



# County of San Diego

**HA DANG**  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/  
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES

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February 28, 2022

## INVITATION - FEE PROPOSAL WORKSHOPS

The County of San Diego Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures (AWM) is committed to providing important services that support public health and safety, resilient food supply, agricultural trade, consumer confidence, and a sustainable environment for the San Diego region.

We are cognizant of the pandemic's impacts on regulated business, but in order to provide quality services to you and the other members of the regulated industry AWM needs the resources so we can support your business continuity and the regional economic recovery. AWM is also cognizant of customers stated preference for annual fee updates to allow businesses to plan for fee adjustments.

This proposal also demonstrates our commitment to the Board of Supervisors (Board) that cost recovery is a regular part of business by ensuring compliance with Board Policy B-29 - *Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts - Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery*. This policy directs departments to recover the cost of services from individuals or entities that receive and benefit from the services provided; any exception to these requires the Board's approval. This fee proposal aligns the needed resources with quality service level and represents cost recovery as a regular part of AWM's fiscal management.

The last cost recovery proposal was approved by the Board on May 5, 2021 for the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22. The fees proposed for FY 2022-23 will be necessary to address cost increases based on retirement costs and anticipated negotiated labor agreements..The proposed fees listed on page 2 are for FY 2022-23 and do not address cost increases based on negotiated labor agreements, due to the timing of this proposal and the labor negotiations still in process. Instead, the proposal reflects the County's standard assumptions. Any unrecovered cost increases due to approved labor negotiations will be reflected in future fee proposals.

AWM has worked to contain costs where possible through business process improvements to enhance efficiency, leverage technology to streamline operations, improve customer service, and increase compliance. Some of the cost containment measures include leveraging technology and implementing virtual video inspections and utilizing mobile field inspection applications. AWM also contained costs by continuing to find methods to streamline operational processes by consolidating field inspections and developing additional compliance resources that allow for better industry engagement. In addition, we also apply County and State funding to further mitigate the increases.

Based on this year's cost review, AWM is proposing adjustments to 16 fees for Export Certification, Direct Marketing, and Industrial Hemp Cultivation, Verification of Agriculture, and Apiary Certification. There are 17 fees unchanged, including the ones related to Hazardous Materials Inventory. On average, the fee increase is \$2 for an overall adjustment of approximately 1.6%.

We will present the following fee adjustments for the programs below to the Board on April 6 and April 27, 2022 for approval to be effective July 1, 2022. The fee adjustments are as follows:

<b>Pest Exclusion – Export Certification</b>	<b>Current Fee</b>	<b>New Fee</b>	<b>Change</b>
International Plant Shipment Certificate	\$101	\$103	\$2
International Counter Service Certificate	\$78	\$80	\$2
Domestic Plant Shipment Certificate	\$43	\$44	\$1
Domestic Counter Service Certificate	\$35	\$36	\$1
Missed Appointment Fee	\$70	\$72	\$2
Hourly Rate	\$140	\$143	\$3
After Hours Inspection Hourly Rate	\$210	\$214	\$4
<b>Direct Marketing</b>			
Certified Farmers’ Market Certificate	\$190	\$194	\$4
Certified Producer’s (CP) Certificate	\$56	\$57	\$1
Additional County Listing on CP	\$12	\$12	\$0
CP's Certificate Change or Addition	\$12	\$12	\$0
Hourly Rate	\$166	\$169	\$3
<b>Industrial Hemp Cultivation</b>			
Annual License Fee	\$200	\$206	\$6
Hourly Rate	\$136	\$140	\$4
<b>Verification of Agriculture</b>			
Application Processing	\$152	\$155	\$3
Hourly Rate	\$104	\$105	\$1
<b>Apiary Certification</b>			
Hourly Rate	\$140	\$142	\$2

You are invited to attend one of the workshops below so we may provide you additional information and answer your questions for this proposal. The workshops’ content provided will be the same and two different dates listed below to accommodate your schedule.

When:	Tuesday, March 15, 2022
Time:	<b>4 PM – 5 PM</b>
Meeting Link:	<a href="https://zoom.us/j/96040683977?pwd=UGZhTS9Hb01ySWE4VnpzQ1Z0MTloQT09">https://zoom.us/j/96040683977?pwd=UGZhTS9Hb01ySWE4VnpzQ1Z0MTloQT09</a>
Website:	<a href="https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/">https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/</a>
RSVP:	(858) 614-7786 or <a href="mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov">sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov</a>

When:	Thursday, March 17, 2022
Time:	<b>4 PM – 5 PM</b>
Meeting Link:	<a href="https://zoom.us/j/99576132253?pwd=WW9PQnpia0FVaGw3VDFFSUNCUWE3QT09">https://zoom.us/j/99576132253?pwd=WW9PQnpia0FVaGw3VDFFSUNCUWE3QT09</a>
Website:	<a href="https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/">https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/</a>
RSVP:	(858) 614-7786 or <a href="mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov">sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov</a>

The workshops will be held virtually and a link to these meetings will be available at AWM’s website, <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/>, where you will be able to access the meeting on the specified dates and times.

Also, please respond by March 7, 2022 by e-mailing [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) or calling 858-614-7786 with the date/time you are interested in attending to ensure you don't miss these updates.

If you need this notice translated, please email [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) to request a copy of this notice in your preferred language. Please include if translations services are needed for the public meeting.

إذا كنت تحتاج إلى ترجمة هذا الإشعار، يرجى إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) لطلب نسخة عن الإشعار بلغتك المفضلة. يرجى ذكر ما إذا كانت خدمات الترجمة مطلوبة للاجتماع العام.

如需翻譯本通知，請電郵 [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) 請求以您的首選語言提供本通知的副本。如果公開會議需要翻譯服務，請註明。

Si necesita que se traduzca este aviso, envíe un correo electrónico a [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) para solicitar una copia de este aviso en su idioma preferido. Incluya si se necesitan servicios de traducción para la reunión pública.

Kung kailangan mong isalin sa ibang wika ang paunawang ito, mangyaring magpadala ng elektronikong koreo sa [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) upang humiling ng kopya ng paunawang ito sa iyong gustong wika.

Nếu quý vị cần dịch thông báo này, vui lòng gửi email đến [sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov) để yêu cầu một bản sao thông báo bằng ngôn ngữ ưa thích của quý vị. Vui lòng ghi ra yêu cầu nếu cần dịch vụ phiên dịch cho cuộc họp công cộng.

If you have questions regarding the fees, please contact the following AWM staff members:

- Pest Exclusion Export Certification, : Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Travis Elder by phone at (760) 752-4700 or by email at [Travis.Elder@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Travis.Elder@sdcounty.ca.gov).
- Direct Marketing or Industrial Hemp Cultivation: Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Jordan Key by phone at (858) 614-7784 or by email at [Jordan.Key@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Jordan.Key@sdcounty.ca.gov).
- Apiary Certification: Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Jason Schwartze by phone at 858-614-7795 or email at [Jason.Schwartze@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Jason.Schwartze@sdcounty.ca.gov)

## Frequent Asked Questions

### 1. Why is AWM proposing fee adjustments when agricultural businesses are impacted by COVID?

We are cognizant of the pandemic's impacts on regulated businesses but needs to obtain the resources to continue providing quality services to you and the other members of the regulated industry so that we can support your business continuity and the regional economic recovery. In addition, our customers had stated their preference for annual fee updates to allow them to plan for fee adjustments. This proposal also demonstrates AWM's commitment to the Board that cost recovery is a regular part of business to ensure compliance with Board Policy B-29 *Fees, Grants, Revenue Contracts - Department Responsibility for Cost Recovery*. This policy directs departments to recover the cost of services from individuals or entities that receive and benefit from the services provided; any exception requires the Board's approval. This fee proposal aligns the needed resources with quality service level and represents cost recovery as a regular part of AWM's fiscal management.

The last cost recovery proposal approved by the Board was on May 5, 2021 for Fiscal Year 2021-22. The fees proposed for FY 2022-23 will be necessary to address cost increases based on retirement costs, anticipated negotiated labor agreements, and to ensure compliance with Board Policy B-29. The fees proposed listed on page 2 are for Fiscal Year 2022-23 and do not address cost increases based on negotiated labor agreements, due to the timing of the fee proposal and the labor negotiations, but instead, the proposal reflects the County's standard assumptions. Any unrecovered cost increases due to approved labor negotiations will be reflected in future fee proposals.

### 2. What has AWM done to contain costs?

The practice of focusing on continuous improvement, implementing operational efficiencies, and prioritizing resources in key areas has positioned AWM to respond to customer needs and regulatory changes. AWM is committed to continuous improvement and partners with stakeholders to identify opportunities and areas for improvement. AWM strives to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency to achieve positive outcomes and a collective impact. Since the last fee proposal, AWM has improved operational efficiency by leveraging technology, streamlining processes, and aligning staff classification with program activities. AWM has worked to contain costs where possible through business process improvements to enhance efficiency and leveraging technology to streamline operations, improve customer service, and increase compliance. Some of the cost containment measures include virtual video inspections and a mobile field inspection app. AWM also streamlined operational processes through consolidated field inspections and developed additional compliance resources for better industry engagement. This resulted in an annual savings of \$99,458, without which fees would increase on average an additional 7.5%.

### **3. How was the fee proposal developed?**

AWM conducts annual analysis of its programs including a review of state mandates, program operations, inspection frequencies, service levels, and benchmarking to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how our fees compare to similar counties. We considered the projected program costs for Fiscal Year 2022-23, cost savings due to operational efficiencies, and available County and State funding sources to mitigate the cost increase where applicable to determine the proposed fee adjustments. This fee proposal does not address cost increases based on negotiated labor agreements, due to the timing of the fee proposal and the labor negotiations, but instead, the proposal reflects standard assumptions made by the County. Increased costs due to approved labor negotiations will be reflected in future fee proposal. The County Auditor and Controller reviewed the supporting documentation and the methodology in this proposal to ensure compliance with County policies.