



# Monthly Update

Counties of Inyo and Mono Agricultural Commissioner's Office  
JULY 2016

## Agriculture

The 2015 Crop and livestock report was presented to both Boards in June, and is now available online at:

<http://inyomonoagriculture.com>

Inspections of certified farmer's market producers are complete for 2016. California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) personnel visited the Owens Valley Certified Farmer's Market in Independence during June to ensure compliance with regulations adopted last year. No major issues were identified during this inspection.

Organic compliance inspections are now ongoing at retail locations throughout Inyo and Mono Counties. Agriculture Department staff visit and inspect a specified number of organic growers and retailers each year to ensure compliance with Federal organic labeling and handling laws.

Traps have been deployed for the 2016 season targeting [Gypsy moth](#) and [Japanese beetle](#). This work is part of an agreement with CDFA to help provide pest detection for high risk insects in our area. Gypsy moths and Japanese beetles are highly destructive pests that defoliate both ornamental as well as agricultural plantings. These traps will be collected in September.

### Agriculture Legislation of Interest

**SB 313**—Amends the Education code to require consultation with the local Agricultural Commissioner prior to approval of new school site selection.

**AB 2596**—This bill is now dead but would have outlawed all rodenticide use anywhere in California. This would have been extremely concerning in our region due to the high number of hantavirus cases each year. This bill may return next year.

## Weights and Measures

Surveys will begin this month as a part of a statewide effort to reduce credit card skimmers. Staff will visit gas stations and physically inspect at least 20% of retail fuel meters in Inyo and Mono Counties to ensure card skimmers are not installed inside. Skimmer fraud has become a serious issue in recent years leading to unauthorized transactions and identity theft.

The CDFA Division of Measurement Standards (DMS) has staff in our area now conducting vapor meter inspection trainings for our county inspectors. These liquid propane experts assist counties throughout the state with staff development. Typically, our staff must travel outside of the county to receive this training, and we appreciate DMS offering to bring the training to us.

### Weights & Measures Legislation of Interest

**AB 2307**—This bill would require county Sealers and registered service agents to work with local law enforcement when devices are found during inspections that could facilitate fraud. This bill was written by the California Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer's Association and is directed at reducing fraud committed via credit card skimmers.

## Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program

Mosquito populations stayed under control in June, with the exception of a large hatch that occurred along the Lower Owens River due to increased flows. Applications were made in Lone Pine and near Shepard's Creek to control this problem.

Sample testing begins in July for the presence of West Nile Virus. A group, or "pool", of mosquitos caught in traps will be sent for disease testing. This will continue through September as West Nile Virus is most prevalent during the late summer months.

Mosquito control technicians will be working diligently during the beginning of July to ensure that Independence Day festivities are as mosquito free as possible. Many people will be out enjoying the summer evening weather, but it is important that we all remember to apply insect repellent to prevent bites.

Trapping continues for the exotic species *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti*. These are the species that can carry Zika. The importance of exotic species detection trapping was highlighted in a recent report from the CDC that stated:

*"Our findings underscore the need for systematic surveillance of Ae. aegypti and Ae. albopictus in the United States and delineate areas with risk for the transmission of these introduced arboviruses."*

This new map, with colored areas indicating recent finds, illustrates just how close to Inyo and Mono Counties these invasive mosquitoes have been discovered:



## Eastern Sierra Weed Management Area

ESWMA staff spent a week in the Antelope Valley conducting weed management work last month. Weeds in the area were largely disseminated during a flood in 1998. Many of these weed species produce seeds that can be viable for more than 20 years. In the last 15 years, these populations have been reduced by 70%. Despite this success, there is no further funding available to continue efforts in the area.

Keeping weeds out of the Antelope Valley is important to the agriculture industry in the area as well as the environment along the West Walker River. We will continue to work to identify future funding sources for this important project.

Staff also met with CDFA personnel last month and visited sites in Mammoth Lakes and Independence that are being managed with the help of CDFA funding. Both projects have been successful, but the saltcedar eradication project in Independence has been an overwhelming success. After the Oak Creek flood in 2008, thousands of saltcedar saplings were identified along the south fork. After five years of meticulous management, this population was eradicated. Monitoring is ongoing to ensure no viable seed remains in the area.

## Important Dates:

### July 4

Office closed in observance of Independence Day

### July 12

OVMAP at Inyo Board of Supervisors for assessment hearing

### July 14

Owens Dry Lake Groundwater Group Meeting—Keeler

California Department of Public Health Zika Conference Call

### July 15

Long Valley Sage Grouse Habitat Field Trip