



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



On The Horizon



December 2009 Edition



Welcome to the “**On The Horizon**” newsletter from the Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer’s office. The purpose of this newsletter is just to give you an idea of the issues that the Department of Agriculture is tracking and addressing on your behalf. Our Department has three major divisions: [Environmental Protection and Pest Management Division](#), [Weights and Measures/Standardization/Crop Statistics](#), and [Pest Detection and Exclusion](#). This newsletter is also posted to our [Department website](#).

If you do not wish to continue to receive this newsletter, please respond to the email to which this newsletter was attached.

Sincerely, *Carol N. Hafner*, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PEST MANAGEMENT DIVISION:

This division includes pesticide use enforcement, apiary inspection and bee disease abatement, weed control and vertebrate pest control. **Fred Rinder** continues his roll of Interim Chief Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer. Until a permanent replacement can be recruited, Rinder will be overseeing this division and some administrative duties.

- **Pesticide Permit Issuance:** The holidays have begun and so is the restricted materials pesticide permit issuance season. The Department will begin issuing permits on Monday, December 14, 2009. **Please note that the Department will be closed due to office closure on Wednesday, December 23rd through Thursday, December 24th and Thursday, December 31st. All County offices will be closed on Christmas and New Year’s Days.**
- **Registration Reminder:** Registration for Pest Control Advisor’s, Pilots, Pest Control Business’s, and Structural Pest Control Business’s has begun as of November 30th for 2010.
- **Change to Private Applicator Certification (PAC) Exam Schedule:** Beginning November 30th, there will no longer be any “walk-ins” for the grower’s (PAC) exam. Scheduled exam classes will begin December 9th and continue until the busy permit and registration season is over in late March. Please refer to the Permit Renewal mailer notice or contact the Pesticide Division for exam dates at (559) 456-7373.
- **Carbofuran’s Residue Tolerance Revoked:** Carbofuran’s residue tolerance for food use has been revoked by Federal EPA. Commodities treated with carbofuran after December 31, 2009 and found with carbofuran residues, cannot legally be sold and are considered adulterated food products. California labeled food commodities for Furadan (carbofuran) are: artichokes, barley, corn (field and human consumption), grape (all), oats, potatoes, strawberry, sunflower, and wheat.
- **Westside Drift Mitigation Information:** Fresno County’s Westside Drift Mitigation Conditions for herbicides will once again come into affect January 15 through April 30, 2010. The Township, Ranges, and Sections affected are located west of the Fresno Slough. The two hours of Drift Mitigation education sessions **will not** be required for 2010 because of excellent compliance resulting in a third straight year of zero reports of loss submitted due to herbicide drift.

- **Rodents Run Amuck:** Lettuce planting for the spring harvest has begun in the Huron area. Some growers are beginning rodenticide treatments along the perimeter of the fields to manage damage caused by deer mice and meadow mice (voles). Both species have a rapid reproductive rate. Therefore, early detection, identification and treatment are critical for managing damage.



Deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*) Meadow mouse, or vole (*Microtus spp.*)

Just a reminder that the bait sales counter will be closed for Temporary Office Closure on December 23, 24 & 31. The normal hours for the bait sales counter are 8:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm. Monday through Friday. For questions concerning vertebrate damage management call 456-7316/456-7510

- **Migratory Bird Damage:** Also, bird damage to lettuce seedlings is occurring. The usual culprits are horned larks and crowned sparrows. Both species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty. Don't forget to obtain a Migratory Bird Permit from our office. The permit allows growers to legally control them. For more information call the bait sales counter at 456-7316/456-7510.



Lettuce field no bird damage (left), heavy horned lark damage (right)



Horned lark



Golden crowned sparrow



White crowned sparrow



Crowned sparrow damage to romaine lettuce.

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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES/STANDARDIZATION/CROP STATISTICS DIVISION:

Measuring and weighing devices, quantity control, weighmaster enforcement, petroleum products, service agents and metrology are programs within the weights and measures function of this division. The other programs include crop statistics, fruit and vegetable quality control, egg quality control, organic farming and direct marketing. **Thomas Nyberg**, retired Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer, has returned as an Extra Help Deputy to provide direction to the division. The recruitment for his replacement is nearing completion.



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- **November Crop Report:** Here is the November Crop Report:
- **Standardization Inspection Programs:** Head lettuce season is nearly complete with a few companies are still packing. The Citrus Maturity Inspection Program is at its peak. Some citrus tests are showing low sugar but are making the minimum standard. Packing sheds state that the market is good for small fruit. Most sheds have an abundance of large sizes and are waiting for the smaller sizes to mature. Inspection of Wholesale Houses is continuing. California Department of Food and Agriculture has increased the number of eggs inspections at wholesale and retail to be performed in Fresno County. Some certified producers are submitting add/changes to reflect their planting of winter vegetable crops. Organic registration and amendment applications are current.
- **Weights and Measures:** Fresno County is one of several local counties inspecting prefilled 5 gallon propane tanks for labeling and accuracy of label. Complaints, originating in a neighboring county, regarding short filled propane tanks started in late October and were forwarded to Fresno County. Inspectors have substantiated some shortages and are working with one company to gain compliance. Fresno County will be inspecting all of the local vendors for compliance during December. Inspectors are conducting weighmaster audits during November and December. Some Notices of Violations have been issued for incomplete weighmaster tags, particularly missing signatures. Follow up inspections will be conducted at these locations to verify compliance. The vehicle scale, bale scale, packing house device inspection programs were completed during November. Several districts and town device inspection lists were also completed. Weights and Measures are on schedule to complete 100% of its device inspection programs.

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PEST DETECTION AND EXCLUSION DIVISION:

Last, but not least, the Pest Detection and Exclusion Division includes nursery inspection, seed inspection, pest detection and trapping, pest control and eradication, biological control, entomological services, and pest exclusion, including high risk pathway and commodity export inspections. The Deputy Agricultural Commissioner in charge of this division is **Tye T. Hafner**.

- **Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP):** Because of additional finds of ACP in Imperial, San Diego, and Los Angeles counties; the ACP quarantine area has been expanded and now includes western San Bernardino County and additional areas of Riverside County including all of the Coachella Valley. The areas of California now under quarantine for ACP totals 14,201 square miles. All of Los Angeles and Orange Counties are quarantined. Maps of the quarantine areas of San Diego, Imperial, Riverside, and now San Bernardino Counties are below. Citrus Packers are reminded that bulk citrus may move into the Valley.



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- **European Grape Vine Moth (EGVM):** Although EGVM is inactive over the winter months, work to eradicate this serious pest in Napa County continues. USDA is forming a technical working group of experts from around the world to evaluate EGVM biology and behavior. Treatment efforts in other countries are being reviewed to make recommendations for eradication efforts in Napa County. Trapping and surveys will resume in the spring. An investigation into the means in which this pest was introduced into California is also in progress. Invasive pests of this kind do not come into the country by natural means; they are introduced by human hands.
- **Mediterranean Fruit Fly (Medfly):** Four more Medfly have been trapped in the Fallbrook area of San Diego County. In addition a property was found with larvae. In response fruit has been stripped from residential fruit trees in the area, trap level have been increased and the release of sterile Medflies in the area has occurred.
- **Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM):** Two LBAM were discovered in traps in Santa Barbara for the first time. Additional traps will be placed in the area of the new find. Another LBAM was also trapped in Davis of Yolo County.



Happy Holidays to You !

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