

# WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

## Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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Marilyn Vernon and Suzanne Opbroek

### **FEE INCREASES**

In June 2002 the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved an increase of fees for the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office. Effective July 1, 2002 our office increased several fees, due to increased costs of serving our customers, and inflation adjustments. Some fees have not been increased since establishment prior to 1992. The new fees were increased based on our costs to provide services and were compared to the fees charged for the same services in surrounding counties. Fee increases affected Certified Producer's Certificates, Pest Control Operators, Copies, Phytosanitary Certificates, and Vineyard Erosion and Sedimentation Control. If you have any questions concerning the fee increases, please feel free to contact our office at (707) 565-2371.

### **PESTICIDE LABEL REMINDERS**

**Submitted by Joseph Gray**

There may have been pesticide label rate changes or changes in the protective equipment that is required. Read and check the pesticide labels of the products carefully when you purchase them, even if you have been using the same product for years. This is information that you need to know and need to pass along to your employees.

When recording E.P.A. Numbers on your monthly pesticide use reports, double check the number that you are reporting with the container that was used. Over the last Several years,

products have been reformulated or are being made by different companies. Under these scenarios, the EPA Numbers will be different from the original numbers that you have reported in the past. It is important to report your information as accurately as possible, since the California Department of Pesticide Regulation uses this information for worker, environmental, and public risk studies.

### **WINE GRAPE INSPECTIONS**

**Submitted by Joseph Gray**

Wine grape harvest is quickly approaching. Our office will once again conduct neutral third party sugar inspections of wine grapes at several local wineries. The California Food and Agriculture Code requires third party inspections when the purchase contract of the wine grapes is based on the sugar content. The state certified inspectors take a statistically random sample of grapes from each load, crush the grapes, and then determine the sugar content using a calibrated refractometer. An official certificate is then issued to the grower and to the winery for that load. This certificate serves as an independent measurement of the sugar level in the grapes. This third party inspection alleviates disputes between growers and wineries. Last season our office certified 2,149 loads of wine grapes at four Sonoma County wineries. For more information about this program, please call Joseph Gray, Senior Agricultural Biologist/Standards Specialist, at (707) 565-2371.

## REMINDER TO LICENSE/CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

All holders of state issued applicator's licenses/certificates (plastic credit card-type), whose last name begins with the letters A-L, will need to make sure that they have all of their required Continuing Education (CE) hours before the end of the calendar year. The following table outlines the requirements for the various licenses/certificates:

<b>License</b>	<b>Total Hours Required</b>	<b>Hours in Laws/Regulations Required</b>
Pest Control Advisor (PCA)	40	4
Qualified Applicator Certificate (QAC)	20	4
Qualified Applicator License (QAL)	20	4
Pilot's License	20	4

Private Applicator's Certificate holders (the paper card that we issue in our office) need to make sure that they have their required Continuing Education hours completed also. Private Applicator's Certificate holders with last names ending in R-Z will expire at the end of the current year. If your card is expiring you will need to have 2 hours of Continuing Education for every year the card was valid. This could be up to a total of 6 hours for a card that was valid for 3 years. Two of the hours must be in Laws and Regulations.

You can find a list of Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) approved classes for Continuing Education on DPR's website at: [www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/license/classes.htm](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/license/classes.htm)

If you have any further questions on Continuing Education hours needed, please call our office at (707) 565-2371.