



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

May 17, 2018

Pamela Creedon, Executive Officer  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Central Valley Region  
11020 Sun Center Dr., Suite 200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114

*Pamela*  
Dear Ms. Creedon:

I am writing to update you on the status of the grower nitrogen training program of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department). As you know, this program serves as a prerequisite for growers in high groundwater vulnerability areas who wish to certify their own Nitrogen Management Plans, as required by the Regional Water Board's Waste Discharge Requirements for growers. A description of this training program was included in my letter to you, dated October 22, 2015 (copy enclosed).

Since July 2015, the Department's Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP) has provided funding to develop grower nitrogen training curriculum and support the presentation of that curriculum in the Central Valley. The Central Valley Water Quality Coalitions began hosting grower training sessions in November 2015 and have now completed 80 training sessions with over 3,300 growers in attendance. Growers take a test at the end of the training to qualify for self-certification, and their pass rate continues to be about 80 percent.

To ensure credibility and continued improvement in the grower community, the Department is asking that participating growers earn three hours of continuing education credits every three years. With that in mind, FREP is working with the Coalition for Urban and Rural Environmental Stewardship to identify and award credits for classes, workshops, and field days that provide practical nitrogen management content.

In the first two years of the training program, the continuing education protocol was not in place, thus the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirement for self-certifying growers will not begin until this calendar year. However, any CEUs growers have



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earned in the first two years of the program will count toward the three hours expected to be completed before January 2021. This information will be valuable to your compliance inspectors when they review grower records during site visits.

I want to thank you and your staff for your continued cooperation and collaboration with the Department. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Dr. Amadou Ba, Environmental Program Manager II of the Feed, Fertilizer, and Livestock Drug Regulatory Services Branch.

Yours truly,



Karen Ross  
Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Amadou Ba, Environmental Program Manager  
California Department of Food and Agriculture

Parry Klassen, Executive Director  
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