



Dairy CARES Report

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Watching mailboxes (email, too) can help producers keep up with increasingly complex water requirements

As CARES coalition members know, new Central Valley water quality regulations are being phased in over about a five-year period.

This staged process was strongly advocated by dairy industry groups during the Regional Water Quality Control Board's development of the rules. CARES members and the Regional Board both recognized that it was important to break the complex regulatory process into logical steps to allow each dairy operator time to understand and complete each stage before moving forward.

Dairy producers have done an excellent job so far, with nearly all producers having completed the initial stages. **But new deadlines are rapidly approaching and it is critical to continue to pay close attention to the requirements.**

By July 1, all Central Valley producers must submit their first "annual report" under the regulations. The annual report calls for detailed information, including an updated dairy facility assessment, well sampling results, manifests for manure exported from the dairy, and more.

In May, the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program (CDQAP) will hold workshops for producers at five Central Valley locations to provide additional help in completing the annual report requirements. In addition, CDQAP is mailing important information to all dairy producers to assist them in meeting the deadline. **Producers should watch their mailboxes in coming days for an envelope from CDQAP and consider attending one of these free workshops:**

- **Orland (Glenn County)**, 10 a.m. to noon Monday, May 12, Carnegie Center, 912 Third St.,
- **Fresno**, 10 a.m. to noon Tuesday, May 13, Fresno County Farm Bureau, 1274 W. Hedges
- **Modesto**, 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, May 14, Stanislaus County Ag Center, 3800 Cornucopia Way
- **Elk Grove**, 10 a.m. to noon Friday, May 16, Sacramento County Farm Bureau Office, 8970 Elk Grove Blvd.
- **Hanford**, 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, May 21, Kings County University of California Cooperative Extension Service Office, 680 N. Campus Dr., Hanford

CDQAP recommends that workshop attendees *try to complete the forms prior to attending the session* (again these forms will be mailed to all Central Valley dairy producers in the next few days). The forms ask for information that may not be readily available to you during the workshops.

Workshops will begin with a short session covering "frequently asked questions" regarding filling out the annual report. Following the opening discussion, the sessions will break to allow CDQAP team

members to provide informal, one-on-one assistance to individual dairy producers regarding any remaining questions they have.

In addition to keeping an eye on the mailbox for information from CDQAP, a new e-mail tool can help dairy producers keep up with updates from the Regional Board. To use the tool, go to the following link:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lyrisforms/reg5_subscribe.html

Simply enter your name and email address and check the box “dairy program” and you will be sent an e-mail when the Regional Board posts important new information, such as updated “Frequently Asked Questions” or other guidance documents, on their website.

It’s true that with California’s stringent water quality regulations for dairies, producers have more to do than ever to keep in compliance with the nation’s toughest environmental regulations. Even if dairy owners and operators are delegating some of the details of compliance to consultants and employees, it’s important to keep on top of knowing what is required because at the end of the day, full responsibility falls to the dairy owners and operators for compliance. Using the available tools, such as CDQAP assistance and e-mail updates, can help keep producers “wired in” to the latest information.

CARES is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability for California’s dairy industry. CARES members include the Alliance of Western Milk Producers, Bank of the West, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, Dairy Farmers of America-California, Dairy Institute of California, Hilmar Cheese Co., HP Hood, Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O’ Lakes, Milk Producers Council, Saputo Cheese, Turlock Dairy & Refrigeration, Western United Dairywomen, and others. For information about CARES, visit our web site at www.dairycares.com, write dairycares@aol.com or call 916-441-3318.