

From: Jim Saunders <Jim@hearstranchwinery.com>
To: <AgOrder@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 1/3/2011 4:48 PM
Subject: Proposed Ag Waiver Changes
Attachments: 12_23_10 Vineyard Team Ag Order Letter.pdf

Mr. Jeffrey S. Young, Chairman

Mr. Roger Briggs, Executive Officer

CRWQCB

Central Coast Region

895 Aero Vista Place, Suite 101

San Luis Obispo, California 93401

Gentlemen:

I have recently learned of the proposed potential changes to the tier levels and other reporting requirements and therefore apologize for not having our counsel address the specific issues with which we do not concur.

As lifelong members and farmers in this community, we believe we are more cognizant of water issues than most. Years ago, and much prior to the reporting requirements currently imposed, we addressed numerous implementations of water conservation such as:

1. We initiated a cover crop management system which utilizes native grasses in our vineyards to prevent runoff, while not overtaxing moisture content of the soil, thereby requiring more irrigation.
2. We have installed moisture monitoring equipment at several locations on our property to let us know exactly when and how much we need to irrigate.
3. We manage our storm water on site to prevent loss of topsoil and detain water to prevent runoff of water that would normally be wasted.

These are but a few of our programs that we have implemented to address numerous water issues.

We feel that the changes to our tier level and additional reporting requirements seem unjustified and unnecessary.

We believe that the agency needs to carefully consider additional changes prior to implementation of the staff recommendations.

It should also be noted that some farmers and ranchers who are not engaged currently in reporting, do not seem to be governed at all as we have experienced recently when we contacted the agency to inquire on wasteful applications of water by those individuals. In fact, there was not even a body in the agency who could act as an enforcer when wasting of precious water occurs.

I urge you to consider the suggestions as set forth submitted to your agency by the CCTV, in which we are in concurrence.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance.

Very truly yours,

Jim Saunders

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