



**Fall Issue
October 2020**

Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of
Weights and Measures

Tulare County Ag News

An Introduction from our Commissioner:

Time sure flies when you're having fun, doesn't it? We have had a few changes in our senior staff and I thought it would be a good idea to highlight those for you. Marilyn Wright was our previous Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures and now we have a new one, me! My old position has been filled and we have one new additional Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer. Let's get started...My name is Tom Tucker and I have been the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner for almost a year and a half. I have been in this position since Marilyn Wright retired and moved to Nebraska with her husband, fellow Agricultural Commissioner from Fresno County. I have been working for this department for about 12 years, and as the Assistant Commissioner/Sealer for more than 6 years. Prior to that I cut my teeth, as it were, in our Weights and Measures Division learning all I would need to know about certifying weighing and measuring devices, but there is a lot more to it than that. I learned about Quantity Control issues, Petroleum issues, weighmaster laws and regulations and more. Prior to that, and currently, I farm a small orchard of citrus and my wife grows flowers for the cut flower market, usually at a Certified Farmers Market. I suppose I could go on but what I really want to do is introduce you to a couple people.



Tom Tucker;
Tulare County Ag Commissioner

Helping me to manage the affairs of the department and the balance of the staff is Christopher Greer. He was appointed as the Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures earlier this year and has been doing a fantastic job. Christopher has spent the most recent years of his career, prior to the Assistant position, as a Deputy and a supervisor of our Standards and Exclusion Division. He has a great deal of experience dealing with staff issues, and equally as important, working with industry and others from the regulatory community. He has gained the respect of the entire department and all others that he deals with. He is married and lives not too far from the office here in the City of Tulare. He, his wife Myca, and (2) kids are members of this community and we are all blessed for it. I have four Deputies that are all well trained, experienced, and good at their jobs. Each of them has a supervisor to assist them with the duties and responsibilities of their position. Please get to know all of them as your paths may cross some day and they will be there to assist you with your needs. - Tom



Christopher Greer;
Assistant Ag Commissioner

Hello Tulare County! My name is Christopher Greer and as Tom mentioned above, I am your Assistant Agricultural Commissioner/ Sealer of Weights & Measures. I have been with the Agricultural Commissioner's Office over 9 years now and couldn't be more excited to be assisting Tom with managing our Department and our staff of 80+ employees. To tell you a little more about myself, I was born and raised in the City of Tulare and agriculture was my life. Along with my grandfather and uncles having a dairy, I raised and showed swine, sheep, dairy cows, beef cattle, and even a pigmy goat through 4-H, FFA, and at the collegiate level. Naturally I knew I would seek a degree in an agricultural related field and I started that path by attending College of the Sequoias after high school for 2 years, focusing on Animal Science. I then transferred to CSU Fresno where I switched majors and decided on obtaining my Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Business. Shortly after graduation, I started my job here at the Agricultural Commissioner's office as an inspector Trainee and I guess the rest is history.

Fun fact many people do not know about the County Agricultural Commissioner system is that we are unique to California. With each County throughout California being so diversified within their agriculture, it has become a huge benefit to the industry that the County Ag Commissioner's Office can promote and enforce laws and regulation at the local level.



Marianna Gentert;
Deputy of Pesticide Use Enforcement

Pesticide Use Enforcement Division

Hello, my name is Marianna Santos Gentert, I was born and raised in the Central Valley and I am the Deputy Agricultural Commissioner in charge of the Pesticide Use Enforcement Division. I received the promotion in August of 2017. I grew up on a dairy and then later out in the country of Hanford, as my dad transitioned to a Hay Broker. I attended California State University, Fresno and graduated in 2006 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Agriculture Business, with a specific in Agriculture Appraisal. I married my husband Eric Gentert in 2010 and have two sons and a daughter on the way! I currently reside in the City of Tulare.

Current Events

- **September 21, 2020** from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tulare County partnered with Kings County and Interstate Ag Plastics to host an empty pesticide container recycling event. The event was free of charge and was held at the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office. (Pictures included on last page!) Please call us for more details on our future plans for another event!
- **September 30, 2020 & October 1, 2020** we will be teaching an in-person Continuing Education class for host GarBennett. Four classes will be held for two hours of Laws and Regulations hours. For more information and to register please call Sonia Garcia at 559-638-6311. Pre-registration is required.

Renewal starts October 1, 2020!

This is in response to Covid-19 and needing to limit capacity, please plan to renew early. **Private Applicator Certification (PAC)** is required for Restricted Material Permit applicants and those using federally restricted products. PAC's with last names beginning with **R-Z** expire on **12/31/2020**. Renewal of PAC's will require 6 hours of Continuing Education.

(2 hours of which must be Laws and Regulations)

If you would like to renew your Certificate with Continuing Education hours, bring copies of your class attendance with you when you come in for Permit renewal.

PAC Exams:

Private Applicator exams will be available on a walk-in basis. Tests will be available from 8:00 A.M – 3:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, at the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office Auditorium located at 4437 South Laspina St. Tulare, CA 93274
Phone (559) 684-3352

We will be limited on capacity, so if you need to send more than 5 employees please call ahead and schedule.

County offices will be closed for the following holidays: November 26-27, December 24-25, 2020, January 1, 2021 and January 18, 2021.

Weights and Measures Division

Hi. I am the Deputy Sealer in Weights and Measures, but I have not always been. I have a degree in Botany and a minor in Entomology. However, the love of my life is Meteorology, but I digress. I graduated from a four-year university on the five-year plan and worked as a Pest Control Advisor for a farming corporation on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. In the late 80's I became a seasonal trapper for the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office and eventually became a full-time inspector and started my career. The first division I worked in was Standards where I tested oranges for maturity.



David Case;
Deputy of
Weights and Measures

I also worked part-time for the Pesticide Division collecting water runoff samples for the Department of Pesticide Regulation. Shortly thereafter, I started working full-time in the Pesticide Division assisting the District Inspectors, issuing permits, checking Notices of Intent and other duties. During the early 90's I became a District Inspector in the Pesticide Division, my primary duties were conducting structural pesticide applications, and pesticide illness investigations while filling in for District Inspectors when they had office duty or were on vacation. I investigated several high-profile pesticide illnesses during that tenure. In 2002, I became an Inspector IV in the Pesticide Division supervising a staff of District Inspectors and more. As an Inspector IV, I conducted employee evaluations, reviewed and approved investigative reports and inspections, wrote Notices of Proposed Actions and acted as the advocate when hearings were requested, kept records of paperwork and reported such paperwork to the Department of Pesticide Regulation. In late 2011, I applied for and was given the position of Deputy in our Weights and Measures Division. It has been a steep learning curve since most of my experience has been with the agricultural side of our Department. Luckily, I had a great staff to learn from and work with and that continues today. Even though most of my work is in Weights and Measures, I still have some agricultural duties on my side of the office. I am responsible for the Certified Producer and Organic programs as well as enforcing the Walnut Theft Ordinance. In 2020, we have embraced a new program – Industrial Hemp. We started registering and permitting growers and processors alike. As time goes on, the one thing I have learned is to treat the industries we serve with fairness and respect in all of what we do.

A look inside Weights and Measures



One of the biggest challenges in Weights and Measures is technology. Some things as simple as scales are becoming more complex with the electronics becoming smaller and more sophisticated. Electricity, hydrogen and compressed natural gas are a few examples of new vehicle fuels. As they become more common throughout the state the devices that deliver that fuel will be more common and just like the gasoline pumps are tested by our office now, the devices delivering these new fuels will be tested as well. COVID-19 has impacted our department in that our ability to inspect devices has slowed down. We are wearing masks and gloves to protect ourselves and the industry when the risk of exposure is high.



Nicole Motley;
Deputy of Pest Exclusion & Standardization

Pest Exclusion & Standardization Division

My name is Nicole Motley and I was born and raised in Tulare, California. I was involved in agriculture from a young age as my grandfather and uncles owned a dairy. I was heavily involved in both 4-H and FFA with raising swine, sheep, and dairy cattle. I participated on livestock judging teams and public speaking teams throughout my youth and into my college years. I attended College of the Sequoias where I graduated with my associate's degree. I then transferred to Fresno State where I graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree in Agricultural Business. I have been married to my husband Jeff Motley for 12 years. I have three children, Makenna is 10 years old, Madison is 7 years old, and Merritt is 2 years old.

I started my career with the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealers Office in January 2012 as an Agricultural & Standards Inspector Trainee. I was promoted to Agricultural & Standards Enforcement Officer in January 2017. I was then promoted to Agricultural & Standards Inspector IV in November of 2017 in the Pesticide Use Enforcement Division. Now I am the Deputy Agricultural Commissioner in charge of the Pest Exclusion & Standardization Division.

The Pest Exclusions & Standardization Division has many different programs within its division. These programs are intended to prevent the introduction and/or spread of plant pests and diseases which may be detrimental to agricultural crops in Tulare County. We have around 35 Agricultural and Standards Inspectors who work in 8 different districts throughout the county. Our inspectors provide essential services by certifying shippers' compliance with other county, state, and foreign countries quarantine requirements, allowing products to be shipped around the world. Our inspectors are federally certified to perform Phytosanitary Inspections and certifications.



Currently our inspectors are finishing up inspections, fumigations, and issuing Phytosanitary Certificates for the stone fruit season. Our inspectors are also currently performing inspections and fumigations on table grapes and performing table grape maturity tests in accordance with California State standards. Our inspectors will soon be transitioning into citrus season where they will start citrus maturity testing and inspections for exports to multiple different countries. On a different note, we didn't see too much effect from COVID- 19. Most facilities stayed up and running and our inspectors followed all COVID-19 precautions while performing their job duties.

Pest Detection, Pest Management, and Crop Statistics Division

Greetings and Salutations! My name is Jonathan Bixler, I was born in Visalia and raised on a small farm in Tulare, CA. Throughout my childhood I worked on the family dairy/farm raising Jersey cows and producing alfalfa, oat hay, plums, walnuts, corn, and cotton. I graduated from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a degree in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology in 2005. After college, I worked at the Sunkist Juice Plant in Tipton as a Quality Assurance Lab Technician testing the quality of orange juice and working on research and development.



Jonathan Bixler;
Deputy of Pest Detection, Pest Management,
and Crop Statistics

I moved to the Bay Area and became a Biologist/Standards Specialist with the San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner's office in 2007. I worked in the Exclusion, Standards, and Weights and Measures divisions of the department for a total of 9 years. I moved back to my hometown in 2016 and took a position with Tulare County as the Deputy Agricultural Commissioner of the Exclusion and Standards Division. Currently, I am in charge of the Pest Detection, Pest Management, and Crop Statistics Division. My hobbies include ocean kayaking, hiking, electronics projects, woodworking, composing and performing music. As Deputy in charge of Crop Statistics, it is my responsibility to make sure the Crop Report is completed accurately and published on a yearly basis. Not only is it a useful resource for many industries, publishing a Crop Report is a requirement by law in the Food and Agriculture Code § 2279.

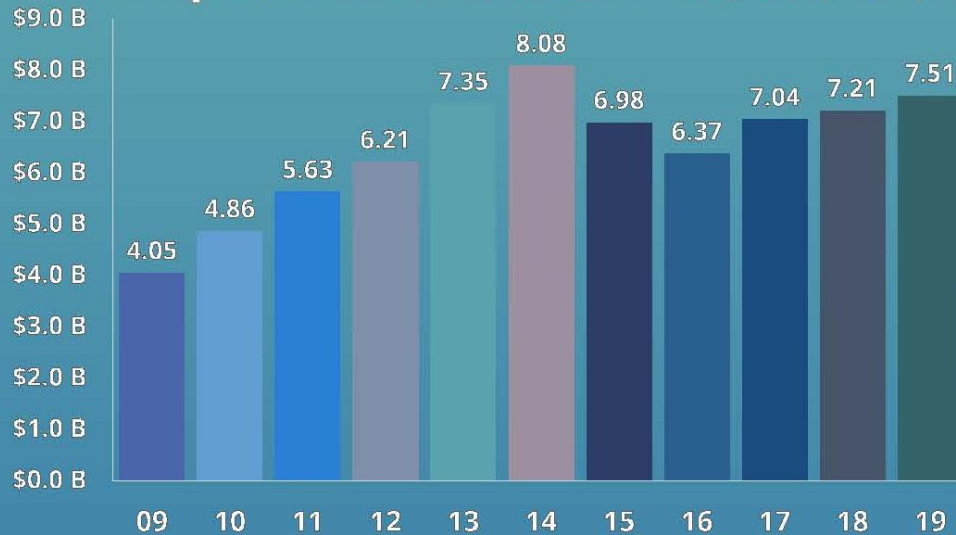
“The Commissioner shall compile reports of the condition, acreage, production, and value of the agricultural products in his/her county. The Commissioner may publish such reports and shall transmit a copy of them to the Director.”

As noted in the code section above, the Crop Report summarizes the agriculture activities in Tulare County. The sections of the Crop Report include: Permanent Planting Acreage, Field Crops, Fruit & Nut Crops, Vegetable Crops, Nursery Products, Apiary Products, Seed Crops, Industrial Crops, Livestock & Poultry, Livestock & Poultry Products, Summary, Million Dollar Products, Category Comparison, Twenty-Year Value Comparison, Top Export Commodities, Export Countries, Sustainable Agriculture, Pest Detection, and Registered Organic & Certified Producer. We send out letters to industry requesting information regarding value, production and acreage. That data is compiled and compared to information from other counties, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), and the California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA). By doing this we are able to establish accurate figures that best represent acreage, value, and production for agriculture in Tulare County. Accurate numbers are very important because the Crop Report is used by industry to make important decisions that can have a large impact on Tulare County.

The next two pages highlight some of the tables, charts and graphs that are featured in the 2019 Crop Report which can be found in its entirety online at our website <https://agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us/ag/> along with previous crop reports dating back to 1917.

2019 Crop Report Highlights

Total Crop & Livestock Value - \$7,505,352,100

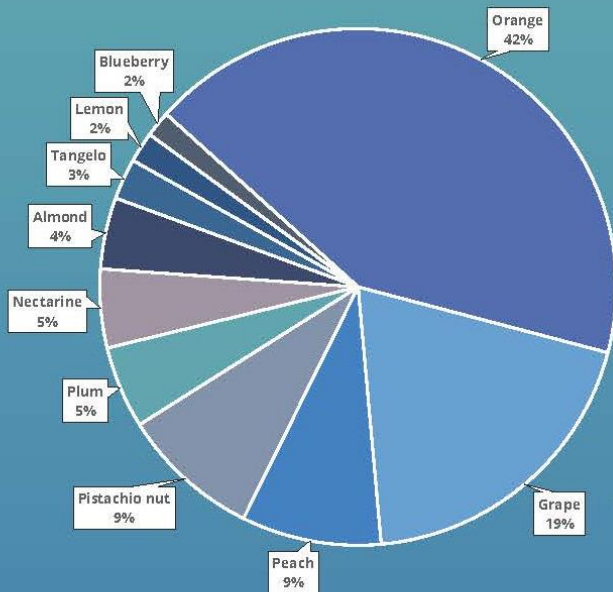


Summary

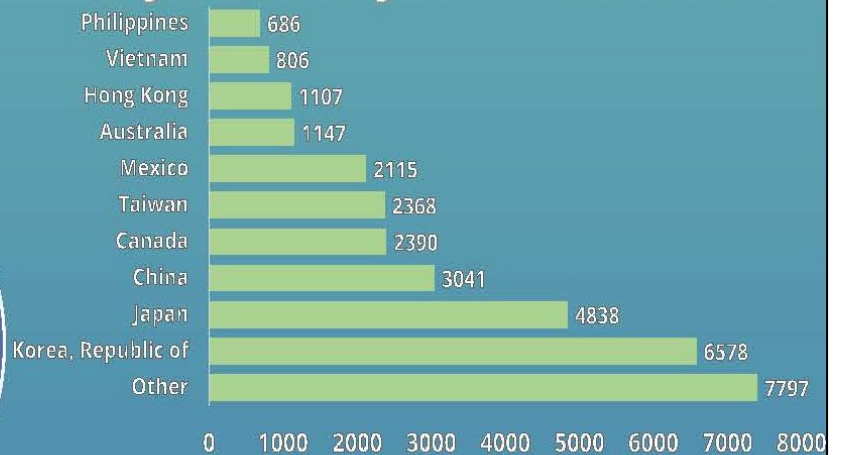
Commodity	Year	Harvested Acreage	Value
Field Crops	2019	1,190,120	\$496,285,000
	2018	1,204,440	\$522,365,000
Fruit & Nut Crops	2019	484,408	\$4,555,465,000
	2018	414,950	\$4,105,817,000
Vegetable Crops	2019	2,409	\$19,929,000
	2018	2,626	\$17,296,000
Nursery Products	2019	X	\$72,794,000
	2018	X	\$97,136,000
Apiary Products	2019	X	\$62,420,000
	2018	X	\$75,846,000
Seed Crops	2019	349	\$4,588,000
	2018	326	\$4,553,400
Industrial Crops	2019	X	\$1,754,100
	2018	X	\$1,895,000
Livestock & Poultry	2019	X	\$665,379,000
	2018	X	\$694,538,000
Livestock & Poultry Products	2019	X	\$1,626,738,000
	2018	X	\$1,693,857,000
Grand Total	2019	1,677,286	\$7,505,352,100
	2018	1,622,089	\$7,213,303,400

2019 Crop Report Highlights

Top Export Commodities



Phytosanitary Certificates Issued



Tulare County Exports to 96 Countries Around the World



Let's Stay Connected!

@TulareAgComm



Website:

<https://agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us/ag/>



2020 Container Disposal Event



Tulare County Ag Commissioner's Office

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Pesticides Office Fax: 559-713-3770

Email us: aginfo@co.tulare.ca.us

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday

8:00 am to 5:00 pm

