



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

# Strategic Plan 2013 - 2018



## A Message from CDFA Secretary Karen Ross

**“Democracy is the only system that persists in asking the powers that be whether they are the powers that ought to be.”**

**~Sydney J. Harris**

With a commitment to continuous improvement, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) presents its 2013 Strategic Plan. Strategic planning is essential because it sets objectives to guide us in the fulfillment of our mission and establishes performance measures to chart our progress.

In light of recent and significant cuts to our budget, it is important to maintain focus on our core mission, while strategically positioning CDFA for its role in a bright and promising future for California agriculture. This will require investment in our people and appropriate technologies that will result in an even more efficient, transparent, customer-focused organization and one that is fully engaged with all of its stakeholders.

Social media and the information age have the power to transform people’s relationship with government in a positive way. This plan outlines strategies to maximize every opportunity to communicate with our constituents to bring greater understanding and appreciation for CDFA’s mission and the great bounty of California agriculture.

CDFA is fortunate to have an intelligent, experienced and passionate staff. As Secretary, I look forward to working closely with these talented, committed employees to achieve our goals through the execution of this strategic plan.

*Karen Ross*



## Our Mission Statement

To serve the citizens of California  
by promoting and protecting a safe, healthy food supply,  
and enhancing local and global agricultural trade, through efficient  
management, innovation, and sound science,  
with a commitment to environmental stewardship.

## Our Vision Statement

To be recognized as the most highly respected agricultural agency  
in the world by leading and excelling in the programs and services  
delivered to meet the needs for the growing local  
and global food and agricultural system.



## Our Core Values

- Integrity:** We are truthful and trustworthy, and we operate in a fair and ethical manner.
- Transparency:** We conduct all our operations in an open manner.
- Accountability:** We are responsible to ourselves and others for our actions and decisions.
- Thoughtful Communication:** We listen and share information openly and honestly with the goal of mutual understanding.
- Respect:** We treat everyone with courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Creativity:** We believe in fostering a creative environment.
- Balance:** We strive to maintain effective partnerships so that our decisions are fair to all our stakeholders.
- Diversity:** We are committed to maintaining a diverse workforce.



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## Our Organization

Since its creation more than 94 years ago by the California legislature, the California Department of Food and Agriculture has served California's rich agricultural history, culture, and traditions, through new and innovative approaches using the latest in science, technology, and economic strategies. In recent years, despite the many challenges facing national, state, and local economies, California's agricultural economy has remained strong and vibrant.

In 2011, 81,500 farms operated in California, employing approximately 800,000 people in all stages of farming and ranching, receiving a record \$43.5 billion for their output. The \$43.5 billion in output sets a new record by 15 percent from the previous year, and allows California to continue its number-one ranking as the top agricultural state in cash receipts for more than 50 years. Furthermore, California agriculture continues to lead the rest of the country as the nation's largest agricultural producer and exporter. In 2010, more than 24 percent (\$14.7 billion) of the state's agriculture production was exported. With agricultural exports increasing by more than 125 percent since 2000, California agriculture's success is firmly engrained in the national economy and the daily lives of all Americans.

With its nationally recognized scientists, veterinarians, economists, laboratory employees and other administrative and support staff, the Department serves and provides vital programs and services to California's farming families, merchants and citizens. Programs are consistently being reviewed and enhanced to improve critical services including animal health and food safety, pest and disease prevention, and responses to emergencies that threaten domestic and international trade.

Currently organized in seven divisions and located at more than 100 locations throughout the state, the Department's employees work with its federal and county partners in striving to support and advance the success of those that have made California agriculture the recognized leader of food and agricultural products in the world.



# Divisions and Services

## Administrative Services Division

The Administrative Services Division provides core services essential to the day-to-day operations of the Department. The division is responsible for directing the complete scope of administrative functions and employee services including: budgetary and fiscal management; contracts development and procurement processes; facilities management and human resources management.

## Animal Health & Food Safety Services Division

The Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division is responsible for the safety and security of meat, poultry, and dairy products, along with other foods of animal origins. The division protects the public and animal health through prevention, detection, and eradication of livestock and poultry diseases and dairy contamination incidents. In addition, the division protects cattle owners against loss of animals by theft, straying or misappropriation through ongoing inspections and investigative services.

## Division of Fairs and Expositions

The Division of Fairs and Expositions provides leadership to the Network of California Fairs and builds collaborations among the fairs and industry stakeholders. In its oversight role, the division creates a framework for administration of the state's 54 District Agricultural Associations and the California State Fair & Exposition allowing for maximum autonomy and local decision making authority.

## Executive Office

The Executive Office provides guidance, leadership, advice, and support to CDFA's divisions. The Executive Office includes the Office of the Secretary, Legislative Office, Legal Office, Office of Public Affairs, Audits Office, and the Office of Information Technology Services.

## Inspection Services Division

The Inspection Services Division provides professional services that support and contribute to a safe, abundant, and quality food supply; environmentally sound agricultural practices; and an equitable marketplace for California agriculture. The services provided by the division include: inspections of fruits, vegetables and nuts to ensure maturity, grade, size, weight, packaging and labeling meet the consumers' quality expectations; chemical analysis services in support of food and environmental safety; verification audits to ensure good handling and agricultural practices are utilized to contribute to a safe food supply; inspections ensuring fertilizer, animal feed, and livestock drugs are safe effective, and meet the quality and quantity guaranteed by the manufacturer.

## Division of Marketing Services

The Division of Marketing Services assists in the promotion and administrative oversight of agricultural marketing programs in order to promote California agricultural products. Specific services provided by the division include: research and gathering information; disseminating marketing and economic information; identifying and helping resolve marketing problems; assisting the dairy industry in maintaining stable marketing conditions; providing mediation to resolve problems between producers and handlers; and assuring that producers are paid for their products.

## Division of Measurement Standards

The Division of Measurement Standards is responsible for the enforcement of California weights and measures laws and regulations that protect both buyer and seller, and promote fair competition in the marketplace. The division's activities are designed to ensure the accuracy of commercial weighing and measuring devices, verify the quantity of bulk and packaged commodities, and enforce the quality, advertising and labeling standards for most petroleum products.

## Pierce's Disease Control Program

The Pierce's Disease Control Program (PDCP) works to minimize the statewide impact of Pierce's disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. The PDCP seeks to slow or stop the spread of the glassy-winged sharpshooter while short- and long-term solutions to Pierce's disease are developed. The PDCP is a partnership that includes CDFA, county agricultural commissioners, the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of California and California State Universities, other state and local agencies, industry, and agricultural organizations throughout the state.



## Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division

The Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division is legislatively mandated to protect California from the damage caused by the introduction or spread of harmful plant pests. The division is responsible for conducting pest prevention and management programs that effectively protect California's agriculture, horticulture, natural resources, and urban environments from invasive plant pests. The division also protects the public from pests that pose human health threats and protects California's position in the global economy by helping ensure quality agricultural crop production.



## Developing the Strategic Plan

CDFA's strategic planning process is the result of a collaborate effort among the department's executive office, divisions, and employees whose input, feedback and ideas were used to capture diverse perspectives, while identifying common themes for change. The staff members represented a multi-disciplinary combination of executives, directors, branch chiefs and program staff. All members participated in drafting the goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures specified in the plan.

CDFA's strategic planning methodology incorporates performance measures that will require ongoing monitoring and tracking of data to ensure accountability. The five step process for performance measurement includes:

1. Establishing Meaningful Goals for Strategic Direction
2. Selecting Initial Performance Measures that Tie Directly to Departmental Goals
3. Gathering Data Requirements
4. Establishing a Baseline Performance
5. Assessing our Progress on a Biannual Basis

CDFA's strategic plan does not address every activity, project, program or function; instead, the plan focuses on five goals and accompanying performance measures which are seen as keys for vital organizational functions in serving our stakeholders and the public over the next five years. In aligning our performance measures directly with CDFA's goals, we will be able to gauge our progress towards goal achievement. At the division level, expanded and detailed performance measures are also established and maintained. Measures at the division level are used to determine how well each division is fulfilling its goals and core functions.

Our strategic plan outlines the potential to make improvements in programs and services that advance the department's vital role in the further success of California agriculture across the nation and throughout the world.



# Goal One

## Promote and Protect

Promote and protect the diverse local and global marketability of the California agricultural brand which represents superior quality, value, and safety.

### Executive Summary

This goal adopts the word “brand” to represent the image of California agriculture - a hallmark of ingenuity and innovation across food safety, environmental, conservation and production lines. California farm families are world leaders with more than \$43 billion in annual production, more than 400 different commodities, groundbreaking food safety programs, and a strong commitment to environmental stewardship. California’s agricultural products are valued and respected throughout the world because they are known to be healthy, safe and produced responsibly. That’s the California brand.

### Performance Measures

- Increase the number and diversity of blogs, social media communications and news releases issued that emphasize CDFA’s role in promoting and protecting California agriculture.
- Increase the number of people surveyed in a biannual survey that answer “agree” or “strongly agree” to the following statement: “The California Department of Food and Agriculture plays an important role in ensuring agricultural products grown in California are of superior quality, value, and safety.”

### Objectives and Strategies

- A. Strengthen CDFA’s public outreach and awareness efforts for programs and activities that assist in the creation of new and the promotion of existing markets.**
  - Establish a CDFA office in support of the multi-agency collaborative Farm-to-Fork Program and promote CDFA’s leadership role in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) Promotion Project.
  - Partner with the University of California Davis Agriculture and Natural Resources Small Farm Program, Buy California Marketing Agreement, and organic food entities to promote California specialty crop products.
  - Provide quarterly and annual reports online summarizing CDFA program updates, accomplishments and pertinent achievements.

# Goal One

## Promote and Protect

Promote and protect the diverse local and global marketability of the California agricultural brand which represents superior quality, value, and safety.

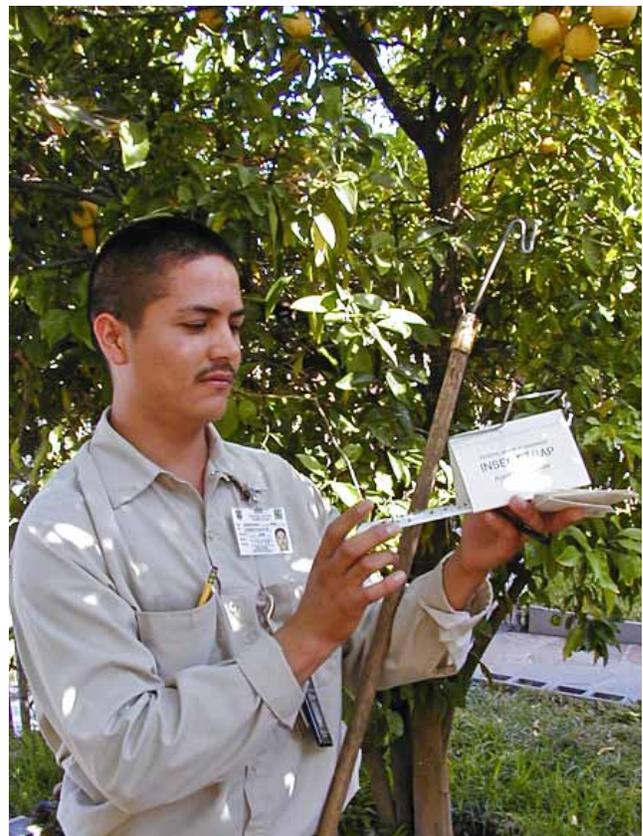
### B. Open new markets, retain existing markets, and prevent disruption through data collection.

- Partner with the California Energy Commission and other stakeholders to develop the standards for preparing the marketplace for the introduction of alternate fuels and for zero emission vehicles.
- Analyze, certify, test and inspect products and commodities that provide safeguards and value comparison for California consumers and businesses.
- Partner with federal and county agencies to conduct surveys for targeted invasive plant pests and demonstrate pest-free areas in support of intrastate and interstate trade.
- Provide phytosanitary certification, testing and identification services for nursery stock within 24 hours.

### C. Optimize local and global partnerships to promote California projects through education and cooperation.

- Actively survey all state marketing programs for relevant information on their partnership activities promoting California projects and incorporate such information in quarterly newsletters.
- Establish a comprehensive approach to enhancing food safety by engaging small scale producers.
- Establish a new grant process within the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to work towards increasing grants to underserved and socially disadvantaged communities, and new/small farming businesses.

- Ensure California is nationally represented in invasive species activities.
- Organize and hold periodic symposia and conferences to foster research partnerships and collaborations related to California agriculture.
- Partner with University of California Davis Agriculture and Natural Resources Small Farm Programs to host agritourism workshops at statewide locations.



## Goal One Promote and Protect

Promote and protect the diverse local and global marketability of the California agricultural brand which represents superior quality, value, and safety.

- D. Utilize audit and inspection systems to facilitate marketability and prevent market disruptions.**
- Expand guidance and assistance to commodity groups requesting food safety metrics.
  - Require official identification tags on adult breeding cattle at change of ownership or entering California to fully implement USDA animal identification requirements.
  - Annually inspect 3.2 million cattle for change of ownership, out-of-state movement, and at time of slaughter.
  - Perform random, unannounced audits and inspections of nurseries operating under compliance agreements with the Pest Exclusion Branch and the glassy-winged sharpshooter approved treatment program.
- E. Provide a comprehensive response and surveillance system of adverse events impacting the food supply.**
- Partner with federal and county agencies to prevent the establishment of invasive plant pests and animal diseases.
  - Perform rapid-response activities around new pest infestations and animal diseases to prevent permanent establishment.
  - Conduct cooperator training sessions annually to increase awareness of exotic plant pests and foreign animal diseases.
  - Train staff to broaden response capacity and surveillance within eradication programs.
  - Expand analytical testing capability within the food safety laboratory, and develop new pesticide screening methods for the ground water protection and food safety programs.



# Goal Two

## Maximize Resources

Optimize resources through collaboration, innovation, and process improvements.

### Executive Summary

California's fiscal crisis ushered in a new era of austerity, making it imperative that CDFA join other state and local agencies in improving efficiencies by embracing new technologies and reviewing existing processes for efficacy and redundancy. It is essential to keep product moving in spite of the strain on infrastructure due to budget challenges.

### Performance Measure

- Increase the number of CDFA customers that process licensing, registration, labeling, and other transactions on-line.

### Objectives and Strategies

#### A. Strengthen CDFA's internet and website presence by updating information systems capabilities and databases.

- Enhance the development of database technology to strengthen CDFA's foreign animal disease and emergency response capabilities.
- Put into production a hand-held electronic system for documenting and submitting inspections of dairy farms and milk production plants into a centralized database.
- Go live with online databases and accounting systems for the Organic, Standardization, and Direct Marketing programs by Spring 2014.
- Implement new and revised web pages for feed and fertilizer programs that include current events, tutorials for technical education, and links to other agriculture and industry databases or websites.
- Expand the use of technology to allow CDFA programs to serve as a clearing house for industry information/research.

#### B. Expand and incorporate tools and approaches which improve the efficacy and/or efficiency of existing programs.

- Develop interactive geographical information system services to maintain cutting-edge technologies that enable real-time analysis of pest finds.
- Perform annual analysis of CDFA systems, protocols and guidelines to improve fiscal and programmatic efficiencies.
- Use video-conferencing for management meetings and incorporate other technological advancements for internal and external training sessions.
- Work with the County Agricultural Commissioners to complete the conversion of the current local trapping grid systems to a uniform state system.
- Incorporate laboratory automation equipment for the preparation of chemical reference materials and implement new analytical methods that facilitate food safety sample preparation processes.

## Goal Two Maximize Resources

Optimize resources through collaboration, innovation, and process improvements.

- C. **Develop a policy and implementation schedule to replace the department's existing paper file/archive systems with electronic management systems where appropriate.**
  - Participate in working groups with the Department of General Services and the State Controller's Office to reduce contracting, procurement, and invoicing paper files.
  - Process customer transactions involving fee payments, license renewals, and other services electronically rather than by manual processes.
  - Complete the Information Technology Feasibility Report and Statement of Work.
  - Develop an electronic workflow process for pest rating analysis to eliminate the need to manually process paperwork.
  - Develop a remote data entry system that allows electronic data transfer to customers.



## Goal Three Education and Engagement

Connect rural and urban communities by supporting and participating in educational programs that emphasize a mutual appreciation of the value of diverse food and agricultural production systems.

### Executive Summary

Interest in the origins of food is greater than ever. People want to know where and how their food is produced. Locally grown food continues to gain interest from the consumer, while the sales of organic products are steadily increasing, along with subscriptions to community supported agriculture operations. On the other hand, projected growth of the world's population means farmers will have to produce twice as much food by 2050, so the need for large-scale production will also be greater than ever. There is room for all models of production in California. We're all better off if they productively co-exist rather than be in conflict among themselves and consumers.

### Performance Measures

- Increase the number of planned public and industry outreach and education efforts completed during the year.
- Increase the number of visits and the amount of time spent by people who access and utilize CDFA's website.

### Objectives and Strategies

- A. Provide outreach and education to industry, stakeholders, academia, and the general public to discuss issues and build partnerships.**
  - Hold periodic meetings and continue to build on strong partnerships with advisory boards to the department, including the State Board of Food and Agriculture, for key issues related to California agriculture.
  - Continue to partner with federal and county agencies to streamline the delivery of outreach information during the course of outbreaks and infestations.
  - Provide relevant training to county agricultural commissioner staff administering CDFA programs, ensuring cohesive application of the latest program regulations and policies.
  - Refine CDFA's language services program and provide education to the general public regarding language services they may use in accessing CDFA programs or services.



## Goal Three

### Education and Engagement

Connect rural and urban communities by supporting and participating in educational programs that emphasize a mutual appreciation of the value of diverse food and agricultural production systems.

- B. Ensure that direct marketing statutes and regulations allow for a diversity of access opportunities.**
- Conduct an annual review of all regulations that are affected by new legislation.
  - Establish a systemic partnership with the Direct Marketing Advisory Committee to review and analyze the regulatory landscape for the direct marketing industry.
  - Promulgate and implement regulations to amend CDFA official market milk (Grade A) dairy farm and milk products plant sanitation scorecards to be consistent with those of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's requirements.
  - Complete the initial round of annual field standardization exercises with all county approved milk inspection programs to ensure uniform interpretation and enforcement of sanitation requirements for dairy farms in accordance with State and Federal requirements.
- C. Research and develop best practice efforts in connecting rural and urban agricultural communities.**
- Have employees participate in urban/rural partnerships such as the Small Farm Conference on an annual basis.
  - Establish a framework to utilize certified farmers markets as an outreach and communicative tool to disseminate the latest news, opportunities, and challenges impacting California farmers and agriculture.
  - Fund at least one research project annually that addresses rural and urban youth education.
  - Partner with public and private organizations to conduct food safety courses related to agricultural production.



# Goal Four Customer Service

Improve regulatory efficiency through proactive coordination with stakeholders.

## Executive Summary

CDFA is committed to doing all it can to improve the business climate in California. One area of concern is redundant regulations. In a transparent process in partnership with stakeholders, CDFA will review regulations within the department for relevancy and consistency and also survey overlapping regulations in other government agencies, and work to remove them. Additionally, the agency will explore and introduce new regulations that will improve efficiency.

## Performance Measures

- Improve the percentage of surveyed stakeholders in a biannual survey that rate the department's quality of service as "good" or "excellent."
- Increase the percentage of surveyed stakeholders in a biannual survey that answer "agree" or "strongly agree" to the statement: "CDFA takes a proactive role in improving regulatory efficiencies."



## Objectives and Strategies

- A. Identify and resolve overlapping inefficiencies in regulatory oversight by CDFA and other state agencies.**
- At meetings with State Marketing Program representatives, solicit and document feedback on regulatory issues and concerns.
  - Work with the State Water Resources Control Board and CalRecycle to identify and resolve overlap and inefficiencies in the disposal of inedible animal materials and inedible kitchen grease.
  - Work with the state's control agencies and district agricultural associations to streamline statutory code reporting and responsibilities.
  - Post and continuously update related laws, regulations, and notices on the department's website.

## Goal Four Customer Service

Improve regulatory efficiency through proactive coordination with stakeholders.

### B. Integrate statutory and regulatory reviews to ensure uniform interpretation and enforcement within the Department.

- Attend California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association (CACASA) meetings annually to promote uniform application of laws and regulations.
  - Conduct specialized training for uniformity and foundational knowledge with all contracted California County Agricultural Commissioners for all CDFA Programs.
  - Collaborate with relevant divisions, state and local agencies to seek process improvements and consistency in regulatory efficiency.
- Develop legislative concepts for CDFA's Legislative Office on an annual basis and promulgate regulations as necessary.
  - Participate in national and regional association meetings and workgroups pertaining to national standards which are also adopted in California.



# Goal Five

## Invest in Employee Development

Invest in employee development and succession planning efforts.

### Executive Summary

Baby Boomers—many of them senior employees with deep experience – are leaving CDFA and state service in large numbers, creating a brain drain that, without careful planning, could have a profound impact on operations. Additionally, employee compensation benefits are being reduced, possibly for the long-term, which could affect ongoing recruitment and retention of employees. Given these factors, this strategic planning function has never been more critical.

### Performance Measures

- Increase the percentage of employees that indicate in a biannual workforce survey overall satisfaction with their job as “good” or “excellent”.
- Increase the percentage of eligible employees who receive an annual Individual Development Plan.
- Complete and implement a department-wide workforce succession plan by 2015.

### Objectives and Strategies

#### A. Revise the existing leadership training program to further enhance the skills of current and future CFDA leaders.

- Create a workgroup of individuals representing all divisions to evaluate leadership needs and determine the means for developing such a program.
- Analyze the department’s Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) activity for the past few years to highlight leadership related issues.

- Promote the importance of leadership training programs at all levels within CDFA.
- Recognize employees that exhibit interest and potential for leadership opportunities.

#### B. Develop processes and networks for identifying and sharing lessons learned and best practices.

- Encourage employees within CDFA divisions to think entrepreneurially and innovatively.
- Utilize annual staff meetings to share lessons learned and best practices among employees and managers.
- Incorporate lean thinking into daily activities to achieve process improvements.
- Ensure employees receive the skills and competencies necessary by annually maintaining valid certifications and licenses.
- Reinstate CDFA’s new-employee orientation program.



## Goal Five Invest in Employee Development

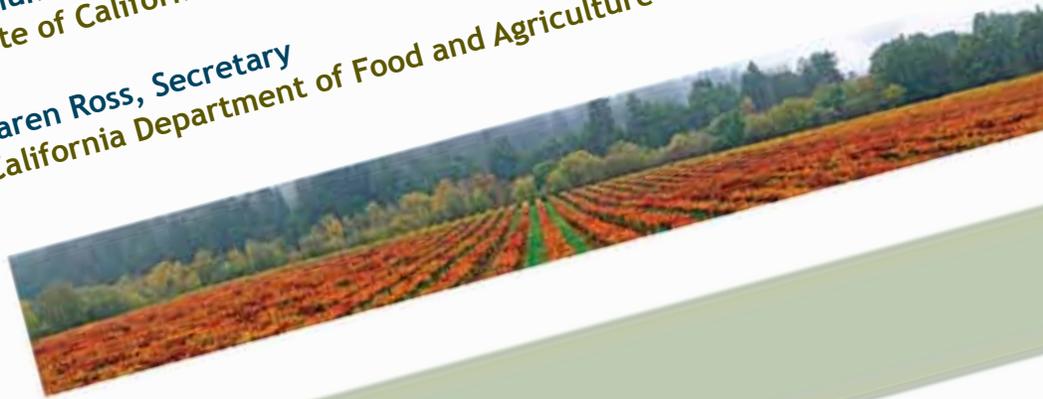
Invest in employee development and succession planning efforts.

- C. Perform a workforce analysis to identify where knowledge gaps may occur and work towards developing and implementing a department-wide succession plan.
  - Convene a department-wide working group to evaluate high risk classifications and move forward with a succession plan to address these areas.
  - Analyze the data gathered to determine the steps necessary to fill the workforce gaps.
  - Develop and implement the succession plan through employee training, development and recruitment.



**Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor**  
State of California

**Karen Ross, Secretary**  
California Department of Food and Agriculture



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