

COUNTY OF SOLANO

AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGIST/ WEIGHTS AND MEASURES INSPECTOR TRAINEE

DEFINITION

Under first immediate and then general supervision, learns and performs assigned tasks in agricultural and/or weights and measures inspection/enforcement; learns to perform inspections in pest detection, pest prevention, pest control and enforcement activities for an assigned agricultural/weights and measures program; and performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is the trainee and entry level for the Agricultural Biologist/Weights and Measures Inspector series. Incumbents receive guidance and instruction from more experienced and licensed staff; however, once a license is gained in a specific area, incumbents may work independently within that area. Progressively less supervision is received in areas of licensure as knowledge and experience is gained. This class is distinguished from Agricultural Biologist/Weights and Measures Inspector in that the latter is the full journey level where incumbents have, at a minimum, three essential inspection/enforcement licenses as issued by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Depending on assignment, duties may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Inspects or assists in inspecting incoming shipments of plant material arriving at post offices, railroads, bus terminals, retail nurseries and other points of entry to ensure compliance with federal, state and local quarantines; inspects agricultural products for evidence of diseases or insect infestation; assists with enforcing plant quarantines and supervising treatment or destruction of quarantined products/materials; collects, identifies and submits for analysis specimens from shipments for detection of pests; inspects feed and grain mills to ascertain freedom from weed seed pests. Assists with inspections of truck, industrial, cattle and retail scales, including electronic point of sale systems, using test vehicles and standard weights.
2. With assistance of experienced licensed staff: Investigates applications for pesticide applicators certificates and use permits; inspects pesticide mixing, loading, storage and disposal operations; inspects facilities, records, and areas in which pesticides are sold, stored and used; ensures compliance with health and safety laws and regulations; ensures proper notification prior to pesticide applications; issues or denies use permits; conducts pre-site inspections; investigates episodes of alleged human illness, property loss, adverse environmental impact or other effects; trains pest control advisors, field workers and employees in the proper and safe application of pesticides. Assists with inspections of packaged commodities for weight and/or volume accuracy and proper labeling.
3. Inspects or assists in inspecting commercial crops, range land and right-of-ways to detect

- manage, control and eradicate pests; visits residents, County and City Parks to assist in identifying and controlling garden and household pests; conducts surveys to determine the presence or spread of pests; collects insects, nematodes and diseased plants for laboratory analysis; sells bait for rodent and other vertebrate pest management/control; sets and inspects traps to detect pests such as gypsy moths and fruit flies. Assists with inspection of gasoline pumps and their remote consoles, oil and automatic transmission fluid meters, dairy milk tanks, cordage and fabric meters, odometers/taximeters, liquid graduates, and similar measuring devices. Assists with inspection of devices and petroleum storage tanks for correct labeling.
4. Conducts surveys and checks for infestations of various weeds, especially noxious weeds; controls infestations by cutting or by applying herbicides; surveys high hazard areas and submits samples of unknown plants for identification.
 5. Assists in inspecting retail markets, packing facilities, fruit and vegetable stands, warehouses and other places where fruit and vegetables, nuts, honey and/or eggs are sold to enforce standards for quality, freshness, proper labeling of containers, maturity, size, freedom from insects, mold, decay and mechanical damage; with supervision, issues certificates to permit individuals to sell products; certifies fruits, vegetables, nuts and honey for shipment; inspects egg production growers for compliance with federal egg surveillance program; consults with/advises program supervisor of significant incidents for finds.
 6. Assists in inspecting nurseries for evidence of insects or diseases, quality and care of plants, proper plants and product labeling; learns to supervise treatment of soil for nematode or other pest control; provides guidance and information to nurseries concerning pest control, plant identification and care.
 7. Assists with repair and maintenance of test vehicles, weights, and other department equipment.
 8. Visits stores and seed storage facilities to inspect seeds for compliance with federal and state seed laws; checks labeling, purity of seed percentage of mixtures of variety seeds; takes samples; inspects certified mill harvesters and equipment.
 9. Inspects beehives for diseased colonies; registers hives and, if certified, enforces regulations for registration, movement notices and notifications of pesticide applications; with supervision, enforces quarantine regulations for imported hives.
 10. Assists with and performs calculations; keeps records of inspections; prepares narrative and statistical reports.
 11. Learns to issue warnings and instructions for violations; gathers evidence and prepares reports for administrative hearings or court actions; testify at hearings and in court.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities:

Knowledge of:

The goals and objectives of a comprehensive agricultural inspection and regulation program; effective public relations methods.

Ability to:

Learn, understand, interpret and apply laws, regulations and policies governing agricultural program operations; learn to make decisions and independent judgments; communicate effectively with people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments; establish and maintain cooperative working relationships; learn to determine the appropriate course of action in emergency or stressful situations; understand program objectives in relation to departmental goals and procedures; collect and analyze data to draw logical conclusions and make appropriate recommendations; prepare narrative and statistical reports; comply with laws, regulations and professional practices governing agricultural programs, services and operations; secure cooperation and teamwork among professional and/or support staff; follow written and verbal instructions; deal firmly and fairly with clients of various socio-economic backgrounds and temperaments; maintain accurate records and document actions taken; learn to ascertain and resolve complaints/problems/violations; learn to organize and prioritize work assignments; make routine arithmetical calculations; learn to research regulations, procedures and/or technical reference materials; learn to gather evidence and testify at administrative hearings and in court; gather samples; learn to identify plants, animals, pests, weeds, diseases and damage to plants and agricultural products; learn to assist growers, residents, retailers and others in complying with agricultural standards and regulations through timely inspections, certifications and issuance of permits and instruction/explanation of laws, regulations, methods and procedures; project a positive image; provide effective liaison between the department and the public.

Experience and/or Education/Training

Experience:

None is required.

Education/Training:

Must be qualified to take the County Agricultural Inspector/Biologist examination administered by the State of California Department of Food and Agriculture (See the California Code of Regulations, Title 3, Section 105), which requires:

Either I

Possession of one or more valid statewide specific category licenses as a County Inspector/Biologist (e.g., in Pesticide Regulation; Pest Prevention and Plant Regulation; Investigation and Environmental Monitoring; Integrated Pest Management; or Commodity Regulation);

Or II

Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college with specialization in either: (A) one or more appropriate disciplines in agricultural, biological, chemical, or physical sciences; **or** (B) any discipline with a minimum of 30 semester units, or equivalent, in one or any combination of the disciplines of agricultural science, biological science, chemical science, physical science, mathematics, and/or statistics.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Possession of a valid Class C or higher California driver's license is required. Some assignments may require an incumbent to obtain a valid Class A California driver's license.

Independent travel will be required.

As a condition of continued employment, incumbents must possess or obtain at least one of the specific category licenses issued by the California Department of Food and Agriculture as a County Inspector/Biologist (e.g., in Pesticide Regulation; Pest Prevention and Plant Regulation; Investigation and Environmental Monitoring; Integrated Pest Management; or Commodity Regulation) within the six month probationary period. As an additional condition of continued employment, incumbents must possess or obtain within 24 months of appointment both of the following Agriculture Inspector/Biologist specific category licenses:

- a) Pesticide Regulation;
- b) Pest Prevention and Plant Regulation;

and must possess or obtain at least one (1) of the following Weights/Measures Inspector specific category licenses:

- a) Weights Verification; **or**
- b) Measurement Verification.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

ADA Compliance

Physical Ability: Tasks require the regular and sustained performance of moderately physically demanding work, typically involving some combination of climbing and balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching, and crawling, and that generally involves lifting, carrying, pushing, and/or pulling of moderately heavy objects and materials (20-50 pounds);

may occasionally involve lifting or moving heavier objects and materials (up to 100 pounds).

Sensory Requirements: Some tasks require visual perception and discrimination. Some tasks require oral communications ability.

Environmental Factors: Performance of essential functions may require exposure to adverse environmental conditions, such as dirt, dust, odors, wetness, humidity, rain, temperature and noise extremes, fumes, hazardous materials, machinery, electric currents, traffic hazards, bright/dim light, toxic agents, disease, pathogenic substances, animal/wildlife attacks, or animal/insect bites. Incumbents may be exposed to chemicals, plant/animal diseases, or poison oak; must have a tolerance for chemical and agricultural odors.

Other:

Incumbents will be required to drive autos or small trucks through fields or orchards; walk agricultural lands in various weather conditions; may be required to spend a great deal of time in a vehicle during hot weather.

Incumbents may be exposed to chemicals, plant/animal diseases or poison oak and must have a tolerance for chemical and agricultural odors.

Some assignments will require operation of a fork lift and/or heavy capacity truck.

Positions allocated to this class may require bilingual skills.

Incumbents must be able to lift and carry objects weighing up to 50 pounds.

Incumbents may be subject to drug and alcohol testing as required under the Federal Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991. Testing includes post-accident and pre-employment, as well as random and reasonable suspicion testing as required by law.

This class may be used to underfill positions allocated to other classes in the series for training purposes.

Revised: April 2011

CSC Approved: 4/13/11