



CDQAP Quality Assurance Update - July 2019

Vigilance in Your Hiring Process

Tips to Protect Your Farm from Undercover Activists

By Allyson Jones-Brimmer, Director of Industry Relations, Animal Agriculture Alliance
The non-profit, multi-species Animal Agriculture Alliance works to protect food security and is an important partner in California's dairy farm security efforts, along with CMAB and CDRF.



Are the employees working on your farm there to help care for your animals? Do their goals align with your business? Unfortunately, it's a common strategy for some animal rights activist organizations to have individuals go "undercover" on farms to record videos that can

be taken out of context, stage scenes of animal mistreatment, or encourage abuse to record it without doing anything to stop it.

The Animal Ag Alliance, a non-profit dedicated to bridging the communication gap between farm and fork for more than thirty years, monitors animal rights activists and offers these tips regarding hiring:

- Screen applicants thoroughly; verify information and check all references.
- Be cautious of individuals who try to use a college ID, have out of state license plates, or are looking for short-term work.
- During the interview, look for answers that seem overly rehearsed or include incorrect use of farm terminology.
- Search for all applicants online to see if they have public social media profiles or websites/blogs. Look for any questionable content or connections to activist organizations.
- Require all employees to sign your animal care policy. Provide training and updates on proper animal handling training.
- Require employees to report any mishandling to management immediately.
- Watch out for red flags, such as coming to work unusually early or staying late and going into areas not required for their job.

Always trust your gut. If something doesn't seem right, explore it further. Be vigilant, and never cut corners on your hiring process, even if you need to hire someone quickly. Doing your homework on every job applicant may be time-consuming, but it can ultimately save your business' reputation. As always, it is important to work with local legal counsel to ensure compliance with federal and state laws for hiring.

You can find farm security resources and background information on animal rights activist organizations at AnimalAgAlliance.org or reach out at Info@AnimalAgAlliance.org or 703-562-5160. As members of the Alliance, you have access to more detailed resources on hiring and farm security. If you have suspicious applicants, contact us to verify if the individuals have connections to animal rights activism.

Online Courses Available

Planning an evaluation before October 1? Need educational units for water or air quality? Remember, classes are only offered online this year. Contact cdqapclasses@cdrf.org to get set up for the course(s) you need.

Expect Inspections

Be Prepared to Shine

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July brings hot weather. In the Central Valley, it's also time for inspections from the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Here are a few pointers to help you shine!

Every two years, one of your wastewater and manure (solids) samples need to have general mineral analyses. These include calcium, magnesium, sodium, bicarbonate, carbonate, sulfate, and chloride. Sampling soil is required every five years. The soils analysis is for soluble phosphorus. Work with your nutrient consultant to be sure these samples are taken and analyzed for the appropriate constituents. These are easy violations to prevent. Inspectors find these violations just by reading your Annual Report.

If you had a 13267 letter (request for additional information) or Notice of Violation, please reply to the Regional Board by the deadline identified. If you are unable to get all the information gathered, you will still want to reply before the deadline. Write about information gathered, and provide a legitimate reason to request an extension. Contact the Regional Board staff if you missed the deadline to identify your best course of action.

Inspectors often want to see current records of nutrient applications during the growing season and recent harvest data.

Being prepared is your best offense to showcase your dairy and your commitment to environmental stewardship.