



# AGRICULTURAL ELEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

This element provides the policy context for Merced County to achieve its vision for the protection, preservation, and expansion of productive agriculture. Agriculture is the prominent economic segment in the County and accounts for more than 90 percent of all land area. Merced County is ranked fifth among all counties in California and sixth in the nation in the annual market value of farm products. Rich soils, accessible irrigation water, favorable climate, a large labor force, and reliable access to local, national, and global markets make Merced County a thriving agricultural community. Goals and policies in this element are organized under the following headings:

- Agricultural Economy
- Agricultural Land Preservation
- Agricultural and Urban Area Compatibility
- Confined Animal Facilities
- Agricultural Research and Education
- Agricultural Recreation

## AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Agriculture plays a key role in shaping the economy and unique character of Merced County. A top priority for the County is to protect the existing agricultural economy, and to also find ways to expand the agricultural economy in the future. The policies in this section address the protection, expansion, and diversification of the local agricultural economy and its support industries. *(Note: Please see the Economic Development Element for additional goals and policies related to overall countywide economic growth).*

### Goal AG-1

Maintain the financial viability of the agricultural sector by encouraging expansion of commercial agriculture, attracting new agricultural support and value added industries, and promoting locally-grown commodity sales. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-1.1: Merced County Farmers Competitive Edge (JP)**

Promote local agricultural operations and businesses that provide a competitive edge to Merced County farmers and ranchers. *[Source: Existing GP Objective AG.1.A]*

**Policy AG-1.2: Agricultural Industry Expansion (IGC)**

Establish programs and coordinate with local, regional, and State agencies to encourage new economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable agricultural industries in Merced County. *[Sources: Existing GP Policy AG.1.1 and 1.2, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-1.3: Promoting Local Agriculture (SO) **

Establish, as part of the County's economic development strategy, programs that promote and maintain local commercial agriculture. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-4.d, AG Focus Group Comment]*

**Policy AG-1.4: High Value Agricultural Industries (SO/JP)**

Support the development of high-value food processing industries and the production of emerging crops and animal products that can lead to new markets for local products. *[Source: New Policy, AG Focus Group Comment, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-1.5: On-Site Product Sales (SO/JP)**

Identify locations where on-site farm product sales have good economic potential, such as on major roadways and support creation of agricultural tours and trails which promote agricultural tourism. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-4.b, BOS/PC Comment]*

**Policy AG-1.6: Certified Farmers Markets (JP)**

Support certified farmers markets by working with local communities, local farm groups, and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Certified Farmers Market Program. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-4.a; BOS/PC Study Session]*

**Policy AG-1.7: Produce Stands (JP)**

Encourage farmer owned and operated produce markets and stands with local farm produce within the agricultural areas of the County that sell locally-grown farm products by working with local Chambers of Commerce and agricultural groups. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-4.a]*

**Policy AG-1.8: Local Farmer-Consumer Connections (JP)**

Promote the connection between local farmers and consumers by enhancing access by local farmers to local markets, including restaurants, institutions, and schools. *[Source: New Policy, AG Focus Group Comment]*

**Policy AG-1.9: Legislative Advocacy (IGC)**

Actively monitor, review, comment, and advocate on pending major State and Federal legislation and executive orders which could have an impact on agriculture in Merced County. Coordinate position statements with the Farm Bureau and other agricultural

interest groups in the County. *[Sources: Existing GP Policy AG.1.3, Objective AG.1.B, Implementation AG.1.3, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-1.10: Regulatory Compliance Assistance (IGC/FB)**

Continue to assist the operators of confined animal facilities to meet local, State, and Federal operational regulations by identifying sources of funding for necessary modifications of facilities, establishing revolving loan programs, and assisting operators in meeting regulatory requirements. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

## AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

Merced County is committed to protecting productive agricultural land and the agricultural industry. The Land Use Element includes numerous goals and policies for focusing future urban growth into either Urban Communities or New Towns off the valley floor, and increasing the average densities of residential development to minimize the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. This section includes policies that address various agricultural land preservation and conservation strategies, including agricultural mitigation requirements, Williamson Act contracts, and farmland conservation programs managed by non-county agencies that acquire and hold conservation easements. *(Note: As used throughout the Agricultural Element, the term “productive agriculture” is defined as: “farmland that has received water supplies in three of the prior 10 years and is classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland on the Statewide Important Farmland map.”)*

**Goal AG-2**

Ensure the long-term preservation and conservation of land used for productive agriculture, potentially-productive agricultural land, and agricultural-support facilities. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-2.1: Agricultural Land Preservation (RDR)**

Protect agriculturally-designated areas and direct urban growth away from productive agricultural lands into cities, Urban Communities, and New Towns. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-2.2: Agricultural Land Mitigation (RDR)**

Protect productive agricultural areas from conversion to non-agricultural residential uses by establishing and implementing an agricultural mitigation program in cooperation with the six cities in Merced County, with consistent standards for county and city governments, that matches acres converted with farmland acres preserved at a 1:1 ratio. In addition, the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA model) may be used to determine whether the conservation land is of equal or greater value than the land being converted. The County shall exempt commercial, industrial, and mixed-use projects within Urban Communities and Highway interchange Centers from this mitigation requirement. *[Sources: Existing GP Objective AG.2.A, MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-1.a, BOS/PC Comment; BOS Direction]*

**Policy AG-2.3: New Development (RDR/IGC)**

Formalize County-City agreements emphasizing concentration of new development in cities that include agricultural mitigation and avoidance of productive agricultural land conversion. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-1.b]*

**Policy AG-2.4: Preservation Programs (RDR/JP)**

Encourage property owner participation in programs that preserve farmland, including the Williamson Act, conservation easements, and USDA-funded conservation practices. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-4.e]*

**Policy AG-2.5: Williamson Act Minimum Parcel Size (RDR)**

Encourage larger parcel size minimums (40 or more acres) and/or evidence of commercial agricultural use for entering new Williamson Act contracts. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-1.e, BOS/PC Comment, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-2.6: Williamson Act Contracts Non-Renewal on Small Parcels (RDR)**

Remove (non-renew) current Williamson Act contracts on small parcels not devoted to commercial agriculture. *[Sources: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-1.d]*

**Policy AG-2.7: Merced County Agricultural Preserve Consolidation (RDR)**

Remove land not under Williamson Act contracts from the Merced County Agriculture Preserve by redrawing the current boundary of the Agricultural Preserve to create one or a series of smaller preserves aligned with contracted land. *[Source: New Policy, County Staff]*

**Policy AG-2.8: Conservation Easements (RDR/MPSP)**

Support the efforts of public, private, and non-profit organizations to preserve agricultural areas in the County through dedicated conservation easements, and range land held as environmental mitigation. *[Sources: Existing GP Policy AG.1.5, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-2.9: Infrastructure Extension (RDR/MPSP)**

Oppose the extension of urban services, such as sewer lines, water lines, or other urban infrastructure, into areas designated for agricultural use, unless necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-2.10: Fiscal Impact Minimization (FB)**

Minimize the fiscal impact to the County from State and Federal programs which result in the purchase of property in fee title through the use of mutual aid agreements, required subvention payments, and any other available means. *[Source: Existing GP Policy OS.1.13]*

**Policy AG-2.11: Preservation Collaboration (IGC/JP)**

Collaborate with landowners, cities, State and Federal agencies, colleges, universities, stakeholders, and community-based organizations to continue and expand agricultural preservation in the County. *[Source: BOS Comment]*

**Policy AG-2.12: Antiquated Subdivisions (RDR)**

Encourage the voluntary merger of antiquated subdivision lots that conflict with adjacent agricultural uses, and continue to require environmental review of permits that could result in adverse environmental impacts in agricultural and rural areas, including traffic generation, groundwater contamination, stormwater drainage disposal, and air quality deterioration. *[Sources: Existing GP Objective AG.2.C, Policy AG.2.5]*

**Policy AG-2.13: Minimum Agricultural Parcel Size Requirement (RDR)**

Require 40 acre minimum permitted parcel size in areas designated Agricultural to discourage land divisions for rural residential purposes and maintain parcels large enough for efficient commercial agriculture production. Require 160 acre minimum permitted parcel size in areas designated Foothill Pasture and in grassland areas. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-2.a; GPU Consultants; County Staff]*

**Policy AG-2.14: Viability of Smaller Parcels (RDR)**

Require applicants seeking to divide agriculturally-zoned parcels to demonstrate the continued viability of lots less than 40 acres for commercial agriculture, using specific standards (i.e., access to agricultural water, joint farm management, access for aerial spraying, size viability for specific commodities) and farm management plans. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-2.f, BOS/PC Comment]*

**Policy AG-2.15: Merced County Agriculture Preserve Consolidation (RDR/MPSP)**

Modify the Merced County Agricultural Preserve to be consistent with State Subdivision Map Act and Williamson act rules for allowing parcels less than 10 acres for a limited number of circumstances authorized as exceptions in the County Zoning Code and consistent with State law. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-1.i, BOS/PC Comment]*

**Policy AG-2.16: High Speed Rail Line Location (IGC)**

Coordinate with the California High Speed Rail Authority to locate the high speed rail lines along existing major transportation corridors, such as State Routes 99 or 152, to minimize the conversion of productive agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. *[Source: New Policy, BOS/PC Study Session]*

## **AGRICULTURAL AND URBAN AREA COMPATIBILITY**

Reducing urban and agricultural land use conflict plays a critical role in maintaining productive agriculture in Merced County. Historically, a major issue in the County has been the expansion of urban uses onto adjacent farmland. This often creates nuisances for urban residents which in turn threatens the viability of agriculture. To combat this problem, the County adopted a Right-to-Farm Ordinance which requires prospective residents of new development near agricultural areas to be notified that there may be inconveniences and discomfort associated with normal farming activities and that any established agricultural operations will not be considered a nuisance.

In addition to nuisance issues, residential development in rural areas and the parcelization of agricultural lands into small unincorporated rural holdings reduces the efficiency and viability of commercial farming. The policies in this section seek to minimize land use conflicts between urban and agricultural uses, reduce farmland conversion, limit further parcelization of farmland, and establish adequate buffers between agricultural and urban uses.

### Goal AG-3

Minimize conflicts between productive agricultural areas and urban land uses, and discourage the parcelization and conversion of large agricultural holdings into rural residential parcels or urban uses. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

#### **Policy AG-3.1: Right-to-Farm Ordinance (RDR)**

Continue to implement the Right-to-Farm Ordinance to define and limit instances where agricultural operations may be considered a nuisance to surrounding residential or urban development. *[Sources: Existing GP Implementation AG.2.7, GPU Consultants]*

#### **Policy AG-3.2: Agricultural Buffer (RDR)**

Require buffers between proposed non-agricultural uses and adjacent productive agricultural operations to protect farms, dairies, and agricultural-related production facilities from conflicts with non-agricultural uses, specifically residential development. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

#### **Policy AG-3.3: Agricultural Buffer Standards (RDR)**

Establish agricultural buffer standards based on type of agricultural operation to be applied to residential development proposals adjacent to productive agricultural land and agricultural-related facilities. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-3.a, BOS/PC Comment; GPU Consultants]*

#### **Policy AG-3.4: Residential Buffers from Agriculture (RDR)**

Require a minimum 200-foot buffer between new residential development and existing agricultural operations, and establish design/maintenance guidelines for developers and property owners. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-3.b, County Staff]*

#### **Policy AG-3.5: Home Site Clustering (RDR)**

Require clustering of homes on agricultural parcels to minimize interference with agricultural operations. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-2.g, BOS/PC Comment]*

#### **Policy AG-3.6: Illegal Dumping (RDR/PI)**

Work with property owners and local law enforcement to find solutions to illegal dumping on agricultural properties such as offering free trash drop-off days and increased penalties for illegal dumping. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-3.7: Public Facility Locations (IGC)**

Discourage public agencies from locating facilities, especially schools, in existing agricultural areas. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-3.e]*

**Policy AG-3.8: Zoning Ordinance Update (RDR)**

Update the County Code to rename the Agricultural Residential (AR) zone to Rural Residential to remove the implication that agriculture is the primary and desired use. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-2.h]*

**Policy AG-3.9: New Confined Animal Facility Location Requirements (RDR)**

Require new or expanded confined animal facilities to be located, at a minimum:

- a) One-half mile from any Rural Center or Urban Community boundary; residentially-designated or zoned property; sensitive uses such as schools, hospitals, jails, Federal wildlife areas, State wildlife areas, and public parks; or concentrations of five or more off-site residences. This does not include areas for municipal uses such as wastewater treatment facilities, airports, or solid waste recycling or disposal facilities located outside urban areas; and
- b) One thousand feet from any off-site residence, unless there is written permission from the off-site property owner. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-3.10: New Adjacent Residences (RDR)**

Prohibit new single- or multi-family residences within one thousand feet of an existing confined animal facility. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-3.11: Solar and Wind Energy Production Facilities (RDR)**

Encourage the installation of solar and wind energy production facilities in agricultural areas so long as they do not result in a tax burden to the County, do not result in permanent water transfers off of productive agricultural land, or do not require cancellation of Williamson Act contracts. In addition, these facilities should include dedications of agricultural land and habitat mitigation, measures to control erosion, and assurances for financing decommissioning activities. *[Source: New Policy, BOS/PC Study Session]*

## **AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

Research and education are vital to the economic health and expansion of the agricultural industry in Merced County. Agricultural research can improve soil and crop productivity; while market understanding can help local farmers adjust to national and international product demand. The policies in this section address opportunities to research market conditions and technology trends, and promote agricultural education and workforce training.

**Goal AG-4**

Anticipate the future needs of the agricultural sector in order to improve agricultural competitiveness, efficiency, and employment. *[Source: New Goal, County Staff]*

**Policy AG-4.1: Technical Assistance Support (IGC/SO)**

Support efforts of UC Merced, UC Cooperative Extension, the Agricultural Commissioner, and other entities to provide technical assistance to farmers attempting to shift to higher-value or more efficient crops. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-4.2: School Programs (SO/PI)**

Coordinate with local school districts to develop or enhance local agricultural awareness and educational programs. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-4.3: Workforce Training Programs (SO/PI)**

Encourage and support regional workforce training programs at local high schools, colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

**Policy AG-4.4: Farmland Protection Educational Outreach (SO/PI)**

Encourage educational programs to inform children and adults of the importance of protecting farmland. *[Source: Existing GP Policy AG.2.8]*

**Policy AG-4.5: GIS Mapping (RDR)**

Expand the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping and related data capabilities to include information on the spatial distribution and value of different agricultural commodities, land values, conservation easement locations, agricultural production processing links, natural resource attributes, urban-agricultural edge patterns, residential fragmentation of farmland, and other policy-related items. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-6.a]*

**Policy AG-4.6: Agricultural Education Outreach (IGC/PI)**

Coordinate with organizations such as the UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau and California Women for Agriculture to provide more public information about the local contributions and practices of agriculture through brochures, the County website, and other media targeted to urban audiences. *[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-3.h]*

**Policy AG-4.7: Methane Sequestration (RDR/IGC) **

Support efforts of local dairies and the San Joaquin Valley Pollution Control District to develop standards and programs for the sequestration of methane gas in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and odors, and to provide a source of clean, efficient, and cheap electricity and natural gas. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*



## AGRICULTURAL TOURISM

Merced County has the benefit of being located along major highway routes between northern and southern California. The County is also near the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta, and Yosemite National Park. The County’s rich agricultural resources and heritage can be used to help expand tourism opportunities.

Agricultural tourism includes commercial enterprises which provide access to visitors at a working farm, ranch, or production facility which is available for the enjoyment or education of visitors. This includes farm stands or shops, U-pick, farm stays, tours, on-farm classes, fairs, festivals, holiday events (i.e., pumpkin patches, Christmas tree farms), winery tours and events, orchard dinners, youth camps, barn dances, hunting or fishing, and guest ranches. The policies in this section address opportunities for expanding the agricultural recreation and tourism industry in Merced County. *(Note: Please see the Recreation and Cultural Resources Element for additional goals and policies related to parks, recreation, and tourism.)*

### Goal AG-5

Further develop and expand the agricultural tourism and recreation industry in Merced County. *[Source: New Goal, GPU Consultants]*

#### Policy AG-5.1: Agricultural Tourism and Ecotourism Development (SO)

Support the development of agricultural tourism activities that promote the agricultural, open space, and natural resources of the County. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

#### Policy AG-5.2: Agricultural Tourism Expansion (RDR/SO)

Support the expansion of agricultural tourism that helps maintain sites in agricultural production and provide supplemental income to property owners, provided these activities do not negatively impact on-going agricultural operations on adjacent lands. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

#### Policy AG-5.3: Agricultural Tourist Centers (RDR)

Promote the development of agricultural tourism centers and visitor tourist centers along Interstate 5, State Route 99, State Route 152, and other State highways within the County. *[Source: New Policy, GPU Consultants]*

#### Policy AG-5.4: Agricultural Niches (JP)

Encourage the development of agricultural niches, such as smaller local farms that produce specialty crops to help promote agricultural tourism. *[Source: Merced County Workshop Phase II Summary, 2007]*

## IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

Agricultural Resources Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
<b>Program AG-A: Right-to-Farm Ordinance (RDR)</b> Periodically review and update the Right-to-Farm Ordinance and provide information to the local real estate industry to help make the public aware of the right-to-farm provisions in their area. <i>[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-3.f]</i>						
Implements Which Policies	AG-3.1					✓
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner UC Cooperative Extension					
<b>Program AG-B: Agricultural Land Mitigation Program (MPSP)</b> Develop an agricultural land mitigation program in cooperation with the six incorporated cities. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>						
Implements Which Policy	AG-2.2	✓				
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner UC Cooperative Extension					
<b>Program AG-C: Public Outreach Program (MPSP, IGC)</b> Develop and implement a public outreach program to inform farmers, ranchers, and the public of the advantages of participation in land trust agreements, conservation easements, dedication incentives, Williamson Act contracts, and the Agricultural Land Stewardship Program Fund, in cooperation with the University of California Cooperative Extension, resource conservation districts, and other industry agencies. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i>						
Implements Which Policies	AG-4.1, AG-4.2, AG-4.3, AG-4.6	✓				
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner County Assessor UC Cooperative Extension					
<b>Program AG-D: Conservation Easements Funding (MPSP)</b> Develop a program establishing criteria to prioritize the location for establishment of agricultural conservation easements. <i>[Source: Existing Program]</i>						
Implements Which Policy	AG-2.9	✓				
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					

Agricultural Resources Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner UC Cooperative Extension					
<p><b>Program AG-E: Agricultural Buffer Guidelines (MPSP)</b>                      Develop and implement guidelines for design and maintenance of buffers to be required when new non-agricultural uses are approved in agricultural areas. Buffer design and maintenance guidelines shall include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Buffers shall be located on the parcel for which a permit is sought and shall protect the maximum amount of farmable land.</li> <li>b. Buffers shall be physically and biologically designed to avoid conflicts between agriculture and non-agricultural uses.</li> <li>c. Buffers generally should consist of a physical separation between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. The appropriate width shall be determined on a site-by-site basis taking into account the type of existing agricultural uses, the nature of the proposed development, the natural features of the site, and any other factors that affect the specific situation.</li> <li>d. Appropriate types of land uses for buffers include compatible agriculture, open space and recreational uses such as parks and golf courses, industrial uses, and cemeteries.</li> <li>e. The County may condition the approval of a project on the ongoing maintenance of buffers.</li> <li>f. A homeowners association, agricultural land trusts, or other appropriate entity shall be required to maintain buffers to control litter, fire hazards, pests, and other maintenance problems.</li> <li>g. Buffer restrictions may be removed if agricultural uses on all adjacent parcels have permanently ceased. <i>[Source: New Program, GPU Consultants]</i></li> </ul>		✓				
Implements Which Policies	AG-3.2, AG-3.3, AG-3.4					
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner UC Cooperative Extension					
<p><b>Program AG-F: Legislative Advocacy (JP, PI)</b>                      Actively monitor, review, comment, and advocate on pending major State and Federal legislation and executive orders which could have an impact on agriculture in Merced County. The County will also coordinate position statements with the Farm Bureau and other agricultural interest groups in the County. <i>[Sources: Existing GP Policy AG.1.3, Objective AG.1.B, Implementation AG.1.3, GPU Consultants]</i></p>						✓
Implements Which Policy	AG-1.8					
Responsible Department	Agricultural Commissioner					

Agricultural Resources Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
Supporting Departments	Planning and Community Development County Counsel UC Cooperative Extension					
<b>Program AG-G: Agricultural Information Database (PSR)</b> Maintain a database that includes information on the spatial distribution and value of different agricultural commodities, Williamson Act parcels, land values, conservation easement locations, agricultural production processing links, natural resource attributes, urban-agricultural edge patterns, residential fragmentation of farmland, and other policy-related items. <i>[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-6.a, Implementation AG.1.5]</i>		✓				✓
Implements Which Policies	AG-2.6, AG-2.7, AG-2.8, AG-2.9, AG-4.5					
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Agricultural Commissioner County Assessor UC Cooperative Extension					
<b>Program AG-H: Zoning Ordinance Update (RDR)</b> Update the County Code to rename the Agricultural Residential (AR) zone to Rural Residential. <i>[Source: MCGPU Policy Alternatives Report, Policy Option Ag-2.h]</i>		✓				✓
Implements Which Policy	AG-4.5					
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Board of Supervisors UC Cooperative Extension					

Agricultural Resources Element Implementation Programs						
		2013-2015	2016-2020	2021-2030	Annual	Ongoing
<p><b>Program AG-I: Agricultural Tourist Center Identification and Standards (RDR, SP)</b>                      Establish and adopt criteria for the creation of new agricultural tourism centers and visitor tourist centers located along Interstate 5, State Route 99, State Route 152, and other State highways within the County. Criteria should address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Require legitimate agriculture commercial activities only, and encourage local grown or produced commodities;</li> <li>b. Ensure new centers are compatible with adjacent land uses, using buffers where necessary to avoid conflicts;</li> <li>c. Require adequate and safe vehicle access to site;</li> <li>d. Require adequate water and wastewater facilities and other sanitation;</li> <li>e. Allow, in very limited situations, ancillary uses, such as gas stations, mini markets, motels, or restaurants;</li> <li>f. Include farm-stays, farm tours, and trails in order to promote tourism;</li> <li>g. Include incentives and promote broad based agritourism;</li> <li>h. Establish appropriate functions, such as fundraises, barn dances, weddings parties; and</li> <li>i. Establish location criteria such as minimum parcel size, existing uses, proximity to cities, and capability with surrounding agricultural, residential, and animal confinement uses. <i>[Source: New Program, County Staff, BOS/PC Study Session]</i></li> </ul>		✓				
Implements Which Policy	AG-5.2, AG-5.3					
Responsible Department	Planning and Community Development					
Supporting Department	Planning Commission Board of Supervisors UC Cooperative Extension					