TO: Greg Neal, Planning Department
FROM: Robert Mulherin, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, Pesticide Use Enforcement
RE: Wine Country Church and School Project
DATE: May 19, 2011

Greg, per your request for a draft report by May 19, 2011, attached please find a document addressing potential impacts associated with development located in proximity to agricultural production areas, specifically, near winegrape production. Also attached is a summary of various agricultural chemicals used on Temecula Valley vineyards within the last 3 years.
Farmland is a vital economic resource to Riverside County supplying food, fiber and nursery plants to not only the residents of Riverside County but throughout the country and the world. There is a rich and varied assortment of agricultural commodities produced in Riverside County, including but not limited to vegetables, field crops, citrus, avocados, table grapes and wine grapes. Agricultural production occurs in four separate districts within Riverside County, (Riverside/Corona, San Jacinto/Temecula, Coachella Valley and Palo Verde Valley) and contributes approximately 4 billion dollars to the economy of Riverside County.

Within the San Jacinto/Temecula agricultural production area, wine grapes are produced on approximately 2,000 acres. The wine grape industry and its connecting tourist industry contribute approximately $100 million to the local and regional economy. Grapes are vulnerable to Pierce’s Disease (PD), Xylella fastidiosa, a bacterial disease that is vectored by Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS). The insect and bacterium are an ongoing threat to the vineyards in the Temecula Valley. During the late 1990s, the GWSS/PD complex resulted in a 40% vineyard loss and threatened the associated tourism industry.

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors recognizes the value of the wine grape industry and its contribution to the economy of Riverside County. In August 1999, the Board adopted Resolution Number 99-369 and a declared a local emergency for Riverside County due to the threat of GWSS/PD to wine grape production and the connecting tourist industry. This Emergency Declaration has been renewed every two weeks since it was adopted. In 2000, an area-wide management program was initiated within the Temecula Valley through a Cooperative Agreement between the USDA and Riverside County, and the University of California, Riverside to prevent the further spread of GWSS/PD. Under the area-wide management program, grapes and citrus are treated with insecticides to control Glassy-winged
Sharpshooter which effectively diminishes the spread of Pierce’s Disease. The aggressive approach by the wine grape industry to control GWSS/PD was instrumental in saving wine grape production in Riverside County. Without these treatments, the wine grape growers would be in the same situation they were facing in the late 1990s.

**PESTICIDE USE RESTRICTIONS**

In general, the use of agricultural chemicals near establishments such as schools and churches becomes more difficult, whether they are conventional or organic, due to use restrictions contained in the California Food and Agricultural Code, California Code of Regulations and the pesticide permit. There is potential for adjacent growers to suffering damage to the crop or possibly losing it altogether. If the nearby or adjacent agricultural operation is a vineyard, the vineyard operator risks having the vines infected by Pierce’s Disease and eventually losing the vines.

When pesticides are applied, it must be done according to the directions and requirements listed on the pesticide label. They must be applied safely and they must not be allowed to drift off site nor contaminate public or private property. To aide in the safe application of pesticides, the Agricultural Commissioner may impose permit/pesticide use conditions that are in addition to the laws and regulations governing pesticide use, in order to prevent “undue hazards” associated with sensitive sites per Food and Agricultural Code Section 14006.6. Each site that is proposed for treatment is evaluated individually to determine what permit/pesticide use conditions will be required.

Due to past situations that have occurred in agriculture/urban interfaces, the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner’s has the following general pesticide use conditions:

- **Buffer Zones**
  
  ✓ do not make applications within 150 feet with a ground rig (or within 300 feet with an aircraft) of sensitive sites, such as occupied residences or businesses or churches unless occupants are contacted and permission is given in writing to apply closer;
- do not make applications within 300 feet of field workers;

- Schools – no foliar applications are allowed within ¼ mile of a school (including daycare centers) in session with a ground rig or within ½ mile with an aircraft.
  - In session means during regularly scheduled class times.
  - Applications are allowed before/after school and during weekends, holidays and vacations, provided that the school and school grounds are not being used for an event such as a public event, meeting, sports activity, etc.

- Some pesticides, such as Sulfur Dust are difficult to control and contain during the application due to the dust formulation; therefore, the application may not be allowed in certain areas. Restrictions and conditions of use are on a site-by-site basis.

- The above restrictions do not apply to agricultural chemicals injected into a drip irrigation system and do not apply to hand applied (backpack sprayer) foliar materials.

**AGRICULTURAL/URBAN INTERFACE DISCUSSION**

In California, increasing pressure has occurred on agriculture as suburban development has moved into what were traditionally agricultural areas and Riverside County is no exception to this pressure. Some of these new residents are often not as understanding nor accepting of farming activities and practices – the noise of tractors, dust being generated during plowing and discing of fields, odors of animals, applications of fertilizers and applications of pesticides. As a result, some agricultural operations are forced to amend their farming practices and activities or cease their operations altogether.

One long-term solution to this problem is effective land use planning. This could include boundaries for urban growth and, where appropriate the use of buffer zones between urban and agricultural areas. If farmland in Riverside County is to be maintained and agriculture is to remain a critical part of the economy in Riverside County, consideration should be given to land use planning decisions that minimize urban development/agricultural conflicts.
Riverside County recognizes the value of agriculture in Riverside County and realizes that when the agricultural/urban interface occurs, agricultural operations are often the subject of nuisance complaints. To address this issue, Ordinance No. 625 was adopted by Riverside County. This ordinance is commonly known as the “Right to Farm Ordinance”. Its intent is to conserve, protect and encourage the development, improvement, and continued viability of agricultural land, industries and agricultural products in Riverside County while balancing the rights of farmers with the rights of non-farmers that own, occupy or use land adjacent to agricultural areas. Another intent of this ordinance is to limit the circumstances under which agricultural activities may be deemed to constitute a nuisance.
### 2009 Applications made to Wine Grapes

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<th>Formulation</th>
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<th>1/4 Mile Applies</th>
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**Grand Total**: 953

Adjuvants used with the Pesticides:

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Grand Total: 481
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**Grand Total**: 115