



COUNTY OF VENTURA
AGRICULTURAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Meeting Minutes – August 19, 2020

1. 9:05 a.m. – MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE

Committee: Sanger Hedrick, District 2, Chair
Scott Deardorff, District 1
Gordon Kimball, District 3
Patty Waters, District 4
Bobby Jones, District 5 - absent

Staff/Others Present: Ed Williams, Korinne Bell, & Alec Thille from the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office; others attended remotely via Zoom

3. CORRESPONDENCE
None.
4. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS
None.
5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA
None.
6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Add review of the June 24th minutes to the agenda and approve the amended agenda
By Hedrick, seconded by Deardorff
Vote: 4 – 0

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion: Approve July 15th minutes
By Kimball, seconded by Deardorff
Vote: 4 – 0

No Action Taken regarding June 24th meeting minutes due to a lack of quorum of members present at the June 24th meeting.

8. PRESENTATION/ACTION

- A. Talia Barrera, Administrative Manager with the Human Services Agency's Farmworker Resource Program, provided an overview of the Farmworker Resource Program.

No Action Taken.

- a. Public Comment
None.

- B. The APAC discussed the draft Ventura County General Plan.

No Action Taken.

- a. Public Comment
- i. Jan Dietrick – Advocation for the relocation of GPP AG-3.2 Integrated Pest Management Practices to section 8.5 Sustainable Farming and Ranching
 - ii. Ron Whitehurst – Advocation for the inclusion of Regenerative Farming in the General Plan glossary, Agricultural Element, and specifically Implementation Program L Encourage and Facilitate Carbon Farming
 - iii. Jan Dietrick – Suggestion that Agricultural Implementation Program C County procurement include accountability in the form of quantitative targets.
 - iv. Louise Lampara – SOAR policy allows for 12 total acres of agricultural processing facilities in Agricultural/Open Space lands with each facility allowed no more than 2 acres for total project footprint. A study commissioned by CoLAB found that for Ventura County to have agricultural processing capacity equal to the average of other California agricultural Counties that number would need to equal 225 acres.

Written public comments are attached at the end of the document.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

A. APAC Members

- a. Proposals for future agenda items:
- i. None.
- b. Other
- i. None.

B. Staff

- a. Proposals for future agenda items:
- i. RMA presentation of LCA contract reviews that include a request for zone change.
 - ii. Potential ballot measure to legalize specific cannabis production and usage in Ventura County.
 - iii. Update on Huanlongbing detecting dog-teams in Ventura County.
- b. Other
- i. None.

C. Confirm Future Meeting Dates:

- a. September 16, 2020

b. October 14, 2020

10. ADJOURN – Meeting adjourned by Sanger Hendrick at 12:13 a.m.

ID	Start Time	How do you plan to make your comments?	Full Name	Phone	Written Comments:
32	8/18/20 16:31:09	Written comments to be placed into record	Louise Lampara	805-797-5679	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. CoLAB is submitting a copy of a report from a biological consultant who evaluated the potential impacts of one of the policies in the proposed general plan. This policy (COS-H) mandates the planting of 2 million (non-crop) trees in Ventura County for the purpose of reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions.</p> <p>County Planning did not conduct an evaluation of this policy in their Environmental Impact Report, but the report from the biological consultant has indicated that there may be significant impacts on agricultural lands and water supply for irrigation that have not been mitigated or addressed in the General Plan. Please refer to our email of August 18, 2020, for a copy of the report and a summary of concerns.</p>
33	8/19/20 1:24:00	Video and Audio by Computer	Ron Whitehurst	805-746-5368	Add regenerative agriculture to AG-L and proposed AG-R. See submitted General Plan additions from a coalition of groups
34	8/19/20 1:38:33	Video and Audio by Computer	Ian Dietrick	805-746-5365	I will be speaking about recommendations to the General Plan that increase food security by strengthening the the County Food Procurement Program C and new policies to support small-scale farming near Existing Communities conditional on use of compatible (regenerative) practices. I will ask that AG 5-6 IPM Practices be moved from Goal 3 Innovative Specialty to Goal 5 Sustainable Farming and Ranching.
	8/19/20 8:45:00	Written comments to be placed into record	Tessa Salzman		<p>Dear Commissioner Williams and Deputy Commissioner Bell,</p> <p>I attempted to submit this comment at 8:45am with regard to the Agriculture Element of the 2040 General Plan. I would like my comment to be on public record at today's 9am meeting. The form said it was no longer taking responses. Screenshot attached. I hope this form of submittal works for you two. Thank you, Tessa Salzman</p> <p>---</p> <p>I believe policy in the General Plan should provide for greater consideration of the needs of farmworkers.</p> <p>My biggest concern is exposure. We don't know what that is if we don't communicate and collect data. The County should have a Certified Industrial Hygienist to communicate work hazards to farmworkers according to OSHA worker protection standards especially when farmworkers are exposed to hazard and caution label pesticides, and to characterize lifetime exposure to conditions in the field, ranging from dust particulates to inhalation of pesticides</p> <p>Farmworker protection standards are set by the US EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A representative to communicate risks and hazards inherent to one's job. -OSHA-level Ergonomic expertise is needed to mitigate risk for work-related musculoskeletal disorders. -Funding and research for opt-in biomonitoring of workers should be offered when hazard and caution label pesticides are used. -Gathering data will enhance our understanding of pesticides for public health goals. <p>We need to use science and data, not just product labels, and make sure workers know what they are exposed to. This is because it takes significant time for the EPA and CalEPA to catch up with the science, to ensure adequate precautions, and to reflect those in regulation.</p> <p>Land access should also be made possible for farmworkers to farm their own blocks of land by their own business model serving local stores and consumers on small blocks of land near Existing Communities. This makes all of us more secure when we plan and support local food production.</p> <p>---</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
	8/19/20 9:22:00		Kristen Kessler		<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>Access to land is an issue in Ventura County, especially for young and socially disadvantaged farmers. There has been a negative perception of living near large farms because of noise, air pollution, and theft of large equipment.</p> <p>Small-scale urban and peri-urban farms that use organic and regenerative methods would not pose these types of issues. They would bring social, ecological, and economic value to neighborhoods, along with the following benefits, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reducing food miles and food packaging 2. reducing urban poverty 3. promoting social inclusion 4. reducing heat island effects 5. reuse of urban wastes 6. in the case of orchards, reducing particulate air pollution, especially near roads <p>Thank you, Kristen Kessler</p>

	8/19/20 9:24:00		Kathy Nolan	<p>FOR THE RECORD PLEASE SHARE MY EMAIL COMMENT ON THE GENERAL PLAN AT TODAY'S MEETING.</p> <p>Policy AG-4.X Land Access for Beginning Small-Scale Farmers The County shall support increasing land access for small-scale commercial farming on blocks from one to ten acres that avoid tillage by using minimally disruptive tools, such as a broadfork, and maximize crop diversity and productivity.</p> <p>SHORT RATIONALE: Current zoning ordinances do not support and may be an unnecessary barrier to access for young, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers who can make a livelihood on one to ten acres of land.</p> <p>Policy AG-4.X Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture near Existing Communities The County shall support small scale urban and peri-urban farming when the practices are compatible with any land use in and near Existing Communities.</p> <p>SHORT RATIONALE : Current zoning ordinances may be an unnecessary barrier to access for farming on small blocks of one to ten acres of land near Existing Communities</p> <p>LONG RATIONALE: People are recognizing the precarious lack of access to food supplies in or near most populated centers. The long distance that 80% of the food consumed in Ventura County travels puts residents at serious risk of not having food during a crisis. People working in commercial and industrial facilities value nearby access to fresh products grown with regenerative practices.</p> <p>Access to land is a barrier in Ventura County, especially for young and socially disadvantaged farmers. There has been a perception of incompatible land use between farms and where people live, work and play, because industrial or conventional large-scale farming has been characterized as a source of air pollution, noise, and vulnerability to theft because of the typical use of toxic inputs and large equipment.</p> <p>These negative impacts are not characteristic of small-scale urban and peri-urban farms that use organic and regenerative methods that offer social, ecological, and economic value to the neighboring community, such as the many benefits shown in the diagram below, but also including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •reducing food miles and food packaging •reducing urban poverty •promoting social inclusion •reducing heat island effects •reuse of urban wastes •in the case of orchards, reducing particulate air pollution, especially near roads <p>Policy AG-5.6 Integrated Pest Management Practices The County shall encourage and support the use of Integrated Pest Management practices to reduce pesticide use and human health risks.</p> <p>SHORT RATIONALE: Move to Sustainable Agriculture and integrate sustainable practices to align with Resolution 1011 from state and California.</p>
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From: Kathy Nolan <kn@studio-landscape.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2020 9:24 AM
To: Bell, Korinne <Korinne.Bell@ventura.org>
Subject: APAC Public Comment - Note Form for comments is not working/available

For the record please share my emailed comment on the General Plan at today's meeting.

Policy AG-4.X Land Access for Beginning Small-Scale Farmers *The County shall support increasing land access for small-scale commercial farming on blocks from one to ten acres that avoid tillage by using minimally disruptive tools, such as a broadfork, and maximize crop diversity and productivity.*

SHORT RATIONALE: *Current zoning ordinances do not support and may be an unnecessary barrier to access for young, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers who can make a livelihood on one to ten acres of land.*

Policy AG-4.X Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture near Existing Communities *The County shall support small scale urban and peri-urban farming when the practices are compatible with any land use in and near Existing Communities.*

SHORT RATIONALE : *Current zoning ordinances may be an unnecessary barrier to access for farming on small blocks of one to ten acres of land near Existing Communities*

LONG RATIONALE: *People are recognizing the precarious lack of access to food supplies in or near most populated centers. The long distance that 80% of the food consumed in Ventura County travels puts residents at serious risk of not having food during a crisis. People working in commercial and industrial facilities value nearby access to fresh products grown with regenerative practices. Access to land is a barrier in Ventura County, especially for young and socially disadvantaged farmers. There has been a perception of incompatible land use between farms and where people live, work and play, because industrial or conventional large-scale farming has been characterized as a source of air pollution, noise, and vulnerability to theft because of the typical use of toxic inputs and large equipment.*

These negative impacts are not characteristic of small-scale urban and peri-urban farms that use organic and regenerative methods that offer social, ecological, and economic value to the neighboring community, such as the many benefits shown in the diagram below, but also including:

- *reducing food miles and food packaging*
- *reducing urban poverty*
- *promoting social inclusion*
- *reducing heat island effects*
- *reuse of urban wastes*
- *in the case of orchards, reducing particulate air pollution, especially near roads*

Policy AG-5.6 Integrated Pest Management Practices *The County shall encourage and support the use of Integrated Pest Management practices to reduce pesticide use and human health risks.*

SHORT RATIONALE: *Move to Sustainable Agriculture goal as integral to sustainable practices to align with Roadmap for IPM from state and University.*

Goal AG-4.1 Connections to Local Products *(replace ~~Produce~~)* *The County shall strive to enhance access to ~~and consumption of fresh, local produce and other~~ locally grown products produced by encouraging direct connections between local farmers/ranchers and markets, restaurants, institutions, schools, hospitals, food banks, and other businesses.*

SHORT RATIONALE: *Modified to include all farm products, not just "fresh produce". Regenerative, resilient farms grow more than just fresh produce. Consumers who want to support regenerative,*

resilient farmers want more. A diversified crop plan is ideal, particularly when livestock are integrated to produce animal manures. Access to a diversity of local products--animal, herbs, fiber, flowers and nursery plants--as well as fresh produce is a community value.

AG-L Encourage and Facilitate Carbon Farming in a Regenerative Agriculture Framework The County shall collaborate with University of California Cooperative Extension to develop a program to encourage and facilitate carbon farming projects, including development of demonstration projects and site-specific carbon farm plans, promote carbon farming accreditation, and guide implementation of carbon farming practices in a regenerative agriculture framework throughout the county, when feasible. Unless otherwise precluded by State law, the County will consider carbon sequestration farming operations to be eligible for an Open Space Easements or Land Conservation Act contracts with 25 per cent set aside for socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, as defined in Section 512 of AB-2377 (See new program AG-X)

SHORT RATIONALE: Modified to ensure that carbon farming develops as part of a holistic regenerative farming benefits framework, that may qualify for favored tax treatment, addressing tenancy barriers, and not just about farmers selling carbon credits. To help owners of farmland benefit from Land Conservation Act contracts by themselves or their tenants earning income from carbon farming accreditation, and from other benefits of regenerative agriculture for land owners and tenants, such as climate and economic resilience and profitability.

NEW PROGRAM AG-R: Incentivize farmers to adopt regenerative agriculture practices that sequester carbon and reduce pesticides and artificial nitrogen. The County shall study how to help farmers adopt regenerative farming practices that sequester carbon and infiltrate water, reduce toxic pesticide and artificial nitrogen fertilizer use, and increase equity and profitability in a continuum of learning about living soils, natural fertility and healthy plants that resist pests and disease. Incentives may include but not be limited to helping obtain Organic, Regenerative Organic, and/or Biodynamic certification, discounting taxes, backing for favorable loans, and supporting training and/or cooperative access to services and markets.

CAP

SHORT RATIONALE: Added to make clear that regenerative agriculture is the best description of sustainable policies and programs that include climate, environmental, economic and resilience value for all farmers. Farmers need financial support to build living soil, pay certification fees, especially during the first three years of transition. The community benefits from the success of local farmers who learn regenerative practices that increase climate and economic resilience and profitability. Acquiring certifications recognizes their regenerative stewardship practices to minimize negative environmental impacts on the land.

NEW Program AG-S: Promote demonstration and training for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to use organic and regenerative practices. The County shall encourage collaboration for grant applications to provide demonstrations and training for socially disadvantaged farmers on research and demonstration projects that meet the farmers' needs and economic interests, including use of organic and regenerative agriculture practices.

CAP, EJ

SHORT RATIONALE: Socially disadvantaged farmers on small holdings are ideal contributors to all of the goals of the Agriculture Element and Environmental Justice goals.

Program AG-C County Procurement The County shall develop a program **with quantitative benchmarks** to identify opportunities to continue to provide organic and locally grown foods into cafeteria services, the jail, Ventura County Medical Center, and other County sponsored services and events that provide food service, ~~to the extent feasible.~~

SHORT RATIONALE: Modified to ensure accelerated development of local markets for local food production that are essential for increasing food security. Currently most of the production in the county is exported and most of what is consumed is imported. Food security must be a top priority goal that can be accelerated if the county invests increasingly in local farmers growing a diversity of products needed by county institutions. The county must put its money where its goals are by stimulating a much-needed market signal toward localizing our food supply. The goal will not be achieved by solely aiming to "identify opportunities...to the extent feasible".

Program AG-G Farm-to-Front Door The County shall facilitate the study with local farmers of the feasibility of encouraging "Farm-to-Front Door" and other business models and their potential benefits to businesses and residents in Ventura County.

SHORT RATIONALE: Modified to expand the scope of study to all business models that can accelerate development of local markets. The pandemic has shown the fragility of the national food distribution system. The county agencies are key to developing a robust and resilient system to reliably meet the demand for healthy, locally grown food, herbs and flowers.

NEW Program HAZ-Z Farmworker Protection Standards. The County shall employ a Certified Industrial Hygienist to communicate work hazards to farmworkers according to OSHA worker protection standards, and seek funding and research for opt-in biomonitoring when farmworkers are exposed to hazard and caution label pesticides, and to characterize lifetime exposure to conditions in the field, ranging from dust particulates to inhalation of pesticides. EJ, HC

SHORT RATIONALE: Added to focus OSHA-level worker protection standards for farmworkers including data gathering to ensure protections

RATIONALE: Farmworker protection standards are set by the US EPA Worker Protection Standard (WPS) requiring:

- A designated representative to be made available to communicate risks and hazards inherent to one's job. This representative should be well versed in OSHA worker protection standards to elevate the quality of the WPS.
- An OSHA-level Ergonomic expertise is also needed to mitigate the risk for work-related musculoskeletal disorders.
- Funding and research for opt-in biomonitoring of workers should be offered when hazard and caution label pesticides are used.
- Gathering quantitative data will enhance our understanding of pesticides for public health goals.

Regards,
Kathleen Nolan
(retired PCA)

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