DATE: August 31, 2009

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman
       County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer’s Weekly Report for August 31, 2009

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer to the Board of Supervisors. This report provides information on issues affecting the County and the progress of County activities.

Health Department

Following a long planning process to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of information, the Health Department’s Environmental Health Division rolled out its Restaurant and Food Facility Inspection Report website on August 14th. This website provides detailed information about the results of the most recent inspection conducted by the Department and the type and nature of violations found. Within the first week, the website registered a total of 65,515 "hits" from the public. The lowest day was Sunday, August 16th, when only 129 hits were registered. Following the Californian article on Tuesday, August 18th, a total of 38,523 hits were registered. It is the expectation that access to current information on food establishments in Monterey County will be seen as a valuable service to the public.

Cooperative Extension Program

Cucumber disease illustrates Cooperative Extension research model

The local pathology farm advisor has enlisted the cooperation of experts from around the country to address a new, aggressive strain of the downy mildew fungus. While cucumber is not a big commodity for Monterey County, commercial growers and homeowners who grow cucumber have seen their crops severely damaged by a new, aggressive strain of the downy mildew fungus. This pathogen causes infected leaves to dry up and die. Extension pathologist Steve Kike has diagnosed downy mildew as the cause of cucumber crop damage here in our region. The new strain of cucumber downy mildew is presently a significant concern nationwide, with damaging outbreaks occurring in Michigan, Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and other states.
Here in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, Koike has initiated research on this problem as it affects local growers. In addition, he has joined a research team consisting of pathologists from other states that have the downy mildew concern. He attended a national research conference in Portland at which strategies for cucumber downy mildew research were discussed. This situation illustrates how the local extension staff assists growers as new problems occur, teams with other research expertise throughout the country, and works to bring research and other resources to help local growers.

This concludes the CAO report.