



July 27, 2020

Director Val Dolcini

via email val.dolcini@cdpr.ca.gov

Dear Director Dolcini,

We are following up on our letter dated June 30, 2020 in which we called on DPR to expand statewide notification regarding hazardous pesticide applications, and requested both a written response by the end of July and a meeting with you and your staff in August. On Monday July 20, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Henry Gonzales abruptly terminated the pilot fumigant notification program in Monterey County and the farmingsafelynearschools.com website, citing the end of grant funding. Five days later, the program was just as suddenly reinstated.

As we noted in our letter of June 30, 2020, we were heartened by your stated commitment in your May 7, 2020 executive guidance letter to “increased transparency concerning pesticide applications that occur near homes and schools,” calling it a “top priority for the state.” However, Mr. Gonzales’ willingness to cancel a notification program, after the costly investment DPR had made to set it up, calls that commitment into question and reinforces the impression that agricultural commissioners will not take the heat for increasing transparency in their counties.

It’s increasingly clear to us that leadership on this issue will have to come from the state, with ag commissioners in several key agricultural counties now demonstrably unwilling or unable to act alone. It’s also clear, especially in light of the dire fiscal projections California is facing, that any notification program must be low in cost and light on resources.

As an interim step toward truly transparent pest management in California, we urge you to use your existing authority to instruct County Agricultural Commissioners to publish Notices of Intent to use Restricted Material pesticides on their county website, along with approvals or denials, in advance of applications. You could accomplish this under your existing authority immediately with an instruction letter to County Agricultural Commissioners¹, followed by updates to their workplans². The whiplash-inducing announcements in Monterey have only made our demand more urgent.

We look forward to receiving your response to this and our previous correspondence, and to meeting with you to discuss next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane Sellen & Sarah Aird".

Jane Sellen & Sarah Aird

Cc: Jared Blumenfeld, Julie Henderson, Yana Garcia, Christine Hironaka

¹ FAC § 2281

² FAC § 2282.5; DPR, A Guide to Pesticide Regulation in California (2017) at 5; Pesticide Use Enforcement Program Standards Compendium, Vol. 1, Ch. 2 at 2-6.