



December 30, 2016

ORG-16-002

TO: CALIFORNIA ORGANIC GROWERS

Re: **State Organic Program (SOP) Registration Changes Effective January 1, 2017**

In September of 2016 Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 1826 into law, which becomes effective January 1, 2017. This change renamed the *2003 California Organic Products Act (COPA)* as the *California Organic Food and Farming Act*, and it revised a number components of COPA, including: revising the composition and advisory scope of the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC); reduction of registration fees; streamlining of data collection; defining certain terms for the purposes of the act; and, made technical and conforming changes among others. The entire text of the law may be found online at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov and can be accessed by typing in bill number 1826 and selecting the 2015-2016 Session Year.

As the California State Organic Program (SOP) implements the new law, Organic Program applicants (including those renewing) will see a reduction in the amount of information required to become registered with the SOP. In addition to this, the following key changes of the Act are reflected in the 2017 registration process to include, but not limited to:

- **Amend and reduce the fee schedule (FAC 46013.1(e))**
 - Eliminates the initial \$75 registration fee
 - Eliminates the Multi-ingredient categorical fee
 - Eliminates the Commission Brokers/Merchants fee
 - Eliminates the Retailer fee
- **Allows certifiers to submit registration applications on behalf of their clients (FAC 46014.1(c))**
- **Requires registration with CDFA and removes registration with the County Agricultural Commissioners (CAC) (FAC 46013.1)**
- **Amends certain types of information required for registration (FAC 46013.1(d)) such as:**
 - Eliminates gross sales by commodity
 - Eliminates gross sales per acreage
 - Eliminates detailed description and dimensions of the production area



The SOP's online registration and renewal process has been updated in accordance with the new statute making registration easier. Similar changes have been made to the paper registration forms for those applicants that do not wish to utilize the online system. As a reminder, the National Organic Program (NOP) still requires all producers and handlers to register with the SOP prior to obtaining organic certification. Please note this letter is for informational purposes and no further action is required at this time. You will continue receiving your renewal notices as usual.

There are additional areas within AB 1826 that provide an opportunity for an enhanced state organic program within California surrounding data collection, outreach and educational resources, and coordination among COPAC, state, and federal partners. The SOP will be working closely with the organic industry and COPAC to obtain feedback and implement these changes in the coming months. Some changes may require promulgating regulations to further clarify areas of the law recast in AB 1826.

We look forward to working together as we implement the changes to the SOP over the coming months, and to serve and support the organic community within California. Should you have further questions or concerns, please contact the SOP at (916) 900-5030.

Sincerely,



Danny Lee
Supervising Special Investigator

cc: California Accredited Certifying Agencies
County Agricultural Commissioners