

State Board of Food and Agriculture
Policy Resolution Urging the Governor to Aggressively
Prepare for the Next Drought in California

WHEREAS, many local public agencies have declared a drought in California and it appears that California is potentially facing serious drought conditions in 2008;

WHEREAS, California's farmers produce more than half the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables, generate approximately \$28 billion in gross receipts annually, employ 1.1 million people and create \$60 billion in personal income each year, and

WHEREAS, California urban growth has exploded and the State continues to grow by about a half million people a year

WHEREAS, a Department of Water Resources (DWR) July 2000 report "Preparing for California's Next Drought" and a 2000 Critical Water Shortage Contingency Plan developed in response to the report need to be updated and aggressively pursued ;

WHEREAS, the Governor in his January 2006 and 2007 State of the State outlined a Strategic Growth Plan that is vital for California to have a strong economy and healthy environment, including a vibrant agricultural sector, and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Water Resources issued a revised California Water Plan (Bulletin 160) in February 2006, and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Food and Agriculture held a hearing on February 28, 2007 at Scout Island near Fresno and invited water and other experts to present testimony on how California should prepare for the next drought.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE STATE BOARD OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE has received testimony from experts on drought planning, and, based on this testimony and the Board's experience, supports the Governor's bold vision contained in his Strategic Growth Plan and in the Department's California Water Plan and urges the Governor and the Legislature to assure that California is prepared for the next drought. The Board specifically urges the Governor to immediately pursue the following to prepare for a potential drought next year:

- Direct the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to convene a drought panel of technical experts to develop a short-term plan to prepare for a drought. This plan should include: 1) aggressive funding and assistance (as requested) for regional and local entities to further advance drought preparedness as part of integrated regional water management plans adopted under Water Code section 10541; 2) a regulatory restructured relief proposal that will describe the efforts necessary in the next drought to effectively meet the water supply required for all purposes in

the state, including agriculture, cities, rural communities, wildlife and the environment; and 3) other measures deemed necessary by the panel to meet drought challenges in California. This plan should become part of the next California Water Plan update, but should be finalized without delay to prepare for 2008.

- Aggressively pursue the Governor's Water Plan as part of the Strategic Growth Plan for California, including new surface and groundwater storage, Delta sustainability and conservation and restoration
- Accelerate efforts described in the Governor's Delta Vision Executive Order (S-17-06) to develop a durable vision for sustainable management of the Delta that will include delta conveyance while protecting water rights and area of origin supplies in the Central Valley.

Subscribed

Helen Lopez, Executive Director

Approved May 23, 2007