

ITEM: 10

SUBJECT: Del Monte Foods, Inc., and Mr. Ralph Alcala, Waste Discharge Requirements, Plant #24, Kings County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of Waste Discharge Requirements*

BACKGROUND: In 1997, Del Monte Foods, Inc. (Del Monte), purchased a tomato and zucchini processing plant (referred to as Plant #24) in Hanford. Plant #24 has been regulated under WDRs since March 1996 that allow a monthly average daily flow up to 3.5 million gallons per day (mgd) and a daily maximum flow up to 4.5 mgd during the processing season (1 June through 31 October) and a monthly average flow up to 0.5 mgd during the off-season (1 November through 31 May).

Wastewater is generated by processing vegetables, boiler and cooling tower blowdown, equipment cleaning, and water softener regenerate. Wastewater receives pH adjustment via carbon dioxide gas injection and screening. Process wastewater is used to supplement irrigation of nearby cropland (referred to as Land Application Area or LAA) that is owned by either Del Monte or Mr. Ralph Alcala. Wastewater application and crop management of the entire LAA is the responsibility of Mr. Alcala.

Del Monte submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (RWD) in April 2014 to expand the size of the LAA by 158 acres to bring the total area of the LAA to 1,235 acres. Based on the proposed discharge and LAA loading data provided in the RWD, a performance based effluent limitation for electrical conductivity (EC) of 1,000 umhos/cm (annual average) was included in the tentative WDRs.

ISSUES: Comments were received from Del Monte. Revisions were made to the tentative WDRs to address some of the comments. Full responses to the comments are included in the Response to Comments in the agenda package. A summary of the issue regarding the effluent limitation and staff's response follows:

- 1) Del Monte is concerned that it cannot consistently meet the effluent limitation for EC proposed in the tentative WDRs since the effluent data included in the RWD were reflective of discharge quality when processing good quality tomatoes. The quality of the discharge is dependent on the quality of tomatoes received at Plant #24 and tomato quality is an uncontrollable factor. Generally, poorer quality tomatoes require more lye in the peeling process which results in a higher effluent EC. Del Monte submitted revised discharge and LAA loading data that are reflective of processing good, moderate, and poor quality tomatoes.

**Response:** Since the Dischargers will not be able to consistently comply with the proposed effluent limitation, the tentative WDRs have been revised to include a Provision with a compliance schedule to implement necessary improvements to comply with the effluent limitation.

The revised data indicate the annual average EC of the discharge is projected to be up to approximately 1,821 umhos/cm. The off season chloride concentration of the discharge is projected to be consistently greater (ranging from 120 to 650 mg/L) than the effluent chloride limitation of 175 mg/L, contained in the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin, Second Edition*, revised January 2004, for discharges to areas that may recharge to good quality groundwater. However, the effluent chloride concentration during the processing season is less than 175 mg/L, which results in an annual average effluent chloride concentration of 174 mg/L.

The compliance schedule will include an interim effluent limitation for EC of 2,000 umhos/cm (annual average). Due to the projected effluent chloride concentrations, the tentative WDRs have been revised to include a final effluent limitation for chloride of 175 mg/L (daily maximum). The compliance schedule will also include an interim effluent chloride limitation of 210 mg/L (annual average). The compliance schedule will be for a period of seven years.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommend the Board adopt the Waste Discharge Requirements.

Mgmt. Review \_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Review \_\_PEP\_\_\_\_\_  
9/10 October 2014  
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