



# Dairy CARES Report

May 2007

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## Central Valley dairy water quality rules adopted; CARES coalition to remain engaged going forward

On May 3, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted water quality regulations for dairies. The new rules, known as General Order Waste Discharge Requirements or WDRs, will mean a big challenge for dairy producers going forward. For now, there are three important things dairy producers need to know:

- **The first important deadline is this December 2007.** Although the regulations include many planning and reporting requirements phased in over the next several years, the first deadline is December 2007. It is important that all Central Valley dairy producers have a plan of action for meeting the deadlines (see schedule below).
- **Help is on the way.** With the support of the CARES coalition, the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program is already planning a series of free producer workshops this fall to assist dairy producers in meeting the initial deadline; the classes will also inform participants about what comes next. Most producers will be able to complete and turn in their initial paperwork right at the workshop.
- **The CARES coalition remains closely engaged.** Although the new regulations are already adopted and in place, critical issues remain going forward. For example there are important questions about lagoon design requirements for future dairy expansions and new dairies, and exactly how groundwater monitoring will be conducted on existing dairies. CARES coalition members will continue their coordinated efforts to work with the Regional Board to make the process as manageable as possible for dairy producers.

### Other key facts about the new regulations:

#### Who is covered?

All dairies that:

- Are in the Central Valley
- Are of *any* size
- Existed as of October 2005 and filed a “Report of Waste Discharge” by that date to the Regional Board
- Have not expanded herd size more than 15 percent since October 2005

#### What are Central Valley dairy operators required to do?

- Prepare a **nutrient management plan** (to ensure that manure is applied properly to crops to prevent impacts to groundwater and surface waters)
- Prepare a **waste management plan** to ensure that stormwater runoff drains properly, does not carry manure off the facility, that the dairy is protected from off-site flooding, and that the lagoon and other storage facilities have adequate capacity for normal operation and stormwater.
- Conduct environmental monitoring including **groundwater monitoring** to ensure that the ongoing operation of the dairy does not adversely impact groundwater. This requirement will be phased in over several years.
- **Submit reports to the Regional Water Board**, generally on an annual basis

### **When does it all get started and what is the first step?**

As stated above, the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program will hold workshops later this year to help dairy producers to understand the details of the process and to prepare and complete necessary paperwork. CDQAP will continue to provide assistance and workshops over the implementation timeline (see below). CARES coalition members will assist with the rollout and will provide support for the workshops.

The following is a partial list of some of the important deadlines:

- **December 31, 2007.** All dairies must submit an **Existing Conditions Report**. The CDQAP will hold workshops to assist with this process with the support of the CARES coalition.
- **July 2008.** First annual report due with Annual Dairy Facility Assessment and proposed interim facility modifications.
- **July 2008.** Dairies must submit partial Waste Management Plans and Nutrient Management Plans, including a detailed facility analysis, operation and maintenance plan and, where needed, proposed modifications.
- **July 2009.** Where needed, dairies must submit retrofit plans with a schedule to reach nutrient balance, improve storage capacity, flood protection, etc.
- **July 2011.** Certify completion of retrofitting requirements for Waste Management Plan and Nutrient Management Plan as proposed.
- **July 2012.** Certify Nutrient Management Plan is fully implemented.

As we have stated before, there is no longer any doubt that California dairies meet the highest environmental standards in the world. CARES is currently working on major educational effort to provide education and information to California community leaders, elected officials and others that tell this positive story of dairy environmental stewardship.

*CARES is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability for California's dairy industry. CARES members include the Alliance of Western Milk Producers, Bank of the West, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, Crystal Cream & Butter, Dairy Farmers of America-California, Dairy Institute of California, Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O' Lakes, Milk Producers Council, Saputo Cheese, Turlock Dairy & Refrigeration, Western United Dairywomen, and others. For information about CARES, visit our web site at [www.dairycares.com](http://www.dairycares.com), write [dairycares@aol.com](mailto:dairycares@aol.com) or call 916-441-3318.*