

## SUMMARY

The *Dairy Element* of the *Kings County General Plan* contains a series of goals, objectives, policies, and programs. These are designed to accomplish two equally important major objectives. One is to ensure that the dairy industry of Kings County continues to grow and contribute to the economic health of the County. The other is to ensure that the standards established in the *Dairy Element* protect public health and safety and the environment.

Part of the strategy to accomplish this is to set a limit on the number of cows that can be accommodated in Kings County. Section II describes the method used to determine this limit. This element derives the limit by using a model to evaluate the Nitrogen and salt loading capacity of Kings County farmland which utilizes manure generated by cows. ~~The farmland that which is available was further~~ discounted by subtracting the acreage used for other types of animal husbandry manure and biosolids (sewage sludge) applications. The result is that the maximum herd size for Kings County is determined to be 381,980 milk cows (534,772 animal units) and 423,998 head of support stock (335,409 animal units), totaling 805,978 head (870,181 animal units).

The goals, objectives, policies, and programs in the *Dairy Element* include changes in the way dairies are regulated. Under existing general plan and zoning ordinance requirements, expansions of existing dairies and establishment of new dairies must be approved through the conditional use permit (CUP) process. Each review of a dairy proposal must undergo individual environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under the proposed new *Dairy Element* the expansion of existing dairies and establishment of new dairies will be accomplished through the site plan review (SPR) process. ~~The site plan review process is a ministerial act and is not subject to CEQA analysis.~~ Dairies may be proposed only within certain specified areas of the County designated in the *Dairy Element* (see Figure 2, page DE-16), and shall only be established after the issuance of a site plan review (SPR). ~~Dairies may be expanded by the site plan review (SPR) process. All e~~Expansions of existing dairies within their calculated capacity may also be expanded processed by SPR as long as they are consistent with the standards adopted in the *Dairy Element* concerning design, operation, monitoring and reporting. ~~These SPR's are~~ Approval of an SPR is ministerial acts and exempt from individual environmental review as long as a finding of consistency with the Dairy Element can be made. These standards have undergone environmental review in the *Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)* prepared as part of the development of this *Dairy Element*. Necessary changes to the *Kings County Zoning Ordinance* are included in Appendix E.

Compliance monitoring and reporting of the dairies of Kings County will be more formal under the new system than in the past. Section V establishes a *Kings County Dairy Monitoring Office* that will monitor new and expanded existing permitted dairy operations to ensure that they operate according to their permit approval requirements. In addition, dairies established before permits were required will be more closely monitored to ensure they do not create nuisances.

The specific ~~criteria including~~ standards for design, operationals, and monitoring and reporting requirements are detailed in the policies of this Dairy Element and its Appendices.

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