

Agriculture, Weights and Measures FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan

I. Mission Statement

The mission of the Agriculture, Weights and Measures Department is to serve the public's interest by ensuring equity in the market place, promoting and protecting agriculture, protecting environmental quality and the health and welfare of Marin County's residents.

II. Department Overview

The Department of Agricultural, Weights and Measures protects environmental quality and the health and welfare of residents by ensuring that pest control is performed safely and appropriately. The department also guards natural, agricultural and urban community resources from destructive and invasive pests and serves the public's interest by implementing weights and measures programs that protect consumers and ensure equity in the marketplace.

These functions are accomplished through education, commodity inspection and certification, promotion of sustainable food systems and enforcement of County, state, and federal mandated laws and regulations. The department works cooperatively with the public, agricultural industry and various county, state and federal agencies with similar mandates to facilitate program goals.

The department also provides sustainable agriculture programs and pest identification and pest control guidance for residents and is an informational resource for the agricultural industry, pest control operators and other government agencies.

The Agriculture, Weights and Measures Department includes the following program areas:

- Agriculture
- Weights and Measures

IV. Accomplishments for FY 2012-13

- Provided outreach and education about our agricultural and weights and measures programs to over fifteen organizations, institutions, industry groups, and individuals
- Purchased tablets for most staff which has resulted in greater efficiencies and ease in conducting field inspections
- Time-off requests are handled electronically which has saved time and resources
- Purchased new scan guns for the Point-of-Sale/Scanner program which in time will increase inspection efficiencies and result in greater data accuracy
- Upgraded our website in coordination with Information Services and Technology department to clearly highlight our programs and facilitate the finding of information for the public and industry professionals
- Developed new Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) pasture/livestock/dairy processing forms and held a workshop with certified operations to review the new forms and ensure compliance with the National Organic Program (NOP) requirements
- Updated all MOCA organic system plan forms to capture necessary criteria for NOP compliance, and improved efficiencies using electronic methods for certified operations and inspection reports

Agriculture, Weights and Measures FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan

- Worked with Information Services and Technology (IST) to finalize phase I of the development of a new database system for our MOCA program
- Continued to expand the MOCA program allowing more Marin operations to be certified organic, including the expansion of many existing livestock, pasture, and crop operations
- Worked with Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office to provide expertise with the creation of forms and the implementation of the Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control program (VESCO).
- Continued to work collaboratively with the State Coastal Conservancy and the Friends of the Corte Madera Creek on the Spartina (cordgrass) eradication project
- Continued to work with the west county ranchers, Marin County Farm Advisor (UCCE), Marin County Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), Marin Resource Conservation District (RCD), Marin Parks and Open Space, Marin/Sonoma Weed Management Area, and other partners on weed issues, including distaff, purple star thistle, and goat grass

V. Key Challenges and Outstanding Issues

Working efficiently and effectively to ensure the department continues to meet state and federal mandates, while maximizing limited revenue resources Providing for adequate professional development and succession planning while accomplishing department goals and objectives Maintaining quality public service with reduced resources Providing outstanding environmental and consumer protection through fair and professional enforcement of laws and regulations Continuing to keep unwanted exotic and damaging pests out of Marin County through our pest detection and exclusion program activities, including invasive weeds, and injurious insects and diseases.

VI. Performance Plan

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
Goal I: Prevent the introduction and spread of exotic and invasive species	IV. Environmental Preservation

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Continue to work closely with the Marin County Farm Advisor (UCCE), Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), Resource Conservation District (RCD), Marin/Sonoma Weed Management Area, and the agricultural industry to address invasive weed issues in Marin County, particularly woolly distaff thistle and purple star thistle	Agriculture - Pest Management, Pest Detection, Pest Exclusion, Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA)
Provide outreach and education to the industry and community on exotic and invasive species	Agriculture - Pest Detection, Pest Exclusion, and Pest Eradication
Identify plant pests and recommend Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches for long-term control such as the use of biological control	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement
Enforce pesticide laws and regulations and issue permits for appropriate weed control materials	Agriculture - Pest Detection, Pest Management

**Agriculture, Weights and Measures
FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan**

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
Goal II: Ensure pesticides are used safely and appropriately	II. Safe Communities

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Work with state and County partners to consistently implement the new state-wide software system (CalAgPermits) for pesticide use reporting and permit issuance, and continue to educate the agricultural industry on submitting pesticide use reports on-line which will become mandatory within a few years	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement
Provide education and outreach to industry and the community on how to safely and effectively use pesticides.	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement
Provide pest identification and integrated pest management assistance for the public, and to licensed pest control businesses only for unusual pests	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement, Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
Implement Enforcement Response Regulations when pesticide non-compliances are found	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement



Department Goal	Countywide Goal
Goal III: Encourage sustainable agricultural practices	III. Sustainable Communities

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Ensure Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) operations are complying with new Organic System Plans to be compliant with the National Organic Program (NOP) requirements	Agriculture - Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA)
Provide education and outreach to industry and the community on the MOCA, Direct Marketing, Pest Detection, Pest Exclusion, and Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control (VESCO) programs through presentations, meetings, and Public Service Announcements, etc.	Agriculture - Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA), Direct Marketing, Pest Detection, Pest Exclusion, and Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control (VESCO)
Support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and biological control methods for invasive pest control	Agriculture - Pest Management
Collaborate on strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	Agriculture - Marin Carbon Project
Work closely with the Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator with the Marin UCCE Farm Advisor's office to help advise on new and existing certified organic operations	Agriculture - Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA)

Agriculture, Weights and Measures FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan

Program: Agriculture

Objective: Increase the number of agricultural operations participating in Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) program

Workload Measures	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target
 Number of growers in the Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) program	62	66	79	72	72
 Number of organically farmed acres	19,706	23,570	24,027	29,000	31,000


Story Behind Performance:

Sustainable agricultural practices in Marin County are strongly supported, valued, and encouraged. In 2002, the Marin County Agricultural Commissioner's office was one of the first counties in California to offer an organic certification program to qualified agricultural producers and handlers. This is consistent with the countywide goals of Sustainable Communities and Environmental Preservation. The MOCA program has seen a 140 percent increase in the number of certified operation from 2003 to 2012. There has been steady growth in certified organic livestock production and certified pasture acreage, and an increased number of certified fruit and vegetable growers.

Organic certification and the implementation of sustainable agricultural practices encourage resource preservation, ensure continued productivity of agricultural lands for future generations, provide added value to local agricultural products, help local producers remain financially viable, and provide our community with an abundance of locally grown healthy products.

Program: Department - Wide

Objective: Inform the community about the valuable services the department provides through public communication, education, and outreach

Workload Measures	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target
 Number of community outreach, education events, and meetings with local agencies	3	3	65	15	12

Story Behind Performance:

Overall, government has done an inadequate job of getting the message out to the community about the various services it provides. The department believes a strong community education and outreach program will help the public better understand where and how their tax dollars are spent. A proactive approach will help garner public support for our programs. Without public awareness, these vital services cannot be fully appreciated,

Agriculture, Weights and Measures FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan

understood, and supported. By educating the community about our programs through multiple channels, a greater understanding of the departments responsibilities will result. The department intends to continue to work collaboratively with a variety of organizations and agencies to tell our "story", including city mayors/managers, Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, the Downtown Novato Business Association, the Golden Gate Better Business Bureau, and the Marin Professional Women's Network. The department has upgraded its website to clearly showcase its programs and services, and provide easy access to information that may be of interest to the community.

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
Goal IV: Maintain a fair and equitable marketplace	VIII. Effective Communication

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Provide education and outreach to the community and industry about weights and measures programs, especially how the department protects consumers every day	Weights and Measures

Program: Weights and Measures

Objective: Improve industry compliance with the scanner program (point-of-sale systems) to ensure the public is properly protected and are paying the lowest displayed or advertised price for purchased items

Effectiveness Measures	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target
Percent of businesses complying with scanner regulations	63%	65%	68%	68%	66%

Story Behind Performance:

For well over a century, weights and measures departments throughout the United States have been responsible for and committed to consumer protection. "Trust, but verify" is a worthy motto that every consumer should follow. Most businesses are honest with good intentions, but even honest people make mistakes. Alert consumers are the best defense against inaccurate transactions. The department recommends consumers bring sale advertisements with them when shopping. When selecting items from store displays, make a note of the price and verify that it is the same when the item is scanned during check out. The correct price is the lowest price advertised or posted price. If stores have scanners for customer price verification located on the sales floor, use them. Department stores often give additional markdowns at the register, so be sure to point out sale items to the clerk. Be aware of the expiration dates for sales. When purchasing items where a check stand scale is used, verify it is set to zero. The readout must be visible to the customer, and if it isn't, point it out to the checker. A scale set ahead of zero shortchanges every customer.

Having a strong presence in the business community is especially critical during this economic downturn to ensure the public is protected and to help ensure there is equity in

Agriculture, Weights and Measures FY 2013 - 14 Performance Plan

the marketplace. As the scanner (point-of-sale) program has been expanded to include more businesses, the compliance rate has dipped slightly. Over time, as we do more scanner inspections and businesses correct any system deficiencies, we project the compliance rate will slowly begin to climb.

Weights and Measures is committed to protecting the economic health of the community by preserving and maintaining confidence in the accuracy of weighing and measuring instruments, product standards, and business practices used in commerce. Through this balanced commitment and timely response to citizen requests, consumers and businesses are assured the means of accurate value comparison and fair competition.

Department Goal	Countywide Goal
Goal V: Provide increased efficiencies through office automation	IX. Managing for Results

Initiative Description	Program(s)
Continue to work with Information Services and Technology (IST) and the County Administrator's Office (CAO) to implement web-based billing, acceptance of credit cards on-line and over the counter, on-line registration of weights and measures devices, and further website development	Agriculture - Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA), Direct Marketing, Pesticide Use Enforcement, Weights and Measures
Continue to work with IST and the CAO to add on additional program modules to our new database, including direct marketing, and a long-term solution to our daily program	Agriculture - Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA), Direct Marketing, Weights and Measures
Continue to have staff become proficient with the new statewide pesticide use/permit program CalAgPermits	Agriculture - Pesticide Use Enforcement
Change to the new on-line federal phytosanitary certification issuance program	Agriculture - Pest Exclusion