**Requirements of Your Membership under the New General Order**

On March 12, 2014 the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) adopted the new Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) and Monitoring Reporting Program (MRP). The WDR and MRP are known as the General Order of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). The ILRP, existing since 2003, has required owners and operators of irrigated lands to implement management practices necessary to protect and improve water quality. The new ILRP covers discharges to both surface water and groundwater. The groundwater coverage is new under the recently adopted ILRP and will address waste (i.e. salt, nitrates, pesticides) percolating past the root zone into groundwater. The ILRP does not address the pumping of groundwater.

Below is a summary of the requirements of your membership with the Lake County Farm Bureau Education Corporation’s (LCFBEC) Irrigated Lands Watershed and the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition (SVWQC) as defined under the new ILRP. If you have questions about these requirements, please contact the Lake County Farm Bureau office at 707-263-0911, or at lcfarmbureau@sbcglobal.net.

1.  The new program applies to owners and operators of irrigated lands\* (excluding rice which has its own program). Either the owner or operator of the irrigated lands may enroll the parcels under the new ILRP. The owner or operator who enrolls the parcels will be considered the member (Member) of LCFBEC and SVWQC.

\**Irrigated lands are defined as land irrigated to produce crops or pasture used for commercial purposes, including land that is planted to commercial crops that are not yet marketable (e.g. vineyards and tree crops). Irrigated lands also include nurseries, and privately and publicly managed wetlands (excluding the non-irrigated upland habitat associated with managed wetlands).*

2. Both the owner and operator are ultimately responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of the ILRP. It is the responsibility of the Member to notify the non-Member owner or operator that the parcels have been enrolled in the ILRP.

3. Members are required to maintain a hard or electronic copy of the ILRP General Order at the farm headquarters, be familiar with its contents, and comply with all parts of the General Order. The General Order can be found at: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2014-0030.pdf>

4. The General Order requires Members to permit representatives of the Regional Board, at reasonable hours, to enter premises to inspect, copy, or photograph any records or facilities. Members must provide the name and phone number to LCFBEC of the individual with the authority to provide consent to access facilities.

5. As an existing Member in good standing, you will be required to confirm your intent to remain covered under the new ILRP. The Notice of Confirmation is included in this packet.

6. Members must report the practices they are implementing to protect water quality. The ILRP does not require Members to implement specific water quality management practices.

7. Members in a designated “high vulnerability” area or area under a Surface Water and/or Groundwater Quality Management Plan must attend a LCILW outreach event annually and provide confirmation of attendance.

8. Per WDR, Section VII B, Members will be required to submit a Whole Farm Evaluation, included in this packet, specifying measures being taken to protect water quality. The plan must be kept at the farming headquarters and submitted to LCFBEC for regional compilation. The compiled regional information will not include Member identifying information.

9. Members within areas where groundwater is susceptible to nitrate contamination, must prepare and implement a Nitrogen Management Plan (The template for this document has not been finalized at this time nor has a date been set for completion.  When the final template is developed and a completion date is set, notification will be sent out to the membership.), per WDR Section VII D, summarizing the amount of nitrogen applied to the land and the amount used by the crop. Plans must be reviewed and signed by a Certified Crop Advisor or certified by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Members in areas where groundwater is less susceptible to nitrate contamination must prepare a Plan and keep it at their farming headquarters. The Plan template will be prepared by the SVWQC and approved by the Regional Board.

10. Members with the potential to discharge sediment to surface waters during irrigation or storm events must prepare and implement a Sediment and Erosion Control Plan (The template for this document has not been finalized at this time nor has a date been set for completion.  When the final template is developed and a completion date is set, notification will be sent out to the membership.), per WDR Section VII C.

11.  Wastes discharged from a Member’s irrigated lands shall not contribute to an exceedance of a water quality objective or a trend of degradation that may threaten applicable Basin Plan beneficial uses, unreasonably affect applicable beneficial uses, or cause or contribute to pollution or nuisance.

12. If a Member’s compliance with any of these requirements creates significant environmental impacts (as defined in Attachment D of the General Order), the Member is required to avoid the impacts where feasible or implement identified mitigation measures.

13. While the LCFBEC and SVWQC will assist Members in complying with the new ILRP, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Member to comply with all components of the General Order. The Regional Board will increase enforcement actions against Members who do not comply with the provisions of the General Order.

14. Any landowner or operator choosing not to be covered by LCFBEC will be required to have individual coverage directly with the Regional Board. The Regional Board will increase enforcement actions against landowners and operators who do not obtain any regulatory coverage.

If you have questions about these requirements, please contact Allison Tucker at 707-263-0911, or lcfarmbureau@sbcglobal.net