



### Annual Crop Report

The Department prepares an annual crop and livestock report which details the gross production and value of the county's agricultural commodities. Research institutions, schools, banks, government agencies, and businesses rely on this information. Agricultural hardships such as drought, flooding, untimely rain, and pest problems are investigated and the information is used by disaster relief agencies.

### Nursery Inspection

The Department inspects plants at commercial production nurseries to assure cleanliness from pests and compliance with grades and standards. Consumers can be confident that the plants they purchase are healthy and vigorous.

### Fruit & Vegetable Quality Standards

We inspect fresh produce at the wholesale level to assure compliance with California's minimum standards regarding quality and labeling. Locally this provides protection to growers, markets, and consumers. Organic producers, dealers, and retailers are inspected for compliance with the California Organic Act. The 28 farmer's markets in the county are routinely inspected for compliance with direct marketing regulations.

The Alameda County Agriculture/Weights & Measures Department operates under the California Department of Food & Agriculture and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation.

The Agricultural Commissioner, as department head, enforces the California Food and Agriculture Code and the California Code of Regulations. The Department employs a staff of 35 full-time and 18 part-time employees and is part of the Alameda County Community Development Agency.

The primary purpose of the Department is "To Promote and To Protect" agriculture, human health and the environment. This is accomplished through education, inspection and enforcement.



ALAMEDA COUNTY | Community Development Agency  
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**AGRICULTURE/  
WEIGHTS & MEASURES**

**To  
Promote  
&  
Protect  
AGRICULTURE**

Cathy Roache  
Alameda County  
Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer



ALAMEDA COUNTY  
Community Development Agency

# The Agriculture Department

The Department uses its local expertise to administer the following programs here in Alameda County



## Pest Eradication

Eradication activities are conducted to eliminate established infestations of harmful exotic pests. Artichoke Thistle, Golden Thistle and Puna Grass are three such pests found in Alameda County that are under active eradication efforts. These weeds have the potential to crowd out beneficial plants and are considered serious threats to rangeland and delta shores.

## Pest Detection

This is an early warning system that enables us to detect pest infestations before they reach a critical size. Traps are placed and monitored throughout the entire county for the presence of exotic pests of agriculture, such as the Mediterranean Fruit fly, Oriental Fruit fly, Mexican Fruit fly, Glassywinged Sharpshooter, Gypsy Moth and Japanese Beetle. These pests infest a large number of different hosts and once established are difficult and costly to control. Statewide, this program protects the environment by limiting the need for pesticide applications and also helps ensure an ample supply of wholesome and economical fresh produce, native and ornamental plants, turf and timberland.

## Pest Management

The Department manages certain weed and rodent pests. It produces pest control materials for destructive burrowing rodents that are major pests of rangeland and hosts for vector borne diseases. These products are provided to local farmers and governmental agencies. The Department also works with the California Department of Food & Agriculture to develop effective biological controls for use on a number of troublesome pests. Biological control organisms have been released throughout the county to control Yellow Starthistle, Red Gum Lerp Psyllid and Ash Whitefly.

## Pest Exclusion

The Department enforces various quarantines to prevent or “exclude” the introduction of pests which are not commonly present in the county. Packages are inspected at Federal Express, United Parcel Service, US Post Office and other carriers. The department also inspects and certifies agricultural commodities destined for other states or countries to comply with the requirements of the importing state or country. Each year the department inspects about 12,000 shipments and issues about 2000 certificates.

## Egg Inspection

We inspect wholesale and retail egg handlers for compliance with state and federal health, quality, and grade standards.

## Seed Inspection

Inspections are performed at wholesale establishments which package seeds. Samples are drawn for germination and purity testing and for the presence of noxious weed seeds. Labeling is inspected for compliance with state requirements.

## Pesticide Use Enforcement

Monitoring the use of pesticides is a major responsibility of the Department. Residential, agricultural, industrial, and institutional uses are routinely inspected for compliance with state and federal regulations. Department staff provides training and advice on pesticide uses, pest management practice, and safety. The Department performs about 1500 inspections annually. Reports of pesticide applications submitted by applicators are recorded as part of a statewide system of tracking pesticide uses. All these activities provide protection to the consumer, the agricultural worker, and the environment.