

*CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA*

For the meeting of January 18, 2011

Councilmember Lieber recommendation: That the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign and send the following letter:

January xx, 2011

Fax #

Dear Governor Brown:

We write to ask you to consider these two priorities as you begin your tenure as Governor:

- 1) Choose top officials to head the state's health, environmental, agriculture, and pesticide agencies who will:
 - prioritize natural, organic, and non-chemical approaches to agriculture and agricultural pests and
 - end the light brown apple moth program and not undertake other similar mass pesticide spray campaigns in populated areas
- 2) Reverse the Schwarzenegger administration's last-minute approval of the carcinogenic pesticide methyl iodide.

The residents of Albany were resoundingly opposed to the state's ill-advised plan in 2008 to begin a multi-year program of aerially spraying our city and the surrounding Bay Area with pesticides for the light brown apple moth, an insect that still has not done any appreciable damage in the state. Albany residents are also enthusiastic supporters of local organic agriculture and a safe, chemical-free food supply.

In line with our community's priorities, the Albany City Council urges you to choose heads of the California Departments of Food and Agriculture, Public Health, and Pesticide Regulation as well as the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, who understand the following:

- the unacceptability of mass spray pesticide spray campaigns and exposures in populated areas
- the need to actively press the U.S. Department of Agriculture to end the wasteful, dangerous light brown apple moth program and its associated quarantines that punish domestic farmers while granting advantages to foreign producers
- the need to rigorously assess the risks of pesticides, including the undisclosed inert ingredients, beyond the manufacturers' assessments on which United States

Environmental Protection Agency relies

We believe state agencies should employ the precautionary principle with regard to the potential use of any toxic chemical in our community. We hope you will choose an Agriculture Secretary who understands that consumers want safe farms and safe food free of pesticide residues and that there is tremendous economic potential in supporting small, organic, and family farms over large-scale industrial agriculture.

We also ask that you take the appropriate steps to revoke the approval of the carcinogenic pesticide methyl iodide. This dangerous chemical was approved in the last days of the Schwarzenegger administration despite the testimony of the state's own Scientific Review Committee (SRC) about the risks of this decision. As the SRC found, this pesticide is extremely hazardous in even tiny amounts, it will be impossible to prevent exposure to farm workers and those who live near fields fumigated with this chemical, there are significant gaps in data regarding methyl iodide's neurotoxicity, and it is "alarming that there were no reliable data on the potential of methyl iodide to contaminate groundwater." Moreover, the approval of this chemical in the last days of the prior administration was based on a declaration of "emergency" although no evidence of an emergency exists.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues of importance to our city and all California residents.

Sincerely,

Farid Javandel
Mayor