



Agricultural Commissioner's Office
Weights & Measures ■ County of Santa Barbara

William D. Gillette
Commissioner/Directo

May 11, 2006

To: Goleta Valley Visioning Committee

From: Bill Gillette, Agricultural Commissioner

Bill Gillette

Re: Follow up to May 6, 2006 Discussion

I would like to briefly review some of the discussion we had at you May 6 meeting and add a few ideas. The publication "Goleta Valley Urban Agriculture" has an excellent information regarding the parcels, agricultural production and growers in the area. It includes growers who want to continue farming and who are concerned regarding the future of agriculture in the area. In addition to this publication, my comments were meant to demonstrate some of the challenges growers face.

One way local government, my office and you as community members can help is to make sure that policies are in place to allow those wanting to remain productive and viable are allowed to do so, and avoid some of the challenges I discussed. I offer three general concepts which would help: 1. Avoid expansion of urban areas abutting productive agriculture – in fill should be sought first, 2. Larger agricultural areas and parcels offer the best opportunity to avoid the ag/urban conflicts and should not be broken up on a piecemeal basis, and 3. Any new development adjoining the agricultural parcels should have sufficient buffer zones, on the property to be developed, to minimize the impact to the agriculture on the adjoining property.

While these are general concepts and any project would have its own particular circumstances and issues, they are be positive steps to allow agriculture to remain viable.