



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 30, 2017

Dear Chair Hartmann and Members of the Board:

On May 3, 2017 the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) received a Planning and Development Department Director's Report which included an update regarding the upcoming June 6, 2017 Board of Supervisors hearing regarding policy options for the hoop structures ordinance amendments project.

We understand the Board of Supervisors will be considering options for policy directions regarding hoops. **The Agricultural Advisory Committee voted to submit this letter to urge the Board of Supervisors to pursue a policy direction that addresses hoops as farm equipment, rather than a structure.**

The use of hoops as a production tool has become critical to our county's continued agricultural vitality and have allowed significant agricultural diversification which provides greater social and economic stability for the agricultural community and its dependents. Hoops are another practice that can be used to manage pests and diseases as a part of an integrated pest management program which may result in fewer chemical applications than might otherwise be required to produce a marketable product, and enable growers to optimize water resources through microclimate management. Hoops have become an important tool for agriculture in Santa Barbara County because they extend the traditional growing season of many of our county's delicate, high-value, healthy food crops and can better match the timing of crop production to market opportunities. The extended growing season and increased reliability provided by hoops allow Santa Barbara County growers to remain viable in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. Hoops are an important tool to maintain and enhance the County's economic competitiveness, job growth, and economic opportunities now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Van Leer", is written over a horizontal line.

Paul Van Leer, Chair

Committee Members

Bradley Miles
Ron Caird
Sharyne Merritt
AJ Cisney
Randy Sharer
Wilja Happe
Claire Wineman
Paul Van Leer, Chair
June Van Wingerden
Morgan McLaughlin
Andy Mills, Vice Chair
Jason Sharrett

Representing

1st District Supervisor, Das Williams
2nd District Supervisor, Janet Wolf
3rd District Supervisor, Joan Hartmann
4th District Supervisor, Peter Adam
5th District Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino
California Women for Agriculture
Grower-Shipper Association of SB and SLO Counties
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau
Santa Barbara Flower & Nursery Growers' Association
Santa Barbara Vintners
Santa Barbara County Cattlemen's Assn.
California Strawberry Commission