

APPENDIX 4.1-1H

*Land Exchange Alternative
Agricultural Plan*

Agricultural Plan

**OTAY RANCH
VILLAGE 14 and Planning Areas 16/19
Land Exchange Alternative
Specific Plan - Appendix 7**

February 2018



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I. INTRODUCTION

The 1993 Otay Ranch Program EIR requires the preparation of an Agriculture Plan concurrent with the approval of any SPA affecting onsite agricultural resources. The Findings of Fact state that the Agricultural Plan shall indicate the type of agriculture activity being allowed as an interim use including buffering guidelines designed to prevent potential land use interface impacts related to noise, odors, dust, insects, rodents and chemicals that may accompany agricultural activities and operations.

Historically, the Land Exchange Area has been used for dry farming, as well as cattle and sheep grazing. Crop production was limited to hay and grains due to limited water availability. Although cultivation and cattle grazing activities are currently permitted, these activities are no longer occurring within the Land Exchange Area. Land used for agricultural activities in areas surrounding the Land Exchange Area has decreased over the years. Substantial farmland has been converted to urban uses due to the increased land value such uses tend to generate. In addition, property taxes often exceed income from agricultural production. The high cost of importing water for irrigation has also resulted in many agricultural activities becoming cost prohibitive. These factors have contributed to the fact that large-scale agricultural activities in the Land Exchange Alternative ceased in 1999. Since that time, only periodic and limited farming and grazing activities have continued in some areas of Otay Ranch, but not within the Land Exchange Area.

II. PHASED ELIMINATION OF AGRICULTURAL USES

Grazing

The Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan includes a Range Management Plan that is administered by the Preserve Owner/Manager. The purpose of the Range Management Plan is to provide a framework for the coordinated control of grazing within the MSCP Preserve. Grazing no longer occurs within the Land Exchange Area.

Farming

Land utilized for agricultural activities in properties surrounding the Land Exchange Area has decreased in recent years. Factors that have led to the decrease in agricultural use include the conversion of farmland into urban uses as a result of increases in property taxes and the high cost of importing water. The phased development of the Land Exchange Alternative would incrementally convert the Land Exchange Area to urban development.

Consistent with the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP, the following agricultural standards will be employed should the property owner or subsequent owner(s) desire to farm on-site prior to development of the Land Exchange Alternative Area:

- A 200-foot distance buffer shall be maintained between developed property and ongoing agricultural operations. Use of pesticides shall comply with federal, state and local regulations.
- In those areas where pesticides are to be applied, vegetation shall be utilized to shield adjacent urban development (within 400 feet) from agricultural activities.
- The Applicant shall notify adjacent property owners of potential pesticide application through advertisements in newspapers of general circulation.
- Where necessary to ensure the safety of area residents, appropriate fencing shall be utilized.