



California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association

Protection and Service Since 1881

December 2009

In California, Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers of Weights and Measures in each county have been working since 1881 to protect individual consumers, the environment and the \$32 billion agriculture industry in the state. County Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers work to maintain a balance between regulatory requirements and commerce to meet the 21st Century challenges and demands of our dynamic food and agriculture industry and to protect our abundant and varying ecosystems. Each day we ensure that consumers get what they pay for at the pharmacy, the grocery store and the gasoline pump. We are also continually surveying for harmful pests and plant diseases that could damage some of the 300-plus agricultural crops grown in California, a large part of the global food and fiber supply.

The California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association (CACASA) is the official organization of County Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers and is incorporated as a non-profit 501 (c) 6 organization.

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Two Recent Reports on States and Counties' Budgets Depict Things Will Get Worse Before Becoming Better



Last month The Pew Center on the States, a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts, released a first in a series of upcoming reports showcasing states that continue to struggle with budget crises. The report, "Beyond California: States in Fiscal Peril," (link below) highlights that while some economists claim the national economy may be recovering that's not the case for many states who continue to grapple with steep declines in revenues spurred by the combinations of reduced consumer spending, high unemployment, tightening credit, the collapse in housing construction and more.

The Pew Center created a scorecard for the report and ranked all states according to six factors that contributed to California's budget crisis: (1) high foreclosure rates; (2) increasing joblessness; (3) loss of state revenues; (4) the relative size of budget gaps; (5) legal obstacles to balanced budgets-specifically, a supermajority requirement for some or all tax increases or budget bills; and (6) poor money-management practices. Data from the first and second quarter of 2009 was used in the report. The first quarter data of 2009 was compared to that of the first quarter of 2008.

One data set that researchers reviewed was the states' budget gap as a percentage of general funds for fiscal year 2010. If a states' budget shortfall resulted from a decrease in revenues the state is mandated to balance its budget by cutting services, raising taxes and/or issuing debt (bonds). The report shows that California's revenues decreased by 16.2 percent from the first quarter of 2008 to the first quarter of 2009. This resulted in a budget gap (expenses over revenues) of 49.3 percent, the highest of any state in the nation.

This report was published just four months after the (July 2009) announcement by Moody's Investor Services that California's general obligation credit rating would be reduced from A2 to Baa1, just three levels above non-investment grade.

There is perhaps some recent good news for California. Early in November Moody's upgraded California's Recovery bonds, totaling \$8 billion, from Baa1 to A1. This rating suggests that while there are many favorable investment attributes, there are also elements that are somewhat susceptible in the future.

The Pew Center report indicates that things will get worse before they become better. "States' fiscal situations are widely expected to worsen even when the national economy starts to recover....Plus, states historically have their worst years shortly after a national recession ends, as they cope with higher Medicaid and other safety net expenses at the same time revenues lag because of stubborn unemployment."

To download "Beyond California: States in Fiscal Peril," click here:

http://archive.stateline.org/images/2009_Nov_11-BeyondCalifornia/BeyondCalifornia.pdf

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In mid-October, the National Association of Counties conducted a survey of mid-size and small counties, a majority with annual budgets under \$150 million, that make up the largest number of counties across the U.S. The survey revealed that 82 percent of respondents anticipated revenue shortfalls in the next fiscal year. Up to 56 percent of respondents anticipated annual revenue shortfall of up to \$10 million.

Half of the counties surveyed indicated the top sources of revenue shortfalls were property taxes, sales taxes and a reduction in state and federal funding. Counties also revealed how they are attempting to address the revenue shortfalls by: Delaying Purchases and Repairs (60 percent), Salary/Pay Freezes (59 percent), Delaying Capital Investments (54 percent), Hiring Freezes (49 percent), Use of Rainy-day Funds/Reserves (44 percent) and Travel Restrictions (41 percent).

A copy of the survey may be obtained on the NACO website at: http://www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=Media_Center&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=32326.

President's Corner



Since taking the reigns of the organization, CACASA President Scott Hudson (San Joaquin County) has been engaged in long-range planning that will improve upon members professional development and leadership capabilities to ensure the longevity of CACASA into the 21st Century.

Amidst a tough fiscal landscape for counties, the dynamic agriculture industry in California is also going through changes and presenting many challenges to industry leaders and organizations, including CACASA. Hudson is positioning the organization to meet these challenges head-on with a strategic plan in place.

Around the Regions:

Northern and Foothill Counties Seek Partnership with US Forest Service

Counties from California's northern and foothilla area met on December 3 with officials from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to discuss ways to better communicate and partner on control of invasive weeds on private lands adjacent to USFS lands. With the assistance from the offices of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congressman Wally Herger, counties have been engaged in preliminary dialogue with the USFS on these challenges.



In 2004, the USFS published a National Strategy and Implementation Plan for Invasive Species. This plan was in response to the Chief of the USFS identifying invasive species as one of the four significant threats to our Nation's forest and rangeland ecosystems. This national strategy encompasses four program elements:

1. Prevention.
2. Early detection and rapid response.
3. Control and management.
4. Rehabilitation and restoration.

County Agricultural Commissioners engaged US Forest Service officials to determine ways to partner in the future on issues including early detection, rapid response, control and treatment of invasive weeds found in USFS Region #5, the Pacific Southwest Region. The USFS manages 20 million acres of National Forest land in California. Eighteen national forests are located in Region #5.

Around the Regions:

Sacramento Valley

On November 12, the Sacramento Valley Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association met by invitation at the new Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Northern Regional Office in West Sacramento. Nearly all Commissioner / Sealers were in attendance. DPR's Tom Babb, Nan Gorder, and Ada Ann Scott were also present during the meeting. The conference area at that office was the right size for our 14 county meeting. An excellent barbeque lunch was prepared by DPR staff.

During lunch, a cameo appearance was made by Ralph Shields.

Against his objections, a cake was presented to Bill Stephans in celebration of his upcoming retirement.

The Sacramento Valley group wishes to thank Nan Gorder, Tom Babb, and DPR staff for their hospitality.

Upcoming Meetings

- Dec 7-11: Winter Conference, Holiday Inn Capitol, Sacramento

2010:

- January 14: Coast Regional Meeting, Marin County

- January 20: Northern Regional Meeting

- January 21: Southern Region Conference Call

- January 27: San Joaquin Valley Regional Meeting

- January 28: Sacramento Valley Regional Meeting, Sacramento County Office

- February 11: Coast Regional Meeting, San Mateo County

- February 18: Southern Regional Meeting, Los Angeles

- February 24: San Joaquin Valley Regional Meeting, Madera

- February 25: Sacramento Valley Regional Meeting, Woodland

- March 11: Coast Regional Meeting, Santa Cruz County

- March 17: Northern Regional Meeting

- March 18: Southern Region Conference Call

- March 24: San Joaquin Valley Regional Meeting, Tulare

- March 25: Sacramento Valley Regional Meeting, Auburn

- April 15: Southern Regional Meeting, Imperial County

- April 21: Northern Regional Meeting

- April 22: Sacramento Valley Regional Meeting, Grass Valley

- April 29: San Joaquin Valley Regional Meeting, Stanislaus

- May 3-6: Annual (Spring) Conference, Radisson Hotel, Dublin

- Dec 6-9: Winter Conference, Sacramento

Around the Regions:

Southern Counties Work to Contain Spread of ACP

In an effort to contain the spread of the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) San Bernardino (SB) County has requested the inclusion of all of the County south of the National Forest Boundary and recommended that Riverside County be quarantined as well; this despite the fact that ACP has not been found in SB County. Recent ACP detections in Pomona, Valley Center and Desert Shores show this pest is moving north and east towards the citrus production areas of SB and Riverside. "If we are going to have any chance of containing this pest and keeping it out of the Central Valley, we need to get ahead of it since our detection traps are not that effective" according to John Gardner, commissioner in San Bernardino.

State Legislative Report

by Matt Siverling

The 2009-10 Legislative Session has proven to be one of the most challenging in the history of the State of California. Our State is attempting to weather the storm that has grown steadily worse at each benchmark in the fiscal year. The Legislature and the Governor have set new records for fewest bills Chaptered in a single year while stripping State and local services to nearly bare minimum in an effort to keep California afloat.

Despite the billions that have been carved out of the State Budget and the gloomy fiscal forecast that lies ahead, the California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association has been able to navigate each of their 2009 sponsored proposals through the Legislature and into law, and lent support to several other measures that were among the very few successful bills this year. The Association's largest portion of General Fund dollars, local dollars for High Risk Pest Exclusion funding, remained untouched in a year in which most unprotected items were slashed or heavily reduced. For a detailed report on the 2009 CACASA Legislative year, please read my Annual Report at http://www.matthewsiverling.com/reports/ms110109_cacasa_final_report.pdf.

I look forward to the opportunity to advocate the legislative agenda of CACASA in the upcoming year.



Federal Legislative Report

by Tim Cansler, Meridian Growth Strategies

The U.S. Senate continues to work on major reforms to the nation's health care system. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has stated he would like to complete debate on health care legislation before Christmas. The debate on health care reform will likely push consideration of other legislation into the new year. The U.S. House adopted their version of health care reform, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, HR 3962 on November 7 by a vote of 220-215.

While the legislative calendar for the Senate between now and the end of the calendar year leaves little, if any, room for consideration of other legislation, the Senate must find time to complete work on the annual appropriations bills for FY 2010. Currently, only five of the 12 bills have been signed by President Obama (Agriculture, Interior and Environment, Legislative Branch, Energy and Water and Homeland Security).

Congressional leaders must also consider legislation that lifts the debt ceiling for the U.S. by the end of the year. The U.S. deficit reached a record \$1.4 trillion on September 30, 2009. Deficits have increased the national debt close to the \$12.1 trillion statutory limit, thus the House and Senate will need to vote on raising the U.S. debt ceiling well above the \$13 trillion level. Some lawmakers are considering adding the language into the FY10 Defense Appropriations bill or another appropriations conference report. Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (D-ND), Ranking Budget Committee Member Judd Gregg (R-NH) and California's Senator Dianne Feinstein are promoting a bipartisan deficit commission that will take under consideration all options to address the deficit.

During the first week of December the U.S. House adopted a permanent estate tax exemption and staved off the scheduled increase to 55 percent in 2011. The vote was largely along party lines, 225-200. Under the House legislation, the estate tax rate will remain at 45 percent with an exemption for up to \$3.5 million in inherited assets per individual and \$7 million for married couples. The estimated cost of the legislation is \$234 billion. This amount will not be subject to pay-as-you-go rules under an agreement secured by House leadership with members of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Democratic Coalition.



Featured Article



House leaders are working on legislation targeted at stimulating job creation. While specifics of the legislation remain vague, it is anticipated that infrastructure spending, tax credits for hiring, extension of unemployment benefits and small business loan programs will be part of the package. Leaders have made it known they would like to adopt legislation prior to the House recess on December 18 for the Christmas holiday.

Highlighting the need for job creation, Congressional Budget Office Director Doug Elmendorf recently told the American Association for Budget and Program Analysis that unemployment is likely to worsen in coming months before showing signs of improvement. Earlier this year CBO projected the unemployment rate would rise to 10.5 percent by 2010. According to data recently released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics the unemployment rate was 10 percent in November. Given such a high unemployment rate it will take years before the U.S. economy again reaches the historical targeted level of four percent.

For more information go to Director Elmendorf's blog at: <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/107xx/doc10748/11-24-09AABPA-Presentation.pdf>

Farm Bill Implementation Update:

California's agriculture industry is among the most robust, productive and competitive in the world. We lead the nation in the production of dairy, grapes and rice, and dozens of varieties of vegetables, fruits and nuts.

But today, much of this productivity is threatened by an alarming number of invasive pests that have entered our state. The Asian Citrus Psyllid, the Light Brown Apple Moth, and the Glassy Winged Sharp Shooter, just to name a few, threaten to destroy our crops and our state's most valuable industry.

As California's front line soldiers in the battle against invasive pests, the County Agriculture Commissioners have helped stem the tide of this very real threat. It has been your on-the-ground knowledge and experience that has allowed us to effectively combat these pests before they become established. But with the increase of international trade, invasive pests will continue to threaten our crops and your continued vigilance is critical to the long-term viability of the industry.

California Ranks #1 in High-Risk Assessment Completed by USDA-APHIS

At the end of October USDA-APHIS-PPQ published a "Comparative Risk Assessment for the 50 U.S. States," in response to the directive in the 2008 Farm Bill (HR 6124, Food, Conservation and Energy Act) to allocate funding provided by Section 10201, Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention, based on risk assessment. Specifically the Farm Bill directs APHIS-PPQ to allocate funds based on the following criteria: i) the number of international ports of entry in the State; (ii) the volume of international passenger and cargo entry into the State; (iii) the geographic location of the State and if the location or types of agricultural commodities produced in the State are conducive to agricultural pest and disease establishment due to the climate, crop diversity, or natural resources.

The Risk Assessment was conducted using risk elements including 1. Likelihood of Introduction, 2. Economic Impact, 3. Environmental Suitability and 4. Natural Resource Impact. The first three risk elements were each given a 30% weight. The Natural Resource Impact was given a 10% weight. Each risk element was composed of a number of sub-elements containing one or more variables. Risk values were established for each variable. Each state was assigned a 1-4 risk value for each risk variable with 4 being the highest risk and 1 being the lowest risk.

Average values were calculated for each sub-element and risk element. These average values were multiplied by the sub-element and risk element weights. The final average of the four risk elements was used to rank the states

In general, the highest risk states are those with large cities and busy ports or airports. They also tend to be located on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts or on the Great Lakes and perhaps share a land border with Canada or Mexico.

The top five high-risk states include 1. California, 2. Texas, 3. Florida, 4. Washington, 5. Illinois.

To read the entire Risk Assessment click on:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pest_detection/downloads/farmbill-states-risk-report.pdf

Section 10201, Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention, directs the Secretary of Agriculture to make available Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for early detection and rapid response of pest threats. These funds are to be made available as follows: \$12 million in FY 2009, \$45 million in FY 2010, and \$50 million in FY 2011 and thereafter.

At the Federal level, I am also committed to protecting California's agriculture industry from invasive pests. As a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, I was able to secure much needed funding to combat these pests in our state. The recently passed Fiscal Year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bill included:

\$44.656 million for the Citrus Health Response Program;

\$22.983 million for Glassy-winged Sharpshooter control,

\$1.008 million to combat the Light Brown Apple Moth;

\$738,000 for California county pest detection import inspection programs; and

\$619,000 for the California County Pest Detection Augmentation program.

But funding alone will not stem the tide of invasive pests into California.

As many of you know, I am also concerned about the quality and quantity of agricultural inspections at our ports and border crossings, particularly since this responsibility was shifted away from the Department of Agriculture and given to the Department of Homeland Security.

However, with your help we have underscored the enormous importance of this responsibility and I am happy to report that that DHS is responding. The number of pest interceptions by DHS has greatly risen in recent months and the

IT Update: New PPUR System On-Track

by Bob Lilley, Chairman



The CACASA IT Consultant Subcommittee is finishing up a one-and-a-half year commitment which began in 2008 by developing and publishing an RFP which led to the hiring of geographIT, an IT Consulting firm. Through the expert services of John Gless, Senior IT Planner, the IT Consultant Committee provided leadership resulting in an evaluation of 1. existing statewide conditions and needs at the county and state level, 2. creation of systems requirements specifications (SRS) to document specific IT needs of our pesticide permitting and use reporting system, and 3. the development an RFP for a competitive bid process to hire a vendor to upgrade software and implement a statewide IT solution.

The project is now entering it's final phase involving the screening of 14 extensive bid proposals from our advertised RFP, and the narrowing of the proposals to a short-list to be interviewed by the committee December 2 in San Luis Obispo. The committee and our consultants will be interviewing the top 3 vendors to recommend a single vendor to contract for services in January, 2010 to develop and implement a statewide pesticide permitting and use reporting IT system.

The selected vendor will be creating new and upgraded software to improve functionality and provide for a consistent statewide solution. Once the vendor is selected and final contract arrangements are approved, the project will be managed at two levels through it's two year implementation process. The Project Director will be Tim Cansler, CACASA Executive Director, and the committee will be recommending the creation of a Project Manager technical position to oversee county implementation. Details will be forthcoming to counties regarding transition of current data and training programs.

The IT Consultant process and selection of a statewide vendor provides numerous advantages over our current situation. The new system will provide many functional improvements that were identified through the fact finding of the multiple phases of the consultant project and the development of the SRS. Secondly, financial and business management issues will be substantially improved. Instead of paying for multiple vendors and systems, mill funds will be utilized to pay for a single vendor and statewide system. DPR has agreed to use the DPR Fund to share the expense for the new system at a 50-50 split with the CACASA Residual Mill Trust Fund. This is a significant improvement for Commissioners as we were previously paying 100% of the expense (other than county contributions) out of the Residual Mill Trust Fund. Business contracts will also be improved as we now have a detailed list of systems requirements which will be implemented through a competitive bid process. Previously we were told by vendors what we needed and then subsequently billed for services, while under the new plan we are telling vendors what we need and utilizing the advantages of competition to achieve the most cost effective price.

Finally, CACASA will own the computer source codes so we can utilize competitive bidding in the future for maintenance and any needed upgrades.

This item will be discussed during three different committee meetings at the 2009 Winter Conference in Sacramento. First, project funding will be proposed during the Mill Sub Committee meeting, mid week the program aspects will be covered during the IMPAC meeting, and finally, the project will be presented for approval during the Board of Directors meeting at the end of the conference. CACASA membership has participated and been kept informed about Phase I, II, and III of the IT Consultant Project through county and regional meetings, Winter and Spring Conferences, regional meetings, and email updates and posting on the CACASA web page. Committee members and consultants will be available all week during the upcoming conference to answer any questions that the membership may have.

For a complete copy of the latest update on the Pesticide Permitting and Use Reporting (PPUR) system go to: <http://www.cacasa.org/pdf/RFP/PPURStatusQuoAssessmentSummary.doc>

number of inspections is also slowly but steadily increasing. I am committed to working with the Department to improve these inspections.

Our success in battling invasive pests is only one highlight of California's dynamic agriculture industry. For more information about my work on behalf of California's agriculture industry, or for other Washington updates, please visit my website at www.feinstein.senate.gov.

Happy Holidays!

National Conference on Weights and Measures Prepares for 2010 Interim Meeting

by Don Onwiler, Executive Director
National Conference on Weights and Measures



Each year, the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) considers proposals to amend the national standards for weighing and measurement. These standards are published in NIST Handbooks 44, 130, and 133. This year, many new proposals have been submitted through the regional associations and forwarded to NCWM. Some specific commodities will be addressed in these new proposals including agricultural seed sold by count, animal bedding, bagged mulch, biodiesel, hydrogen fuel quality standards, polyethylene sheeting, and moisture loss allowance for pasta. Additionally, NCWM will consider proposed specifications, tolerances and other technical requirements for hydrogen gas metering systems.

The NCWM Interim Meeting will take place January 24-27, 2010 at the Hilton Nashville Downtown in Nashville, Tennessee. Committees will conduct open hearings on all agenda items, further develop them, and designate each item's status for the voting agenda of the NCWM Annual Meeting in July 2010. All interested parties are invited to attend this important meeting in January. Don't miss this opportunity to have a strong voice in the development of national weights and measures standards. To register for this meeting, or to simply get more information, please visit our website at www.ncwm.net.

Leadership Moment:

When a baby elephant (260 lbs.) is trained for the circus, its leg is chained to a pole. After several attempts to escape the baby elephant gives up. As the elephant grows (26,000 lbs.) it continues to assume it cannot escape, thus never again attempts to break the chain.

Assumed Restraints based on past experiences limit our current and future potential.

Challenge Assumed Restraints.

For More pick up a copy of Self Leadership and The One Minute

Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Program Success: Sacramento County Requests Eradication Declaration



At the end of the 2009 trapping season, Sacramento County will experience two full years since the last detection of Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter (GWSS). Having passed that milestone, the county has requested that they be declared glassy-wing free and that the quarantines, in place since July of 2000, be lifted.

Sacramento County was one of the first counties in Northern California infested with GWSS. The first find, in Rancho Cordova, was in July of 2000. That infestation was declared eradicated last year. A later infestation, discovered in Foothill Farms in August of 2002 is now eliminated as well. Both of these areas were treated repeatedly with a variety of pesticide products, including imidacloprid, carbaryl, and cyfluthrin. There was very good cooperation from the community with very few refusals of access or treatment.

The county is very appreciative of this community support and for the support of the Pierce's Disease team at CDFA and from a wide coalition of industry representatives. Without everyone's cooperative effort in this eradication program, success would not have been possible.

USDA-APHIS, in partnership with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), works to minimize the statewide impact of Pierce's disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. The strategy is to slow or stop the spread of the glassy-winged sharpshooter while short- and long-term solutions to Pierce's disease are developed.

Considering only grapes, the GWSS/PD threatens a crop production value of \$3.71 billion and associated economic activity in excess of \$51 billion.

GWSS is currently established in nine southern California counties (Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura).

Initiated in fiscal year 2000, the GWSS program was funded with \$22.948 million in FY 2009, a reduction from previous years. The FY 2010 Conference Report for Agriculture Appropriations included \$22.983 million.

The GWSS program has successfully used areawide treatment programs and regulation of host pathways to prevent the spread of the pest to the valuable wine-growing regions of California.

Leadership Development Survey Results



Twenty-nine County Agricultural Commissioners (CAC) have completed the online survey on Leadership Development to date. That is a response rate of 52.7%.

Of those respondents, nearly two-thirds (62%) indicated that their respective county administration did offer leadership development training programs. Of those CAC's indicating their county administration did offer leadership development training, one-half, 15 respondents, indicated they were taking advantage of the programs. This may lead to a hypothesis that from one-quarter to one-third of CACASA members are participating in leadership development programs already offered by their respective county administration.

Over one-third (38%) of respondents indicated they have participated in a leadership program offered by a third party such as California Agricultural Leadership, American Management Association, College or University.

Of those CAC's indicating they have participated in leadership development training, the timing of their training was as late as 2004 and as recent as this year.

Twenty-one percent of respondents indicated that at this point in time in their career leadership development was not a priority. Another twenty-one percent indicated their work schedule did not allow them to participate or that costs of such programs were an inhibiting factor. A majority of respondents listed their own reasons for not participating in leadership development programs. Some of those reasons included the availability of leadership development programs throughout the state and travel restrictions.

Interestingly, the overall satisfaction level of those participating in leadership development programs was neutral, they were neither very satisfied, nor dissatisfied with the training received.

Some respondents indicated interest in leadership development training in a two-to-three day workshop setting. Other ideas surfaced included CACASA building a framework of leadership training, designing and building a leadership academy.

Retirement Corner

CACASA bids farewell and best wishes to County Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers who recently announced their retirement. Thank you for your service:

Rick Landon, September 1, 2009

Bill Gillette, December 15, 2009

Bill Stephans, December 30, 2009

Gary Kunkel, January 27, 2010

Gail Raabe, March 1, 2010



In Remembrance

CACASA wishes to remember and honor Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers for their service.

September 27, 2009

Ken Wright, Modoc County (1973-1984), Shasta County (1984-1988).

September 28, 2009

Paul Matulich, San Benito County (2004-2009).

