



20  
YEARS OF  
IMPACT

CALIFORNIA DAIRY  
  
Quality Assurance  
PROGRAM

# CDQAP Quality Assurance Update - December 2023



## CDQAP 2023: Year in Review

**Despite 2023's significant challenges, including historic flooding and persistent supply chain issues, CDQAP and our partners made considerable headway on some stubborn issues.**

*By Dr. Michael Payne, UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine and Director, CDQAP*

**Minimizing Fees Through Certification** – Currently 786 California dairies are certified through CDQAP's [third party evaluation program](#) and receive a 50% discount in water board fees. The program continues to provide on-farm evaluations year-round for interested producers.

**Response to Historic Flooding** – In 2023 producers, particularly in the south valley, faced an unrelenting series of atmospheric rivers, followed by [flooding](#) due to snow melt. Coordinating with our regulatory & trade association partners, CDQAP's outreach on flooding lasted into the summer. Topics covered included [emergency actions](#) that could be taken in between storms, livestock [evacuations](#), a checklist for [repopulating](#) a dairy, staying in [regulatory compliance](#) during flooding, and state and federal [relief programs](#).

**Funding for Dairy Plus Program** – CDRE, CDEA and industry worked collaboratively, successfully competing for USDA's [Climate Smart Commodities](#) funding. For producers seeking support to improve manure management and reduce GHG emissions, funding continues to be available from the [Dairy Plus +](#) program.

**Dairy Stress & Wellness** – Focusing on the needs of dairy field staff, CMAB and CDQAP hosted an October [webinar](#) which featured the nation's foremost experts on farmer stress. The program included testimony from producers who successfully faced crises, a discussion on the most current advice in addressing mental fatigue, and descriptions of free online training. The webinar was recorded and is available.

**Responding to Activist Trespass** – CDQAP continued to work with national organizations and CMAB to distribute timely information to protect farms from theft and trespass. Particularly concerning in 2023 was [activist trespass](#) during historic flooding. Welcome progress, however, was demonstrated in November with the [sentencing of an animal activist](#) for conspiracy and trespass on Petaluma poultry farms.

**Responding to Drones & Other Suspicious Activity** – CDQAP partnered with the Central California Intelligence Center ([CCIC](#)) to distribute a [new flyer](#) on responding to Suspicious Drone Activity. This training augments CDQAP's [existing guidance](#) on drones and trespass. CDQAP also

partnered with CMAB to deliver training on how to submit a Suspicious Activity Report ([SAR](#)) to the CCIC. CDQAP partnered with trade organizations to file reports on incidents involving a helicopter hovering low over a dairy and a milk tanker being followed and photographed.

**Producer Cybersecurity** – CDQAP and CMAB continue to coordinate with our cybersecurity [expert workgroup](#) to protect against cyber-threats. Through this collaboration state and federal law enforcement cyber-experts were able to respond quickly to two cyber-attacks against producers this fall.

**Emergency Mortality Disposal** – CDQAP and CDRF successfully partnered in obtaining a grant to examine environmental impacts of dairy mortality composting. Ultimately, the [research](#) will pave the way to allow carcass composting during emergencies and when rendering is not available.

**New 2024 Classes for Expected Water Regs** – With [draft requirements](#) for a new General Order still pending, the exact shape of future Central Valley water regulations remains uncertain. Being pro-active with the goal of providing producers with information as soon as possible, in 2023 CDQAP organized an industry-UCD academic workgroup which formulated a draft curriculum addressing whole farm nitrogen balance and nitrogen management options. Classes will be available in early 2024.

**FBI Partners with Agriculture** – The cost of agricultural crime in California is staggering, up to half a billion dollars by some estimates. While the strongest producer allies remain local sheriff's departments, federal agencies also have an important role. In July, CDQAP hosted a blended in-person and [virtual workshop](#), introducing California farmers and ranchers to the [InfraGard](#) program, which remains the FBI's primary outreach effort for industry. After a brief background check, industry representatives can receive intelligence and training not available to the general public.

**Joint FBI – USDA Training** – Knowing how to differentiate between accidental disease introduction (like the British FMD outbreak) and a deliberate terrorist attack is important for tailoring industry and law enforcement response. That was the focus of a two-day in-person training jointly held by the FBI and USDA in March. Co-hosted by CDQAP, the [workshop](#) addressed both [foreign](#) and [domestic](#) extremist threats, [deliberate contamination](#) of the food supply, danger from farm and plant [visitors](#) and [economic espionage](#), including theft of [intellectual property](#).

All of us at CDQAP wish you a peaceful holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year!