

July 16, 2007

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor
State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

With respect to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's 2007-2008 Budget Item 8570-001-0001, relating to invasive pest exclusion and detection activities, the following undersigned agricultural, water resources and environmental organizations urge you to support the augmentation of \$1.5 million to county agricultural commissioners for pest detection & exclusion and \$0.7million for border inspection stations.

Yearly upwards to 30 million private cars plus millions of commercial vehicles enter our state. Of the 16 border stations, the Needles station only for the current fiscal year is equipped on a 24 hour/7 days a week basis to inspect private and commercial vehicles. Eight other stations are open on a 24-hour basis but only for commercial carriers. The remaining 7 border stations operate intermittently for all vehicles. The bottom-line is that there are all too many opportunities to bypass inspection, which exposes California to unnecessary invasive species' infestations.

Invasive pests such as the Light Brown Apple Moth eat treasured native plants, such as coyote brush and California lilac in addition to our beloved redwoods and oaks. The quagga mussel disrupts the food web by consuming enormous amounts of phytoplankton which in turn decrease the food source for zooplankton. The citrus canker disease disrupts organic and sustainable citrus and winegrape growing practices.

These pests are just a few examples of why we so strongly believe that additional funding should be provided. The augmentation of \$2.2 million to item 8570-001-0001 is an incremental and necessary first step. We look forward to working with you in future budget years to make the border stations fully operational on a 24/7 basis, further improve state and local trapping/ early detection programs, and set aside sufficient funds for the agricultural commissioners' high risk pest prevention efforts. We also are committed increasing state funding for implementing, demonstrating and promoting biologically integrated pest management practices.

The \$2.2 million augmentation request for the California Department of Food and Agriculture is money well spent to protect urban and rural forestry, aquatic species and wildlife, air and water quality, and our robust farming and ranching economies.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Council of California, Don Gordon, President
Bank of America, Corny Gallagher, Agribusiness Executive
California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers, Bob Falconer Executive VP
California Association of Winegrape Growers, Karen Ross, President
California Cattlemen's Association, Susan T. LaGrande, VP Government Relations
California Citrus Mutual, Joel Nelson, President
California Farm Bureau Federation, Noelle Cremers, Director, Natural Resources
California Grape & Tree Fruit League, Barry Bedwell, President
Community Alliance With Family Farmers, Dave Runsten, Executive Director
Environment California, Dan Jacobson, Executive Director
Environmental Defense, Kathryn Phillips, Manager Clean Air Campaign
Marrone Organic Innovations, Dr. Pam Marrone, CEO
Natural Resources Defense Council, Jonathan Kaplan
Nisei Farmers League, Manuel Cunha, President
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District, Molly Watkins, Vice President
Western Growers, Erin Field, Manager, Government Affairs
Western United Dairywomen, Paul Martin, Director, Environmental Services
Wine Institute, Mike Falasco, Director, California State Relations

cc: Hon. AG Kawamura
Hon. Michael Genest