



# GROWING TIMES



Volume 1, Issue 1

Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture Update

November 2002

## The Division of Agriculture

*How can we help you?*

The Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture is a regulatory agency that enforces State and local laws relating to public health, environmental protection, and agricultural production. Much of your involvement with our office is likely due to our role in the regulation of pesticides. But, we also provide information and services in other areas. We:

- Certify shipments of agricultural products exported from Santa Clara County to foreign destinations.
- Operate programs to exclude, detect, eradicate, or control harmful insects, weeds, and plant diseases.
- Participate in the SCC Weed Management Area
- Operate a certification program for weed-free hay and straw
- Help growers & the public identify weeds and pests
- Respond to public information requests
- Conduct continuing education seminars
- Oversee Certified Farmers Markets & producers
- Compile an annual crop report

Please feel free to contact one of our offices if you have any questions about our programs.

North County Office  
 1553 Berger Dr., Bldg 1  
 San Jose, CA 95112  
 (408) 918-4600  
 Fax (408) 286-2460  
 Office hours 1pm-5pm

South County Office  
 605 Tennant Ave, Suite G  
 Morgan Hill, CA 95037  
 (408) 465-2900  
 Fax (408) 779-2255  
 Office hours 8am-12pm

## SCC Vector Control District

*What services do they offer to growers?*

The Santa Clara County Vector Control District's mission is "to detect and minimize vector-borne diseases, abate mosquitoes, and help to assist the public in resolving problems with rodents, wildlife, and insects of medical significance."

For more information about the following services contact the Vector Control District at: **(408) 792-5010**

- 1) If you want advice or information regarding your responsibility to abate mosquitoes on your property.
- 2) If you want free mosquito fish for ponds or water troughs.
- 3) If you have rat or mice problems and want a free inspection and recommendations for control.
- 4) If urban wildlife such as skunks & raccoons are damaging your property or becoming aggressive. A District Specialist may inspect the property and discuss with you a plan of action to control or eliminate the problem.
- 5) If you know of the location of a feral honeybee colony or swarm. A sample may be taken to monitor for Africanized honey bee
- 6) If you find dead or dying birds, particularly bluejays, raptors, and crows. This may indicate the presence of West Nile Virus.

More details about Vector Control's programs and information on diseases like West Nile virus and Lyme disease can also be found at: [www.sccvector.org](http://www.sccvector.org)



## Agriculture Web Site

The Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture has a newly updated website with information you may find useful. We have links and information about pests and diseases, including glassy-winged sharpshooter, sudden oak death, olive fruit fly and yellow starthistle. Crop reports are available for FREE! We also have a printable pesticide use report form, annual pesticide handler training, and a written pesticide safety training form. Future editions of this newsletter will also be available on the site. You can access the site by going to: <http://santaclaracounty.org/agweights/>

## UC Cooperative Extension

*Who to call for advice*

The University of California Cooperative Extension Service's office is located at 700 Empey Way, Suite 110 in San Jose. Our local Cooperative Extension office includes three farm advisors. Their roles are to provide education and technical advice to growers, help identify and control pests and diseases, and to improve management practices. If you have questions related to:

- Specialty crops, greenhouses or management practices on small farms; contact Aziz Baameur at (408) 299-2635 ext 1010
- Natural resources and management of open space areas, livestock quality assurance and marketing, grazing, oak woodlands, restoration, weed control; contact Sheila Barry at (408) 299-2635 ext 1005
- Plant diseases, including Pierce's Disease, mushroom production, compost or waste management, contact Maria de la Fuente at (408) 299-2635 ext 1001. Maria is also the Director of the program.

UC Cooperative Extension also has a catalog from which you can order UC publications and videos.

## Reporting Rural Crimes

*How to report rural crimes*

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's office is part of a statewide rural crime task force aimed at reducing and solving crimes specific to the rural environment.

The California District Attorney's Association estimates that statewide losses due to rural crime totaled \$8.1 million in 2000.

According to the Sheriff's office, the most common type of crime is petty theft of crops. This crime often results in vandalism and destruction of property, such as cut fences. You should report rural crimes by calling 911. If it is not an emergency, simply tell the operator you wish to report crime or theft.

Other examples of rural crimes you should report are animal abuse, dumping of waste and trespassing. The report will be routed to the appropriate officer who will carry out a follow-up interview or site visit.

*The Santa Clara Department of Agriculture appreciates your feedback on this newsletter. Please send us questions, comments, and suggestions!*

## New Opportunity to Gain Continuing Education Units

*Video-based continuing education.*

The Division of Agriculture has developed a new way growers can earn continuing education credits to renew their pesticide private applicator certification. The program is based on educational videos.

### How does it work?

- 1) Call us to make an appointment to come to our office to view a set of videos.
- 2) As you watch the videos, you will fill out a worksheet based on the information discussed in the video (10 multiple choice questions).
- 3) You gain 1 hour of continuing education credit for watching the video and completing the worksheet.

### What are the topics of the videos?

- 1) Pesticide Safety for Small Farms
- 2) Pesticide Safety in the Greenhouse
- 3) The Long-term Health Effects of Pesticide
- 4) Pesticides and Water Quality
- 5) Control of Yellow Starthistle

Remember, Certified Private Applicators need 6 hours worth of CE units every 3 years to renew their license.

## SCC Weed Management Area

*New members wanted!*

The Santa Clara County Weed Management Area (SCCWMA) is a partnership of public and private land and watershed managers interested in noxious weed management. A goal of the SCCWMA is to receive grant monies for education, research, and weed control projects within the county on both public and private land.

Meetings are currently being held from 10am-12pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at the Division of Agriculture office in San Jose. Private landowners, especially ranchers with an interest in weed management techniques, are encouraged to attend. A new steering committee will be elected at the January meeting, so now is the time to get involved. For more information, contact Pat Congdon, Santa Clara County Open Space Authority at (408) 224-7476 ext 822, or call Eric Wylde, the Division of Agriculture at (408) 918-4626.