



Mel Graham

Vertebrate Pest Control Research
Advisory Committee

ABOUT

I grew up in various agricultural regions of California including the Central Coast, Central Valley, and Imperial Valley and have been interested in agriculture my entire life. Through 4-H and FFA, my love of the industry blossomed and I began developing my skills advocating agriculture. I developed public speaking and education skills through the agricultural science programs at both Cal Poly and CSU Fresno and by teaching high school agriculture for 5 years. In my graduate program, I developed an interest in research and field trials related to sustainable agriculture and gained valuable skills through my coursework and fieldwork for UC Cooperative Extension and the Strawberry Commission. My recent experience with the County of Santa Barbara has equipped me with proven abilities in managing impactful programs and dedicated staff. I have successfully developed and implemented new initiatives, served as a key liaison fostering collaborative relationships, and actively advocated for the county's vital agricultural resources. I am confident these skills align with CDFA's mission to support and protect California's diverse agricultural landscape.

CAREER INTERESTS

My experience in production agriculture has centered on finding practical solutions to persistent challenges, particularly in pest management. I have a proven ability to engage with growers to understand their needs, develop targeted outreach and education, and collaborate with industry and regulatory bodies to overcome obstacles. My understanding of pesticide use and existing research informs my approach to identifying gaps where new research, especially concerning vertebrate pests, is critical. I am keen to apply my problem-solving skills and collaborative experience to support the Vertebrate Pest Research Committee's mission of serving California's agricultural interests.

SKILLS

- Deputy Agricultural Commissioner's License
- Pest Control Advisor
- Program Development, Relations & Recruitment
- Education & Leadership Training
- Photography & Graphic Design (Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Lightroom)

SCHOOL & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **M.S. Agriculture: Plant Protection Science** **2016**
California Polytechnic State University, SLO
- **B.S. Agriculture: Agricultural Sciences** **2008**
California State University, Fresno
- **Agricultural IPM Specialist- Santa Barbara County**
- **CAPCA- Central Coast Board Member**

Mel Graham

RESUME

WORK EXPERIENCE

Agricultural Integrated Pest Management Specialist,

County of Santa Barbara

November 2016- Present

Provide pest management identification and solutions, grower education to industry. Department liaison and responsible for developing new agricultural programs.

Mel Graham Photography

Central Coast California

2009-Present

Graduate Student Research Assistant

Horticulture and Crop Science Dept, Cal Poly

Mar 2014 - May 2016

Teaching Assistant and Research Associate

Dr. Jim Cooper, Wine and Viticulture Dept., Cal Poly

Aug 2013 - Mar 2014

Intern/Research Associate

California Strawberry Commission

Jun 2013 - Aug 2013

Student Research Associate

Horticulture and Crop Science Dept, Cal Poly,

in association with UC Cooperative Extension, SLO

Apr 2013 - Jun 2013

Agriculture Instructor,

Merced Union High School District

June 2008-2012

- Department Chair/Head, FFA Advisor
- Classes Taught: Ag Biology, Ag Life Science, Ag Leadership, Floral Design, ROP Computer Applications in Ag

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

California Polytechnic State University, SLO

Masters of Science, June 2016

Major: Plant Protection Science

Thesis: Investigating approaches for the control of soilborne strawberry pathogens *Macrophomina phaseolina* and *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *Fragariae*.

California State University Fresno

Bachelor of Science, May 2008

Major: Agriculture Science/Education;

Minors: Crop Science and Animal Science

Completed Credential Program June 2008

**Dean's List/Honors*

SKILLS & PROFICIENCIES

- Regulatory Experience
- Program Development & Implementation
- Research & Laboratory Experience
- Computer Skills
- Leadership Development Training

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- California Association of Pest Control Advisors- Board Member
- Association of Applied IPM Ecologists
- California Association of Standards & Agricultural Professionals

[Redacted]

Lottie Martin

Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer- County of Santa Barbara

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

How Are You Acquainted With this Person? Current supervisor- Santa Barbara County

Debbie Trupe

Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, County of Santa Barbara- Retired

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

How Are You Acquainted With this Person? Former Supervisor & mentor- County of Santa Barbara

Kelly Ivors

Pathologist- Driscoll's Global Plant Health

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

How Are You Acquainted With this Person? Advisor for M.S. degree & research, professional colleague and friend

Dr. Dave Headrick

Professor of Horticulture & Crop Sciences, Cal Poly, SLO

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

How Are You Acquainted With this Person? Advisor: Biological Control Research-Strawberries & professional colleague

Pete Agalos

Cal Poly Animal Science Faculty-Retired

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

How Are You Acquainted With this Person? Personal friend, mentor and trainer in cutting/reined cowhorse