

Chairman Croucher, members of the committee

I'm Eric Larson, Executive Director of the San Diego County Farm Bureau.

The members of the farm community have mixed feelings about the impending end to MWD's Interim Agricultural Water Program.

But we understand the limitations of surplus water and we understand the leanings of the MWD board members.

At this point we fully expect that you will do your own examination of your ag water discount program.

The underlying conditions of the MWD program have changed. The rationale for your program is the same today as the day the program was developed.

There are a few of things we would ask you to consider.

We would like you to think about the continuation of your ag discount as a stand-alone program. With the parameters of the MWD program and yours fundamentally different, ending one should not automatically signal the end of the other.

Second, develop your own voluntary entry and registration for growers who choose to participate in your discount program. It makes sense to us that this would be administered by the retail agencies.

Finally, take action as soon as possible. In the next few months the farmers in San Diego County will be making critical decisions about how they will function as a business without the MWD discount. It would be good if they could also weigh their options under your program at the same time.

Farmers are a big part of our community and economy. And they are good water customers. Please do what you can to keep it that way.