

# WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

## Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

John Westoby  
Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer

2604 Ventura Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
Phone (707) 565-2371  
Fax (707) 565-3850  
[www.sonoma-county.org](http://www.sonoma-county.org)

September 2003

Marilyn Vernon and Suzanne Ostrom

### DECEMBER GROWER WORKSHOP

Our annual grower continuing education workshop will be held on Thursday, December 4 at the Santa Rosa Veterans' Memorial Building, located at 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa. The workshop will begin at 9:00 a.m., with check-in starting at 8:00 a.m. The workshop provides growers with continuing education hours.

Growers holding Private Applicator Certificates need two hours of continuing education for each year their certificate is valid. The workshop will provide growers and license holders with two hours continuing education hours.

#### Workshop Schedule:

8:00 – 9:00     Registration

9:00 – 9:05     Introduction:  
Lisa Correia, Chief Deputy Agricultural Commissioner

9:05 – 9:25     Year-End Review:  
John Westoby, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer

9:25 – 9:40     Pesticide Regulation Update:  
Sue Ostrom, Agricultural Biologist/Standards Specialist

9:40 – 9:55     Burn Permit Requirements:  
Bruce McArthur, Sr. Ag. Biologist/Standards Specialist

9:55 – 10:25   Vine Mealybug Update:  
Jim Raisner, Agricultural Biologist/Standards Specialist  
Rhonda Smith, Viticulture Farm Advisor  
Lucia Varela, Integrated Pest Mgt. Farm Advisor

10:25 – 10:55   Endangered Species Update:  
Polo Moreno, Environmental Research Scientist, DPR

10:55 – 11:00   Closing:  
Lisa Correia, Chief Deputy Agricultural Commissioner

Growers and license holders with questions regarding the training can call our office at 565-2371

### OFFICE MOVE

Our new office building located off of Airport Boulevard is nearing completion. Our staff was able to tour the new building at the end of August. The new building will house the Agricultural Commissioner's office, Department of Weights and Measures, and the University of Cooperative Extension. Our move-in dates have been determined. The Agricultural Commissioner's office, and Weights and Measures will be moving October 31, and will be in the new office on Monday, November 3.

In anticipation of our move, we have been busy the last couple of months going through all the files, manuals, and supplies, in our office and warehouse. This was no small undertaking; we have been in our current office since the early sixties. So there were several decades of information, and resources to go through, and to make decisions on whether to archive, keep, or recycle.

Our staff will be doing all our own packing for our move. We will be taking our current office furniture, some of which will be refurbished prior to our move. So during the last few weeks of October, Our office will be in some disarray due to our moving preparations. During this time, we will

continue to deliver our same level of service. Our phone numbers will remain the same.



## MANDATORY TIME OFF

We have learned that the unions representing many county departments have passed Mandatory Time Off (MTO). MTO will begin on December 24, at 1:00 P.M., and will run through January 2. We will return to work at 8 A.M. on Monday, January 5. A total of 44 hours will be the MTO for each employee.

The money saved due to MTO, will allow positions to be restored. In our department, we will regain some of our extra-help positions. We are currently advertising to fill extra-help positions. These extra-help positions will handle Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS) inspections. At the current time, permanent staff is conducting all GWSS inspections.

Since we will be off one week in December, we will start issuing pesticide use permits on December 8. This is a week earlier than normal. A letter will be send in late October, or early November reminding those growers whose permits or identification numbers expire at the end of the year to renew. Growers may begin calling for appointments on November 12. Appointments will be made at all three offices.

We will have at least one or two people working during the last week of December to handle vital functions. They will handle exclusion duties at the United States Post Office, United Parcel Service, and Federal Express. The biologists will also inspect any

incoming nursery shipments from out-of-state, or for GWSS.

## DIRECT MARKETING AND ORGANIC SPOT INSPECTIONS

Deputy Commissioner Alexis Ramey, and Senior Agricultural Biologist Priscilla Lane have been conducting farmers' market inspections the last few months. Farmers' Markets in Sonoma, Santa Rosa, Windsor, Duncan Mills, Sebastopol, Occidental, and Guerneville have been inspected so far. The Occidental and Guerneville markets are new this year. The Cotati, Healdsburg, and Petaluma markets will be inspected in the next couple of weeks.



Inspections of growing grounds have also started. In the next couple of months, growing ground inspections will be combined with organic spot inspections. Each year we contract with the California Department of Food and Agriculture to do organic spot inspections. These spot inspections are done to determine if organic growers are keeping the proper paperwork, and that the identity of their produce is maintained. We conduct organic inspections at retail, producer, and handler locations