

AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR/BIOLOGIST I

DEFINITION

Under immediate supervision, learns to perform a variety of agricultural inspections and investigations in the enforcement of the provisions of the California Food and Agricultural Code, Code of Regulations, Business and Professions Code, and County Ordinances governing the work of the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office; and does other work as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Agricultural Inspector/Biologist classes are found only in the Office of the Agricultural Commissioner, a regulatory and enforcement entity, with the authority to issue administrative fines and penalties, and responsible for programs to monitor compliance issues within the industries of the County, and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of consumers and workers.

This is the entry-level class within the Agricultural Inspector/Biologist series. Incumbents in this class receive substantial training initially and perform limited, less complex work under the close supervision of licensed personnel. As experience is gained, employees work with greater independence performing a broader range of duties in one or more agricultural program. Employees in this class perform work under close supervision. In emergencies and for training purposes, they may work in subject areas for which they do not possess the requisite licenses. They will be required to issue inspection certificates or violation notices only in areas in which they are licensed.

This is a flexibly staffed series; incumbents appointed at the lower level may be promoted to the next higher level without further competition, subject to meeting the employment standards and licensing requirements for this class. Upon demonstrated competence, employees are expected to promote to the Agricultural Biologist II level within three (3) years of appointment.

The class of Agricultural Inspector/Biologist I is distinguished from the journey-level class of Agricultural Inspector/Biologist II in that incumbents in the latter class possess three valid core licenses as a California County Agricultural Inspector/Biologist and function in a wider range of activities with some level of complexity within the Agricultural Commissioner's office.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

1. Enforces pesticide use laws and regulations, issues restricted material permits and monitors usage. Monitors and inspects pesticide use by pest control businesses, private applicators, government, and commercial applicators for compliance; analyzes compliance history and recommends appropriate actions.
2. Under supervision, investigates a variety of less complex incidents such as pesticide related complaints, illnesses, reports of loss, environmental effects, plant quarantine violations; gathers samples and evidence, and prepares investigative reports; reviews and evaluates evidence to ascertain if a violation has occurred and recommends appropriate action including potential fines.
3. Issues compliance actions such as notices of violation, cease and desist orders, and letters of warning, participates in documented compliance interviews and follows up to ensure compliance.
4. Assists in complex investigations and in the preparation of case files for enforcement actions such as Agricultural Civil Penalties, or civil/criminal actions with the District Attorney; may testify as a witness.
5. Inspects and samples plant material, fruits, vegetables, seed, feed grain and other agricultural commodities in growing areas, the field and markets, packing houses, mills, rail cars and storage areas

for compliance with laws and regulations. Inspects plants and plant materials at wholesale and retail nurseries, and those arriving and shipped by private or common carrier, for evidence of disease, pests, noxious weed seeds and proper certification.

6. Under supervision, evaluates restricted use pesticide permit applications; identifies hazards, sensitive sites, determines likelihood of adverse impacts and conditions permit with feasible mitigation measures; prepares and issues permits; monitors applications for consistency with permit and use requirements.
7. Assists in the preparation and delivery of continuing education for permittees and pest control licensees. May create informational documents and make oral presentations to the public.
8. Examines fields, hillsides, creek beds, roadways, and cultivated areas (by foot, county vehicle or ATV) to determine location and extent of infestation, and presence of weeds or insects; assists in eradication or control, including pesticide applications.
9. Assists in the rodent control program through the storing and sale of vertebrate pest control materials.
10. Assists the public in person or by telephone; conducts research related to department services, programs and records.
11. Collects statistical data for use in preparing the Annual Crop Report and other agricultural report purposes. Compiles data and prepare various reports; keeps records of inspections and pest surveys.
12. Establishes and maintains working effective relationships with customers (public, growers, schools, media, etc.).
13. Conducts field worker safety inspections, employer records audits, and employee safety record audits.
14. Assists in the evaluation of businesses for compliance with laws and regulations as part of certification programs such as organic certification or food safety.

QUALIFICATIONS

A combination of experience, education, and/or training which substantially demonstrates the following knowledge, skills and abilities:

Knowledge and Skills:

Some knowledge of:

1. County, state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to county agricultural operations
2. County agricultural products and commodities
3. College-level chemistry
4. Personal computer usage including the following software: Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, PowerPoint, as well as Internet research methods

Skill and Ability to:

1. Learn to interpret and apply provisions of the Food and Agricultural Code
2. Enforce standards, laws, and regulations
3. Deal tactfully and effectively with the public and others contacted in the course of work
4. Establish and maintain effective communication in enforcement situations that may be difficult or tense
5. Communicate effectively both orally and in writing
6. Prepare and maintain reports and accurate records of inspections

7. Distinguish small insects/pests through a hand lens
8. Read and interpret maps, graphs, charts
9. Learn to analyze situations and make decisions on routine enforcement problems, in accordance with departmental policies and procedures
10. Apply basic computer skills and techniques in order to use common office programs and specialized programs
11. Learn to drive forklifts, ATV's, four-wheel drive vehicles and trucks with trailers over uneven ground
12. Observe safe work practices and procedures
13. Maintain confidentiality of protected records

REQUIRED CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

As a condition of employment, the incumbent will be required to:

1. Possess a valid California Class C Driver's License
2. Pass a pre-employment physical examination
3. Possess and maintain a good driving record and good driving habits
4. Travel and work throughout Monterey County
5. Adhere to related Federal, State, and local safety laws, regulations, and ordinances as applicable
6. Wear and use proper and appropriate safety clothing and equipment
7. Work overtime, weekends and holidays, as assignments required
8. Acquire and maintain safety certifications as required
9. Work under such adverse conditions as inclement weather, heat, dust, chemicals and noise
10. Work in confined spaces such as rail cars
11. May come in contact with a variety of toxic elements or irritants while wearing protective equipment

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE/EDUCATION/TRAINING

Pursuant to the Food and Agricultural Code of California, Chapter 2, Section 2106 the following education or licensure is required:

Education

Graduation from an accredited four-year institution of higher education with a Bachelor's degree specializing in one or more appropriate disciplines in the agricultural, biological, chemical, physical sciences or other appropriate disciplines as determined by the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture to qualify for the licensing exam.

AND

License

Incumbent must obtain one of the following core licenses: Pesticide Regulation, Investigation and Environmental Monitoring, or Pest Prevention and Plant Regulation within one year or two testing periods from date of appointment. Incumbent must then obtain one other core license within two years from date of

employment and the remaining core license within three years of employment. Failure or inability to obtain licenses is cause for termination.

PHYSICAL/SENSORY REQUIREMENTS

The physical and sensory abilities required for this classification include:

1. Operate a motor vehicle, including forklifts, ATVs, trucks with trailers
2. Lift, push pull and/or carry a 50-pound object
3. Visually observe and monitor a pesticide application at 100 yards while driving over uneven terrain; may have to differentiate between colors while conducting tests
4. Verbally communicate and to hear cell phones in field or noisy environments
5. Smell and detect the presence of chemicals and/or pesticides in open and closed environments. Detect odors and aromas for potential hazards
6. Read maps, fine print, gauges, meters and other calibrated or precision measuring instrument, data on computer screen, and to visually detect differences between agricultural pests, crops, plant material, etc.
7. Sit and/or walk for approximately 8-10 hours a day
8. Distinguish and identify sounds and voices in a noisy environment, able to recognize potential danger
9. Project a voice that can be heard over loud noises
10. Work outdoors, on uneven ground or floor surfaces, and on slippery surfaces, or come into contact with water
11. Work under adverse weather conditions
12. Climb a ladder

CLASS HISTORY

Class Code: 30N01
Established Date: October 1969
Revised Date: January 2007
March 2004
Former Title: n/a

CLASS DATA

Job Group: 14
EEO Category: PP
Work Comp. Code: 9410
Bargaining/Employee Unit: J
FLSA: C
MOCO OT: Y

Prepared by: Gerta McClay, SPHR
Management Specialist

Approved by:

/s/ Dianne Dinsmore
County Administrative Office

5/16/08
Date