

**California State Board of Food and Agriculture  
Resolution On  
Mitigating Drought Impacts**

*WHEREAS*, California is entering a second stage of drought – whereby reduced deliveries of water by means of water restrictions and some conservation measures will increase concentrations of contaminants (such as salts). Left unaddressed, the second drought stage will result in decreased crop yields, loss of permanent crops and increased land fallowing land precipitating a third stage of drought now seen in Australia which is affecting air quality. These dynamics in Australia were the impetus for a “Manhattan Project” style approach to scientific research and planning to begin stemming drought impacts in farms and urban centers while addressing environmental concerns. Lack of immediate recognition of the drought in Australia resulted in unprecedented cost and forced/unanticipated expenditures as well as hardship by all sectors of the Australian society;

*WHEREAS*, addressing the second and third stages of drought requires that regulatory agencies step out of their usual fine-driven enforcement modes by proactively taking steps with other agencies (inter-regional water quality, soil conservation, air quality, etc.) to keep land productive protecting both the environment and productive enterprise such as farming. Implementing the actions addressed by the Governor’s Emergency Proclamation of February 27, 2009;

*WHEREAS*, substantial reductions in productive acreage will occur if water restrictions above those provoked by drought continue, thus accelerating impacts toward the second drought stage;

*WHEREAS*, failure to streamline and conclude water transfer approvals with reliable delivery schedules are hampering capacity to grow specific crops in the 2010 growing seasons, and will undermine confidence by lending institutions whose deadlines for financing many of next years crops are passing;

*WHEREAS*, the pending two-gates project in the Delta and Delta-Mendota Canal/California Aqueduct Intertie can help increase the flexibility of water delivery systems while averting environmental impacts affecting fish species in addition to providing disaster mitigation and salt management in the area around the Banks Pumping Station near Stockton;

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, that in order to expedite approval of water transfers, that the California Department of Food and Agriculture formally advise the Resources Agency, Department of Water Resources, the California Environmental Protection Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board of water delivery schedules required to grow the 10 major crops respectively in Madera County, Fresno County, Kings County, Tulare County and Kern County in the 2010 growing season. The California Department of Food and Agriculture in addition will need to stress the importance of streamlining/expediting state and federal approval process for water transfers;

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, that in order to mitigate economic impacts, the California Department of Food and Agriculture consult with state banking officials on deadlines for “proof of water deliveries” and determine potential impacts on a crop-specific basis in each respective county mentioned above, if deadlines are missed because of delayed permits and approvals of water transfers;

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*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, that in order to streamline intergovernmental coordination and assure accountability, the Board advises the Governor to continue efforts at both the federal and state level to expedite water transfers;

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, that in order to make progress in averting water quality impacts in the second stage of drought, that the CA State Board of Food and Agriculture by an additional resolution urge California's congressional delegation to prevail upon the United States Bureau of Reclamation to expedite funding for construction of the Two Gates pilot program and the Delta-Mendota Canal/California Aqueduct Intertie;

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED*, that in order to further determine the potential impacts of the drought in 2010 on California agriculture, that this committee conduct hearings in Ventura County, San Diego County, and other areas of California in 2010.

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Subscribed  
Joshua Eddy, Executive Director  
Approved October 28, 2009