Sustainability Update

• What is Sustainability
• Who can certify a grower sustainable
• California Sustainable Winegrowing Program
  – Hires 3rd party certifiers
  – 85% of Cal winegrowers are certified

Do we want any part of this?
What about Soybeans?

• Should there be a national basic program?
• Program covers any crop
• Will buyers, growers, ag groups buy in
• Who certifies?
  – CCA, Professional Agronomist, RCD, University
  – Associations, Buyers, ???

Is it worth looking at??
University of California

Nitrogen Management Training
for Certified Crop Advisers

MODULE 1

California’s Nutrient Management Regulations – Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

• CCA’s have been chosen, following training and certification, to sign off on nitrogen management plans for California growers.

• This presentation addresses questions CCAs may have regarding their role in the future of nitrogen management plans.
What is the Problem?

• Nitrate in Drinking Water
  – Federal/CA Maximum Contaminant Level is 45 mg NO₃ /L (10 mg NO₃–N /L).
  
  – Concentrations in drinking water of some CA aquifers exceed this level.
  
  – CA State Water Resources Control Board noted that 8% of drinking water wells exceed the nitrate threshold.
Where is Nitrate a Problem in CA?

Areas with shallow groundwater and intensive agriculture are vulnerable to nitrate contamination

- **Above** MCL
- **Below** MCL
Regulations: Waste Discharge Requirements

- Growers with irrigated lands must either join regional coalitions or meet WDR requirements individually.

- **Tasks to be handled by Coalitions**, at least in Central Valley:
  - Groundwater quality assessments and plans
  - Monitoring long term ground water quality trends
  - Assess which BMPs protect ground water quality
  - Surface water quality monitoring
  - Compilation of data submitted by growers (CV only) and Reports to Regional Water Board
Regulations: Waste Discharge Requirements

• Growers are responsible for:
  – Annual Farm Management Plans
    • Review whole operation for possible impacts on ground and surface water
  – Annual Nitrogen Management Plans
    • Will require CCA sign off if in vulnerable zone
    • Growers who attend training class and pass test can certify their own plan.
  – Sediment and Erosion Management Plans
    • where needed
  – Submitting data to Coalition or Water Board
  – Fees to pay for Coalition activities as well as Water Board staff time
change from "Center" to "Central"
Current Status

• Growers were required to report the results of their 2015 Nitrogen Management Plan to their coalition by March 1, 2016.

• Growers and CCA’s should be working on completing the 2016 season plans for submission in March 2017.

• Should begin to see results of data analysis from 2015 season.
The power of CCAs

The role of CCAs in these regulations is to deliver information to farmers. The following examples demonstrate how important CCAs are in getting information to farmers.
The power of CCAs: Indiana Example

Please indicate how influential the following groups and individuals are when you make decisions about agricultural practices and strategies. (16 options)

Family, chemical dealers, and seed dealers are most influential

Influence of Extension is mixed

- Strong Influence
- Moderate Influence
- Slight Influence
- No Influence
- No contact
The power of CCAs: Minnesota Example

...the survey asked farmers about the primary decision influencer for the decision maker.

Overwhelmingly, this was the "fertilizer dealer"

(Mike Schmitt, Univ Minn)
The power of CCAs: California Example

Crop Advisors are the most consulted source of technical assistance in helping CA farmers change nutrient management and irrigation practices.
Certified Crop Advisors **CAN** Facilitate Change

CCA’s have the relationship with farmers to help them improve their practices... everyone can improve!

CCA’s have been empowered by the Water Board to take the lead in changing nutrient management practices:

- Get Educated!
- Get Busy!
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Course materials available at:

[link to course materials]

Contributing partners:

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California Institute for Water Resources
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California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA)
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