



Enforcement News

Central Coast Water Board Reaches Settlement with Guggia Farms Over Reporting Violations

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San Luis Obispo – The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board has approved a [settlement](#) for \$55,164 with Guggia Farms, Inc. of Santa Barbara County for failure to submit data and information used to monitor water quality impacts to surface and groundwater sources.

The violations include failure to submit individual surface water discharge monitoring data; late submittals of the annual compliance form, total nitrogen applied reports, an irrigation and nutrient management plan effectiveness report, a water quality buffer plan and technical report documentation required under Water Code section 13267.

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) adopted the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Ag Order) in 2012, which was updated in 2017. The Ag Order requires landowners and operators with farms growing commercial irrigated crops to obtain regulatory coverage by enrolling the farm in the Ag Order.

During the enrollment procedure, staff assigns the farm a tier, with Tier 1 ranches having the fewest reporting requirements and Tier 3 having the most reporting requirements. Landowners and operators with Tier 2 and Tier 3 farms are required to complete, and keep up to date, an annual compliance form. Landowners and operators with Tier 2 and Tier 3 farms growing high-risk crops (those that have a high risk of discharging nitrogen to groundwater) are required to submit an annual total nitrogen applied report.

A subset of landowners and operators with Tier 3 farms are required to develop and implement a water quality buffer plan and an irrigation and nutrient management plan (INMP); growers required to develop an INMP must submit an effectiveness report of their INMP. Guggia Farms is ranked as a Tier 3 ranch because they reported chlorpyrifos applications to the Department of Pesticide Regulation, and irrigation and stormwater discharge in the annual compliance form submitted to the Regional Water Board. The data requirements are used to ensure that farms are achieving water quality objectives in their management practices.

Landowners and operators growing commercial irrigated crops must enroll farms by submitting an electronic [Notice of Intent](#). For more information about the Ag Order requirements, contact Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program staff at AgNOI@waterboards.ca.gov, or call 805-549-3148.

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