



Weighmaster Enforcement Program

Description

The 1915 Weighmaster Act provided for the licensing and oversight of individuals and companies engaging in the business of public weighing for hire and issuing weight or measure certificates upon which the purchase or sale of bulk commodities was based. Today, the Weighmaster Program (Program) is just as relevant in providing assurance that commercial transactions based on quantities certified on a weighmaster certificate are accurate.

Activities

The Program licenses as weighmasters, individuals or firms who weigh or measure bulk commodities and issue certificates of accuracy. Inspections and investigations are conducted that include reweighing of vehicles and containers to verify the net weight statements on weighmaster certificates and routine as well as spot inspection of establishments involved in bulk sales. Program staff responds to complaints and conduct investigations to protect all financially interested parties in the transactions when one or more parties are not present.

Program Importance

The Program responds to complaints and provides training to county weights and measures officials related to the Program. Though the weighmaster program originated to ensure equality in transactions between agricultural producers and buyers, today nearly every industry dealing in bulk commodities uses weighmaster certificates as part of their everyday operations.

Program staff conducts investigations and monitor transactions to ensure accuracy of work performed by weighmasters. Continued reductions in staffing have resulted in less training to industry and county inspectors. Historically the department has handled most enforcement actions against businesses violating weighmaster laws and regulations since nearly all weighmaster cases cross multiple counties. With reduced monitoring and training, businesses and consumers will have to rely on local weights and measures officials to perform enforcement and oversight.

Budget

The Program is funded entirely through license fees. Weighmaster licenses are issued for the business location, additional locations, non-fixed locations, and deputy weighmasters. Program fees set in 1984 and have not been increased to keep pace with inflation or enforcement costs. Through cooperative agreements with counties, weighmasters are regularly inspected to ensure the accuracy of their certificates.

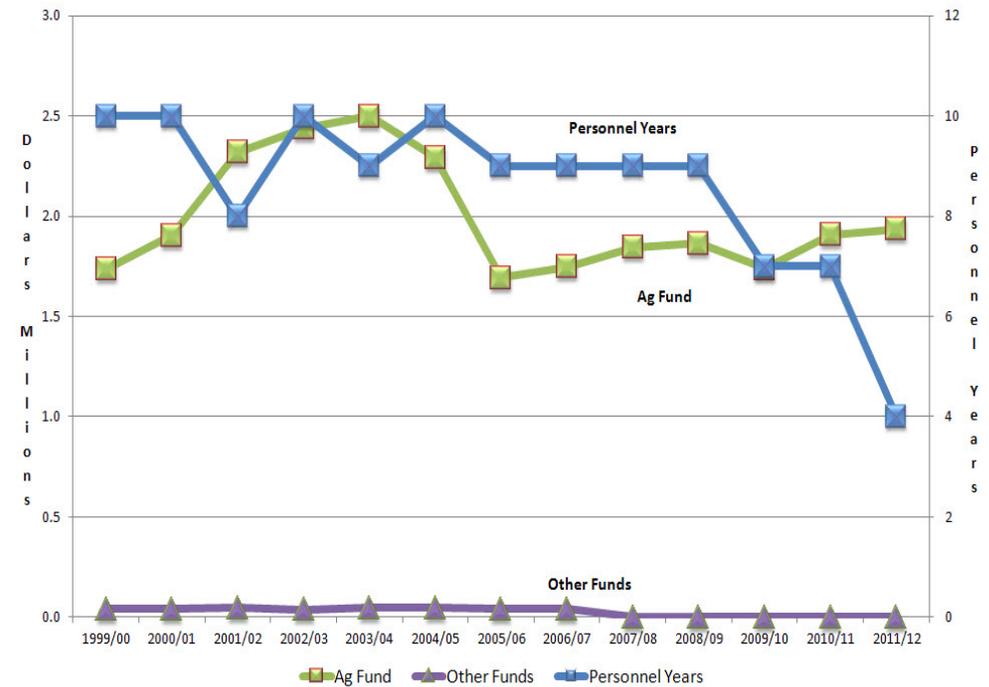
Staffing

The Program has experienced a 50 percent reduction in staff over the last ten years. Program staff is unable to continue specialized training for industry groups. Reduced staffing has also resulted in a significant reduction for county training, and reduced the Program's ability to respond to complaints.

Forecast

New technology has presented special challenges to the Program. The Weighmaster Law has not kept pace with new devices, methods of sale, and electronic recordkeeping systems. However, one success was achieved in 2012 when the Business and Professions Code was modified to allow unmanned weighing systems in the sale of construction materials.

Weighmaster Enforcement Budget Summary Staffing



For more information, please contact:

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