



July 29, 2019

2019 Referendum to Consider Suspension of the California Asparagus Commission

TO THE CALIFORNIA ASPARAGUS PRODUCER ADDRESSED:

At its June 6, 2019 Board Meeting, the California Asparagus Commission (Commission) Board or Directors voted to initiate suspension activities for the Commission. Due to declining acreage, the Commission determined that its programs are no longer an effective tool for the remaining producers.

In accordance with the provisions of the California Asparagus Commission Law, the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture shall, upon receipt of a suspension recommendation, conduct a referendum of asparagus producers to determine whether producers favor continuation or suspension of the Commission.

The California Asparagus Commission has operated since 1990 and is authorized to promote asparagus sales, including advertising and promotion, conduct production and processing research, work to develop, maintain and expand foreign and domestic markets, including trade and tariff related proceedings, as well as any other action that furthers the production and sales of asparagus.

Enclosed is a ballot for casting your vote. All asparagus producers who grow asparagus for market in this state, including landlords who own a percentage of the crop, and who grew at least five (5) acres of asparagus in the proceeding marketing season (January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018) are eligible to vote. To indicate whether you desire the California Asparagus Commission to be continued or suspended, please complete and return the ballot in the envelope provided.

The Secretary shall suspend the operation of the California Asparagus Commission if at least 40 percent of the total number of eligible producers have participated in the referendum and either one of the following has occurred:

- 65 percent or more of the producers who vote in the referendum vote in favor of suspension, and the producers so voting marketed a majority of the total quantity of asparagus in the 2018 marketing year; **or**
- A majority of the producers who voted in the referendum voted in favor of suspension, and the producers so voting marketing 65 percent or more of the total quantity of asparagus in the 2018 marketing year.

(over)



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The voting period in this referendum is hereby established as July 29, 2019 through August 27, 2019. Ballots received in envelopes postmarked later than August 27th will not be valid and will not be counted.

A summary of the results of the voting will be announced as soon as the ballots are tallied following the close of the voting period. Individual votes and all information provided on individual ballots will be kept confidential.

If you have questions concerning this referendum please call Kacie Fritz at this office at (916) 900-5095. If you have questions about the activities of the California Asparagus Commission, please call Cherie Watte, Program CEO, at 916-690-3111.

Sincerely,



Robert Maxie, Chief
Marketing Branch

Enclosure