,500 worth of damages.

Anyone with information on these cases is asked to please contact the Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center at (559) 600-3111, the Ag Task Force at (559) 600-8150 or email agcrimes@fresnosheriff.org You may also call Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-STOP (7867).