



October 9, 2014

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

To Consider the Continuation of the California Garlic and Onion Research Program

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is calling a public hearing to receive testimony and evidence from the garlic and onion industry and the general public on whether the California Garlic and Onion Research Program should be continued for another five years. The Program requires such a hearing every five years to determine whether it is fulfilling the purposes of the California Marketing Act, under which the Program was created.

The California Garlic and Onion Research Program is a state marketing order that was approved by industry votes in 2004 for the purpose of conducting research relating to the production, processing and distribution of garlic and onions. The program is funded by mandatory assessments upon producers and handlers of garlic as defined (*garlic grown in California without regard to whether it is marketed fresh, dehydrated or processed in some other fashion*) and upon producers and handlers of onions as defined (*only those onions grown in California for dehydration*).

The public hearing is scheduled as follows:

Date / Time	Location
Wednesday November 12, 2014 Beginning at 9:30 a.m.	Harris Ranch Inn & Restaurant 24505 West Dorris Avenue Coalinga, California

HEARING PROCEDURE

All affected producers and handlers of California garlic and onions and other interested persons are invited to attend and participate in this hearing. Additionally, written comments will be accepted if sent to this office to the attention of Ben Kardokus, postmarked or received no later than *November 10, 2014*.

At the hearing, CDFA representatives will receive testimony and evidence, both oral and documentary, with respect to the following matters:

1. The production, economic, and marketing conditions affecting the garlic and onion industry of this State;
2. Whether the California Garlic and Onion Research Program tends to effectuate the declared purposes and attain the declared objectives of the California Marketing Act.

The hearing transcript and written comments will be considered by CDFA in determining if the California Garlic and Onion Research Program will be authorized to continue. If the hearing record generally supports the continuation of this program, CDFA may authorize the program to operate for another five years without the need for an industry referendum. However, if CDFA finds from the hearing record that a substantial question exists as to whether the Program is fulfilling its declared purposes, CDFA will conduct a vote of affected garlic and onion producers and handlers to determine if the Program should be continued.

HEARING PREPARATION

At the hearing, supporters of the California Garlic and Onion Research Program should provide testimony that communicates why they believe the Program should be continued. Conversely, those who may have concerns about the Program's continuation should provide testimony that substantiates their concerns. Following are some examples of questions that hearing witnesses may wish to consider in preparing their testimony.

- Has the California garlic and onion industry benefited from the research projects funded by the California Garlic and Onion Research Program? If yes, please explain how. If no, please explain why not.
- How do producers benefit from this Program? How do handlers benefit from this Program?
- What problems, if any, would the industry face in the absence of a mandatory industry-funded research program?
- Does the general public benefit from the activities of the California Garlic and Onion Research Program? If yes, please explain how. If no, please explain why not.
- Have assessment monies been spent wisely and according to the authority granted to the Program?
- Are there ways that the Program could be improved?

A witness need not address all of the questions above. Also, witnesses are not limited to addressing these questions so long as the testimony is pertinent to the call of the hearing. If you have questions regarding this hearing or the Program, please call Bob Ehn, CEO of the California Garlic and Onion Research Board, at (559) 297-9322 or Ben Kardokus with the Marketing Branch at (916) 900-5018.

Sincerely,



Robert Maxie, Chief
Marketing Branch