



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

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AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/
SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

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March 20, 2025

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, a resilient food supply, agricultural trade, consumer confidence, and a sustainable environment for the San Diego region.

Recognizing that many customers are managing economic uncertainties due to possible interruptions to their business operations and rising input costs, AWM continues to leverage the essential use of technology and business process streamlining to limit cost increases, improve customer service, and promote regulatory compliance. AWM has seen new cost containment in the Certified Farmers' Market program by utilizing more cost-effective personnel and implementing a standard operating procedure for all communications with customers. Additionally, improvements in business processes have expedited data entry and certificate issuance in the Agricultural Export program. There also continues to be efficiency gains due to staff proficiency in previously implemented cost containment measures. Some of the cost containment measures that continue to improve efficiency include mobile field inspection apps, streamlining of operational processes, and developing additional resource documents, such as checklists and tutorials to increase industry engagement in maintaining compliance. Increased staff proficiency with technology innovations and newly implemented business processes, along with past efficiencies, has provided AWM agricultural customers with a collective savings of \$643,000 over the past five years. New and past cost savings continue to be applied to fee proposals to reduce the cost increases. Without these operational efficiencies implemented in these past five years, fees would have needed to increase an additional 5% on average each year. We also leverage County and State funding to further limit increases as we continue to support your business continuity and the regional economy.

This Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Fee Proposal demonstrates our commitment to the Board of Supervisors (Board) that cost recovery is a regular part of business, 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 those who receive and benefit from the services provided; any exceptions require the Board's approval. This Fee Proposal aligns the needed resources with quality service for customers and represents cost recovery as a regular part of AWM's fiscal management. In addition, our customers have stated their preference for annual fee updates to plan for changes.

In FY 2023-24, the total cost of all agricultural programs was \$22.9 million. Local growers paid a fee total of \$363,000 or 2%, and out-of-county agricultural operators paid \$1.2 million or 4% of the total program costs. The remaining 94% of program costs were covered by \$7.9 million, or about 35%, from the County and \$13.5 million, or about 59%, from State and federal contributions.

You are invited to attend one of the workshops below to learn more and ask questions about these proposed fee changes. The content of these workshops will be the same, with two dates to accommodate your schedule.

In-person Meeting	Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Time:	3 PM – 4 PM
Meeting Location:	151 Carmel Street, San Marcos CA 92078
Website:	https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/
RSVP:	(858) 614-7786 or sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov
Virtual Meeting	Thursday, April 3, 2025
Time:	4 PM – 5 PM
Zoom Link:	https://sdcounty-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/81896978611?pwd=3dHnistHZfyO19NmakZgQLRYiDfYLQ.1
Website:	https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/awm/
RSVP:	(858) 614-7786 or sdcawm@sdcounty.ca.gov

The Board approved the last fee proposal for the current FY 2024-25 in May 2024. The fees proposed for FY 2025-26 on page 3 will be necessary to address projected cost increases and to ensure compliance with Board Policy B-29. The fees proposed are for Fiscal Year 2025-26 and address cost increases based on negotiated labor agreements and the County's standard assumptions. The proposed fee increases for FY 2025-26 will be necessary to partially address cost increases based mostly on projected negotiated labor agreements.

Based on this year's cost review, AWM is proposing adjustments to 18 fees, including Export Certification, Direct Marketing, and Industrial Hemp Cultivation. There are 14 unchanged fees. These program fees will increase by \$6 or 5.0% on average.

The regulated operations in the HMI Program will need to pay a State surcharge that has been in effect since 2023. The California Environmental Protection Agency surcharge is an assessment on each site that has hazardous materials to recover the necessary and reasonable costs for the State to provide program implementation, ongoing maintenance, and oversight. The County of San Diego is responsible for collecting the surcharge from persons, owners, or operators who need to obtain facility permits and inspections and then transmits this surcharge to the State. This surcharge is not a County fee, and State surcharge revenues are not retained by the County but forwarded to the State.

We will present the following fee adjustments for the Programs on the next page to the Board on May 7 and 21, 2025, for approval to be effective July 1, 2025.

Pest Exclusion – Export Certification	Current Fee	New Fee	Change
International Plant Shipment Certificate	\$111	\$118	\$7
International Counter Service Certificate	\$88	\$93	\$5
Domestic Plant Shipment Certificate	\$50	\$53	\$3
Domestic Counter Service Certificate	\$43	\$46	\$3
Missed Appointment Fee	\$80	\$82	\$2
Hourly Rate	\$160	\$164	\$4
After Hours Inspection Hourly Rate	\$240	\$246	\$6
Direct Marketing	Current Fee	New Fee	Change
Certified Farmers' Market Certificate	\$208	\$220	\$12
Certified Producer's (CP) Certificate	\$62	\$66	\$4
Additional County Listing on CP	\$14	\$15	\$1
CP's Certificate Change or Addition	\$14	\$15	\$1
Hourly Rate	\$186	\$198	\$12
Industrial Hemp Cultivation	Current Fee	New Fee	Change
Annual License Fee	\$223	\$239	\$16
Hourly Rate	\$152	\$163	\$11
Hazardous Materials Inventory	Current Fee	New Fee	Change
Base Fee	\$546	\$546	\$-
Inventory Item Fee	\$100	\$100	\$-
State Surcharge for Certified Unified Program Agency Oversight (This fee is forwarded to the State and not retained by the County)	-	\$94	-

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

- Pest Exclusion Export Certification: Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Travis Elder at (760) 752-4700 or Travis.Elder@sdcounty.ca.gov.
- Direct Marketing or Industrial Hemp Cultivation: Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Jordan Key at (858) 614-7784 or Jordan.Key@sdcounty.ca.gov.
- Hazardous Materials Inventory: Deputy Agricultural Commissioner Kara Roskop-Waters at (858) 614-7747 or Kara.Roskop-Waters@sdcounty.ca.gov

Language Access:

If you need this notice translated, please email sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov to request a copy in your preferred language. Translation will be available at the public meeting if requested 72 hours prior to the meeting. Please send translation requests and any questions to sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov.

لطلب نسخة من هذا الإشعار بلغتك المفضلة، يرجى إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov. ستكون الترجمة متاحة في الاجتماع العام إذا طُلبت قبل 72 ساعة من الاجتماع. يرجى إرسال طلبات الترجمة وأي أسئلة إلى sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov.

如果您需要翻译本通知，请发送电子邮件至 sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov 索取本通知的您首选语言的副本。如果在会议前 72 小时要求，将在公开会议上提供翻译。请将翻译请求和任何问题发送至 sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov

Kung kailangan mong isalin ang notice na ito, mangyaring mag-email sa sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov upang humiling ng kopya ng notice na ito sa iyong gustong wika. Magiging available ang pagsasalin sa pampublikong pulong kung hihilingin 72 oras bago ang pulong. Mangyaring magpadala ng mga kahilingan sa pagsasalin at anumang mga katanungan sa sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov.

이 통지서를 번역해야 하는 경우 sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov로 이메일을 보내 원하는 언어로 된 이 통지서 사본을 요청하십시오. 회의 72시간 전에 요청하면 공개 회의에서 번역이 제공됩니다. 번역 요청 및 질문은 sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov로 보내주십시오.

ایمیل بزنید تا یک نسخه از این اعلامیه را به زبان دلخواه sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov اگر به ترجمه این اعلامیه نیاز دارید، لطفاً به خود درخواست کنید. در صورت درخواست 72 ساعت قبل از جلسه، ترجمه در جلسه عمومی در دسترس خواهد بود. لطفاً درخواستهای ترجمه ارسال کنید sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov و هرگونه سؤال را به

Haddii aad u baahan tahay in ogaysiiskan la tarjumo, fadlan iimayl u dir sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.govsi aad u codsato koobiga ogeysiiskan oo ku qoran luqadda aad doorbidayso. Turjumaada waxaa laga heli karaa kulanka dadweynaha haddii la codsado 72 saacadood ka hor kulanka. Fadlan u soo dir codsiyada tarjumaada iyo wixii su'aalo ah sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov.

Si necesita traducir este aviso, envíe un correo electrónico a sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov para solicitar una copia de este aviso en su idioma preferido. La traducción estará disponible en la reunión pública si se solicita 72 horas antes de la reunión. Envíe las solicitudes de traducción y cualquier pregunta a sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov.

Nếu bạn cần dịch thông báo này, vui lòng gửi email tới sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov để yêu cầu một bản sao của thông báo này bằng ngôn ngữ ưa thích của bạn. Bản dịch sẽ có sẵn tại cuộc họp công cộng nếu được yêu cầu 72 giờ trước cuộc họp. Vui lòng gửi yêu cầu dịch thuật và bất kỳ câu hỏi nào tới sdcawm@sdcountry.ca.gov

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is AWM proposing fee adjustments when agricultural businesses are impacted by economic uncertainties?

This proposal addresses projected cost increases provides the resources needed for AWM to continue providing services that support public health and safety, a resilient food supply, agricultural trade, consumer confidence, and a sustainable environment for the region. Through these services, the County balances environmental, community, and economic interests to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors. The proposal would provide the resources needed for quality services that support your business continuity and the regional economy. In addition, our customers have stated their preference for annual fee updates to plan for fee changes. This Fee 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 those who receive and benefit from the services provided; any exceptions require 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 Fee Proposal approved by the Board was in May 2024 for Fiscal Year 2024-25.

2. What has AWM done to contain costs?

Recognizing that many customers are managing economic uncertainties due to possible interruptions to their business operations and rising input costs, AWM continues to leverage the essential use of technology and business process streamlining to limit cost increases, prioritize resources in key areas, improve customer service, and promote regulatory compliance. AWM strives to enhance program effectiveness and efficiency to achieve positive outcomes and a collective impact. AWM has seen new cost containment in the Certified Farmers' Market Program by utilizing more cost-effective personnel and implementing a standard operating procedure for all communications with customers. Additionally, improvements in business processes have expedited data entry and certificate issuance in the Agricultural Export program. There also continues to be efficiency gains due to staff proficiency in previously implemented cost containment measures. Some of the cost containment measures that continue to improve efficiency include mobile field inspection apps, streamlining of operational processes, and developing additional resource documents, such as checklists and tutorials to increase industry engagement in maintaining compliance. Increased staff proficiency with technology innovations and newly implemented business processes along with past efficiencies has provided AWM customers with a collective savings of \$715,000 over the past five fiscal years. New cost savings and past cost savings continue to be applied to fee proposals to reduce the cost increases. Without these operational efficiencies implemented in these past five fiscal years, fees would have needed to increase an additional 5% on average each fiscal year. We also leverage County and State funding to further limit increases as we continue to support your business continuity and the regional economy.

3. How was the fee proposal developed?

The methodology used to develop fees for AWM is an approach that is consistent across the County of San Diego (County) enterprise and is followed by other groups with fee proposals, such as the Health and Human Services Agency and the Public Safety Group. 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 looked at the projected program costs for Fiscal Year 2025-26, cost savings due to operational efficiencies, and available County and State funding sources to limit increased costs where applicable to come up with the proposed fee changes.