State of California
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
LOS ANGELES REGION

ORDER NO. 01-090

WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
UNITED FOODS, INCORPORATED
(PICTSWEET VENTURA MUSHROOM FARM)
(FILE NO.65-155, CI-5067)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Los Angeles Region (Regional Board), finds:

1. United Foods, Incorporated (hereinafter Discharger) operates the Pictsweet Ventura Mushroom Farm (Pictsweet). Wastewaters are discharged from the facility under Waste Discharge Requirements prescribed in Order No. 87-085, adopted by this Regional Board on June 22, 1987.

2. The California Water Code Section 13263 (e) provides that all Requirements shall be reviewed periodically and, upon such review may be revised by the Regional Board. A review of the current Requirements, and a site inspection, was conducted by Regional Board staff, during which several changes to the Facility operations were identified.

3. Pictsweet has filed a report of waste discharge and has applied for renewal of its waste discharge requirements for discharge of wastes to surface impoundments (ponds).

Description of Facility

4. Pictsweet Mushroom Farm is located at 4440 Olivas Park Drive, Ventura, California (Figure 1 is a vicinity map of the facility). Pictsweet Mushroom Farms cultivates up to 25,000,000 pounds of mushrooms per year. The Pictsweet Mushroom Farm includes seven (7) growing buildings, an administrative office building, an area in the center of the growing buildings that is utilized for compost mixing, a stockpile area for straw (includes manure) from racetrack stables, a spent compost area and a pond area. The pond area lies approximately 280 feet north of the Santa Clara River near the southern boundary of the property. The pond area includes three (3) holding ponds and eight (8) percolation ponds (Figure 2 is the facility layout). The three holding ponds are used to store excess on-site storm water runoff. Pictsweet Mushroom Farms has indicated that the holding ponds are clay-lined. However, the integrity of the clay liners in the ponds has not been verified and percolation may occur through these ponds. Two (2) of the percolation ponds located next to the holding ponds have been used to store excess storm water runoff on an as needed basis, but are precluded as stormwater storage areas in this Order. To the extent practicable, the excess storm water runoff collected in the ponds is used in compost conditioning. The combined storage capacity of the three holding ponds is 0.6 million gallons of liquid.

5. Potable water is obtained from the City of Ventura and is utilized by the Discharger at an average rate of approximately 0.28 million gallons per day (mgd).

6. The potable water is used to: moisten compost piles composed of straw and manure; to produce steam for heating and humidifying seven growing buildings; and to wash down farm facilities and equipment. Most of the process water is used to produce steam for heating and humidifying the growing rooms.

7. Insecticides, fungicides, algicides, acids, and disinfectants are added to the waste water used for compost conditioning and mushroom farming. Cottonseed meal and canola meal are also added to the compost piles during conditioning. The potable water used to produce steam for heating and humidifying the growing rooms is softened.

8. Prior to 1995, the maximum flow of wastewater to the eleven (11) ponds was approximately 0.014 to 0.017 mgd. The wastewaters included compost leachate, condensate, cooling tower blowdown water, and washdown water.

9. The wastewaters, which were not treated prior to discharge, were collected in a concrete-lined gravity-flow wastewater drainage system. This wastewater drainage system flowed to a concrete-lined sump at a pumping station. Prior to 1995 the wastewater was discharged to eleven ponds (three holding and eight percolation ponds) located near the southern property boundary.

10. In 1995, the closed loop system was installed which precludes disposal to the ponds in dry weather and which facilitates the reuse of wastewater generated by the compost conditioning and mushroom farming operations. Since that time, the wastewater has been reused in the compost conditioning operation. The wastewater is collected in the concrete-lined drainage system that flows to the pumping station. From the pumping station the water is pumped to four above ground tanks where the settleable solids are removed. The water is then reused in the processing operation; usually it is sprayed onto the compost piles during conditioning. The settleable solids collected are disposed at a permitted site.

11. An agricultural drain (channel) runs along the western and eastern edges, and along the southern property boundary before entering the Santa Clara River. During significant rain events the agricultural drain can fill to capacity with runoff from nearby farms. Simultaneously, high flow levels in the riverbed can close the flapgate that connects the agricultural drain to the river. In the past, Discharger has forced stormwater from the channel through the flapgate by utilizing a pump which then allows the flow in the channel to enter the Santa Clara River.

12. Spent compost is stockpiled in a field east of the growing rooms. The stockpile may remain on the ground (there is no paving on the stockpile area) for several months prior to removal from the premises. The spent compost is normally dry. However the pile is not covered, hence during rain events leachate may be generated. Since the area underneath the stockpile is not paved, there is no barrier to percolation. The spent compost is sold for use as fertilizer or soil amendment.

13. All wastes are contained and hauled away to a legal disposal site except for wastewaters reused in the mushroom processing operations, domestic wastes which are discharged to

the sanitary sewer, and spent compost materials that are ultimately sold for reuse.

Storm Water Management

14. Storm water falling onto the site is collected in the washdown water recycling system, where it commingles with any washdown waters present, and is utilized in compost conditioning. When the amount of on-site storm water runoff exceeds the amount that could be used for compost conditioning during the day, the excess storm water runoff, including commingled washdown water, is discharged to the holding ponds. The two percolation ponds located next to the holding ponds were also used on an as needed basis for storage of storm water runoff, but per this Order will not be used.

15. The facility is not covered under the Water Quality Order No. 97-03-DWQ NPDES General Permit No. CAS000001, Waste Discharge Requirements for discharges of storm water associated with industrial activities excluding construction activities because the Pictsweet Mushroom Farm Standard Industrial Code (SIC) (0182) is not subject to the permit.

Description of Waste Discharge

16. Discharge to groundwater underlying the facility may occur through percolation of wastewaters from the holding basins, leachate at the straw pre-wet area, leachate at the stockpile area for racetrack straw, and leachate generated during storm events at the spent compost area. The areas underlying these operations are not paved. Hence, leachate from these operations, including site contaminants, may reach groundwater which during the rainy season may be within one foot of the ground surface. At other times during the year, the depth to groundwater in the area may be between 8 and 12 feet below ground surface (bgs).

17. Even though Pictsweet has installed a closed loop system for dry weather flows, the Regional Board has required Pictsweet Mushroom Farms to sample stormwater flows to the holding and/or percolation ponds. Data collected from the sampling, which includes the results below, verifies that stormwater would not meet the new effluent limits. Pictsweet has no plans for treating wastewaters nor stormwater. Subsequently, because the stormwater holding ponds may not adequately preclude percolation of stormwater which is expected to exceed Basin Plan objectives and effluent limits, and because leachate may be generated from existing compost operations which is not precluded from percolation, the accompanying Time Schedule Order is necessary.

Constituent	Units	Results	Date Sampled
Total dissolved solids	mg/L	14,600	06/22/00
pH	pH Units	9.1	06/22/00
$BOD_5 20^oC$	mg/L	795	11/06/00
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/L	0.5	11/06/00
Nitrate (as N)	mg/L	1.7	06/22/00
Nitrite (as N)	mg/L	<0.01	11/06/00
Ammonia (as N)	mg/L	48	11/06/00
Organic Nitrogen	mg/L	130	06/30/00
Ethylbenzene	µg/L	<3	11/06/00
Xylenes	µg/L	<6	11/06/00
Chloride	mg/L	1,430	04/24/00
Diazinon	µg/L	3.10	11/06/00
Propoxur (Baygon)	µg/L	42.9	11/06/00

18. Wastewater in the percolation ponds may turn anaerobic, as indicated by a biochemical oxygen demand ($BOD_5 20^oC$) of 583 mg/L (in a sample collected on October 14, 1994), the presence of beggiatoa, a chemosynthetic bacterium that typically lives in anaerobic conditions, noted during the October 1994 sampling, and during the site visit by Regional Board staff on April 4, 2000, and by the presence of septic odors.

19. The Pictsweet facility is in the Santa Clara River Watershed and overlies the groundwater plain north of the Oxnard Plain portion of the Ventura Central Groundwater Basin. The Regional Board database lists the groundwater basin as unnamed, but Ventura County personnel refer to it as the Mound Basin. Some of the aquifers below the facility may be perched or semi-perched. Shallow groundwater below the facility could be hydraulically connected with the Santa Clara River.

    The directional flow of groundwater in the area is toward the ocean per Ventura County Underground Tank Division personnel.

    Shallow groundwater data collected during a tank excavation near the Pictsweet facility in July 2000 by Ventura County yielded the following results:

Analyte	Units	Result
Total dissolved solids	mg/L	3,337
Sulfate	mg/L	1,530
Nitrogen as Nitrate	mg/L	15
Turbidity	NTU	130
Iron	mg/L	200
Manganese	mg/L	2.6
Conductivity	µmhos/cm	5,100

    These data indicate that total dissolved solids and sulfate exceed the maximum objectives prescribed for groundwater basins within the region.

20. The Discharger does not currently monitor the groundwater quality beneath the facility to evaluate any impacts from its operations or discharge. However, the Regional Board is now requiring the Discharger to do so.

Applicable Plans, Policies, and Regulations

21. The Regional Board adopted a revised *Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties* on June 13, 1994. This plan contains beneficial uses and water quality objectives for the groundwater basins in the Region. Ventura County personnel refer to the area where the Pictsweet Mushroom Farm is located as the Mound Groundwater Basin. The beneficial uses of the unconfined and perched aquifers in the Oxnard Plain of the Santa Clara River in the Ventura Central Basin are:

    Existing: agricultural supply, and municipal and domestic supply

    Potential: industrial service supply.

    The Pictsweet facility is located in the Santa Clara River Watershed. The perched groundwater in the vicinity may have hydraulic connection with the river. The beneficial uses of the Santa Clara River are:

    Santa Clara River - Hydrologic Unit 403.11

    Existing: industrial service supply, industrial process supply, agricultural supply, groundwater recharge, freshwater replenishment, water contact and non-contact water recreation, rare, threatened, or endangered species, warm freshwater habitat and wildlife habitat

    Potential: municipal and domestic supply.

22. The issuance of waste discharge requirements for this discharge is exempt from the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 21100) of Division 13 of the Public Resources Code (California Environmental Quality Act) in accordance with 14 CCR Section 15301 as an existing facility.

Watershed Management Approach

23. This Regional Board has implemented a Watershed Management Approach, in accordance with *Watershed Protection: A Project Focus* (EPA841-R-95-003, August 1995), to address water quality protection in the Los Angeles Region. The objective is to provide a comprehensive and integrated strategy resulting in water resource protection, enhancement, and restoration while balancing economic and environmental impacts within a hydrological-defined drainage basin or watershed. The Watershed Management Approach emphasizes cooperative relationships between regulatory agencies, the regulated community, environmental groups, and other stakeholders in the watershed to achieve the greatest environmental improvements with the resources available.

24. The January 2000, *Watershed Management Initiative Chapter* of the Regional Board addresses water quality problems and issues in the Santa Clara River Watershed. Increasing loads of nitrogen and salts in supplies of groundwater threaten beneficial uses including irrigation and drinking water. Other threats to water quality include increasing development in floodplan areas, which necessitated flood control measures such as channelization that results in increased runoff volumes and velocities, erosion, and loss of habitat.

25. There are no drinking water supply wells within 100 feet of the facility. The groundwater well that is closest to the facility (Well ID 02N23W24J02S) is approximately 2,300 feet away. According to Ventura County personnel, this well and others located in the vicinity are screened at depths greater than 400 feet and are primarily used for agricultural supply.

26. The requirements contained in this Order are based on the Basin Plan, USEPA National Recommended Water Quality Criteria, other Federal and State plans, policies, guidelines, and best engineering judgement, and are in conformance with the goals of the aforementioned water quality control plans, and will protect and maintain existing beneficial uses of the receiving water.

Notifications

27. The Regional Board has notified the Discharger and interested agencies and persons of its intent to issue waste discharge requirements for this discharge and has provided them with an opportunity to submit their written views and recommendations.

28. The Regional Board, in a public hearing, heard and considered all comments pertaining to the discharge and to the tentative requirements.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that United Foods, Incorporated shall comply with the following:

I. DISCHARGE LIMITATIONS

A. Effluent Limitations

1. Waste shall only be discharged to the three holding ponds and shall be limited to wastewaters commingled with storm water on an as needed basis during storm events.

2. The pH of wastes discharged to the ponds shall at all times be within the range 6.5 to 8.5.

3. The temperature of the wastes discharged shall not exceed 100 ^{o}F.

4. The discharge of a wastewater to the three holding ponds with constituents in excess of the following limits is prohibited:

Constituents	Units	Discharge Limitations Monthly Average	Daily Maximum
BOD_5 (20°C)	mg/L	45(1)	-
Total suspended solids	mg/L	150	-
Total dissolved solids	mg/L	3,000	-
Oil and grease	mg/L	10	15
Sulfate	mg/L	1,000	-
Nitrate + Nitrite as Nitrogen	mg/L	-	10
Xylenes	µg/L	1,750	-
Ethylbenzene	µg/L	700	-
Diazinon	µg/L	6	-
t-butanol	µg/L	12	-
Malathion	µg/L	160	-
Baygon	µg/L	30	-
Chloride	mg/L	500	-

(1) Average is 7 day average.

B. PROHIBITIONS

1. Discharge of wastes to any point other than specifically permitted in this Order is prohibited and constitutes a violation thereof.

2. Effluent discharged to the ponds shall not have any visible scum, foam, floating debris, or sludge deposits at any time.

3. The ponds containing discharged effluent shall not have beggiatoa or other indications of anaerobic conditions that would create a public nuisance.

4. The ponds and the berms surrounding the ponds shall not contain plants, shrubs, and bushes.

5. Wastes discharged shall not impart tastes odors, color, foaming or other objectionable characteristics to groundwater.

6. Wastes discharged shall at no time contain any substance in concentrations toxic to human, animal, plant, or aquatic life.

7. The discharge to the ponds shall not contain salts, heavy metals, or organic pollutants at levels that would impact groundwater, or groundwater that may be in hydraulic connection with surface waters designated for marine aquatic life or body contact recreation.

8. All process wastewater discharges that do not meet the aforementioned requirements shall be held in impervious containers or ponds and discharged at a legal point of disposal.

9. Disposal or handling of process wastewaters and/or storm water runoff shall not create a condition of pollution, contamination or nuisance, or problems due to breeding of mosquitos, gnats, midges, flies or other pests.

10. Composting operation storage and treatment areas will be designed, constructed, and managed in order to impede the migration of liquid phase constituents or leachate to ground water or surface water.

C. PROVISIONS

1. The Discharger shall file with the Regional Board technical reports on self-monitoring work performed according with the specifications contained in Monitoring and Reporting Program No. 5067, as directed by the Executive Officer. The results of any monitoring done more frequently than required at the location and/or times specified in the Monitoring and Reporting Program shall be reported to the Regional Board.

2. The Discharger shall implement engineering controls to prevent the discharge of contaminants from the straw stockpile and/or other operations near the southern portion of the facility to the agricultural drain channel.

3. The Discharger shall take all reasonable steps to minimize or prevent any discharge that has a reasonable likelihood of adversely affecting human health or the environment.

4. This Order includes the attached *Standard Provisions Applicable to Waste Discharge Requirements* (*Standard Provisions*, Attachment W). If there is any conflict between provisions stated hereinbefore and the attached "Standard Provisions", those provisions attached hereinbefore prevail.

5. This Order includes the attached Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment T). If there is any conflict between provisions stated in the Monitoring and Reporting Program and the Standard Provisions, those provisions stated in the Monitoring and Reporting Program prevail.

6. In the event that liquid wastes are transported to a different disposal site, the Discharger shall report: types of wastes and quantity of each type; name and address of each waste hauler (or method of transport if other than by hauling); and location of the final point(s) of disposal of each type of wastes.

7. The waste discharge requirements contained in this Order will remain in effect for a period of (5) years after issuance to the Discharger by the Regional Board Executive Officer. Any discharge of waste five years after the date of issuance, without obtaining new Waste Discharge Requirements from the Regional Board is a violation of the California Water Code, Section 13264. The Regional Board is authorized to take appropriate enforcement action for any noncompliance with this provision, including assessment of penalties.

8. In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order requiring any proposed activity be reviewed to determine whether such activity will cause additional energy usage, Regional Board staff have determined that implementation of these WDRs will not result in a significant change in energy usage.

9. In accordance with Water Code Section 13263(g), these requirements shall not create a vested right to continue to discharge. All discharges of waste into the waters of the State are privileges, not rights, and are subject to rescission or modification.

II. EXPIRATION DATE

This order expires on May 10, 2006.

III. RESCISSION

Order No. 87-085, adopted by this Board on June 22, 1987, is hereby rescinded, except for enforcement purposes.

IV. PETITION TO REVIEW ORDER

Pursuant to California Water Code Section 13320, any aggrieved party may seek review of this Order by filing a petition with the State Board. A petition must be sent to the State Water Resources Control Board, P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, California, 95812, within 30 days of adoption of the Order

I, Dennis A. Dickerson, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region on June 28, 2001.

Dennis A. Dickerson
Executive Officer

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