

California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association



January 27, 2011

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

The Honorable Jacob Lew
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Director Lew:

We are requesting your expedited consideration on an urgent matter important to California's continuing battle with pests and diseases harmful to the nation's agriculture industry and the environment.

We remain extremely concerned about the overall pest prevention system in the United States, but while all emerging and invasive plant pest programs are important, one of the more recent and significant concerns to California includes combating *Lobesia botrana* (European Grapevine Moth or EGVM). EGVM is a very destructive pest of wine grapes, attacking the flowers and fruit of grapes as the primary host. California's grape and wine industries are economic powerhouses accounting for \$62 billion of economic activity in the state and \$122 billion in the nation, as well as providing 330,000 jobs within California and 820,000 jobs nationwide.

We understand an emergency CCC funding request is pending approval. Can you give us some indication when the funding will become available? Please know a delay in funding EGVM program activities in California can have serious consequences to the winegrape industry and undo the significant gains made against this invasive species in 2010. The funding is needed to support the staging of traps to capture the 'first flight' of the EGVM as they emerge from dormancy. This is a critical stage, which is rapidly approaching and our surveillance efforts will be key to determining which areas need to effect prompt treatment options and continue a process to work toward releasing areas from quarantines. Time is of the essence because these systems require some planning and set-up to be implemented most efficiently and effectively.

We are also hopeful the Administration will provide a minimum \$10 million in the FY 2012 budget for our ongoing efforts to control the proliferation of EGVM.

Robert G. Atkins, President
San Diego County
Agricultural Commissioner /
Sealer of Weights & Measures

Mary Pfeiffer, President Elect
Shasta County
Agricultural Commissioner /
Sealer of Weights & Measures

Patrick Griffin, Vice President
(Agriculture)
Siskiyou County
Agricultural Commissioner /
Sealer of Weights & Measures

Kurt Floren, Vice President
(Weights & Measures)
Los Angeles County
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Please know we will appreciate your expedited consideration of this important, timely funding issue that is vital to our continuing endeavors to protect California, and our nation's agriculture industry and environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Atkins", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert G. Atkins
President

cc: California congressional delegation
Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Dr. Robert Leavitt, Director, Plant Health & Pest Prevention Services, CDFA