



April 9, 2013

Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 E. Anapamu St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Adoption of Agricultural Buffer Regulations, Agenda Item 5

Dear Chair Carbajal and Members of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors:

The Grower-Shipper Association works to promote the wellbeing of the produce industry in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau represents over 500 farmer and rancher members in Santa Barbara County. **We urge you to protect the future of farming and farm land in Santa Barbara County and its social and economic contributions by adopting the Agricultural Buffer Ordinance.**

#### **Overwhelming Support for Adoption**

We are writing to express our **strong support for the adoption of the Agricultural Buffer Ordinance** and supporting CEQA findings. **Both Board of Directors consist of a diverse group of farmers, including many landowners and champions of private property rights: both Board of Directors provided overwhelming support for the Ordinance.**

#### **Concerns with Agriculture as an Explicit Allowable Use**

Farm Bureau and the Grower-Shipper Association do have outstanding concerns regarding the last-minute addition of including agriculture in part E1j. "Any other use, ~~including agriculture~~, determined by the review authority to be consistent with the purpose and intent of the buffer requirement." We recommend deleting agriculture as an explicitly listed other allowable use. Other potentially compatible allowable uses are unique to each site and are not included as examples. The concern is that agriculture as an "other" allowable use will be too broadly applied, which will undermine the intent and effectiveness of the Ordinance in separating land uses to protect both parties from foreseeable conflicts.

#### **Thorough, Collaborative Vetting Process**

Representatives from the Grower-Shipper Association and Farm Bureau have been actively involved in the development of the Ordinance for years. **Both Farm Bureau and Grower-Shipper representatives served on the Working Group, along with development and environmental interests, to collaboratively and thoroughly vet the Ordinance before you today.**



### **Importance of Buffers**

Buffers help to minimize predictable land use conflicts and facilitate orderly development. The buffer width ranges reflect the anticipated range of potential conflicts, where the larger maximum ranges represent a higher possibility for conflicts. Buffers serve to benefit landowners and operators on both sides of the buffer, as well as the City and County Agencies that would likely be contacted if conflicts were to arise due to the lack of an adequate buffer.

### **Importance of Agriculture to Santa Barbara County**

The latest Santa Barbara County Crop Report indicated that 2011 gross agricultural production was valued at \$1,194,379,056. Through the multiplier effect, agriculture has a local impact in excess of \$2.4 billion dollars.

The economic and food security of our communities depend on this land for production and we encourage you to protect it by adopting the Agricultural Buffer Ordinance.

**We urge you to adopt the Agricultural Buffer Ordinance today with the modification to part E1j.** Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Claire Wineman".

**Claire Wineman**  
**President**  
Grower-Shipper Association of  
Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties  
P.O. Box 10  
Guadalupe, CA 93434

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Van Leer".

**Paul Van Leer**  
**President**  
Santa Barbara County  
Farm Bureau  
P.O. Box 1846  
Buellton, CA 93427