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Equal Opportunity Employer

October 15, 2021

RE: Mandatory Cotton Plow Down Date - December 31, 2021

Dear Merced County Cotton Growers,

This is a friendly reminder that although Pink Bollworm was declared eradicated in 2018, cotton plow down regulations are still in effect. Plow down requirements continue to be an important preventative measure to guard against re-introduction of this destructive pest. The Cotton Pest Control Board (made up of cotton growers), contracts with CDFA and county agricultural commissioners to enforce these laws and regulations.

Method of Destruction.

(1) Shredding. All cotton stalks and debris shall be shredded by a power-driven shredding device in a manner which effectively reduces stalks to a particle size permitting burial and decomposition and assures that bolls remaining in the field are broken open and the parts scattered.

(2) Tillage. Following shredding as required above, the land on which any cotton plants were growing during the preceding season shall be tilled in such a manner that stubs are uprooted and loosened from soil around their roots. Roots, plant stubs, shredding debris and trash remaining from harvesting or clean-up operations shall be mixed with surface soil.

Merced County agricultural commissioner staff will inspect every cotton field in Merced County prior to December 31, 2021. **Please make sure before planting a winter crop (i.e. oats, barley, wheat, etc.) that fields are in full compliance with cotton plow down regulations.** Please feel free to contact your district biologist in either the Merced or Los Banos office if you have questions and/or would like to verify compliance before you plant. Fields not meeting requirements will be required to be re-worked until in full compliance. The option for reduced tillage of your sites may be available. If interested, contact our office for more information.

For the protection of the entire cotton industry in the San Joaquin Valley from Cotton Boll Weevil and Pink Bollworm, it is very important that all growers timely and properly comply with current plow down requirements. Thank you for your full cooperation and I urge you to comply with cotton plow down laws and regulations to avoid potential penalties.

Sincerely,
David A. Robinson
Merced County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures