DATE: June 6, 2011

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman  
County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer's Report for the week of June 6, 2011

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer.

This Week's Topics: County Public Works will return to San Jerardo armed with a state grant to improve the community’s wastewater system, County Fleet Management earns national recognition - again, and Cooperative Extension experts sponsor a field demonstration showing off cutting edge equipment.

**RMA – Public Works**
The Public Works Department of the Resource Management Agency is poised to bring more improvements to the community of San Jerardo.

In May, the State Water Resources Control Board approved the department’s $1.9 million grant application for wastewater system improvements in San Jerardo, a community located about 5 miles southeast of Salinas.

In December of last year, Public Works completed a one-year, $5 million water project for the community (which was also grant-funded), involving the installation of two miles of water transmission pipelines, erecting a 285,000 gallon water tank and constructing a potable water well.
The new project focuses on the community’s wastewater collection system, and involves design and construction of much needed improvements including a lift station, monitoring wells and treatment ponds. A start date for the work has not been announced, but the project will likely take two years to complete.

**RMA – Public Works**
Monterey County’s Fleet Management, which is a section of the Public Works Department, has another award to ‘park’ on its wall. It has been named to the Top 100 best fleets in the Country by a prestigious industry magazine.

Public Works
Director Yazdan Emrani says congratulations are in order for Fleet Manager Thomas Abear and his team for the hard work and dedication needed to earn this recognition.

Government Fleet Magazine, which serves government sector fleet management, provides a yearly Top 100 listing of government fleets around that nation. The 100 Best Fleets award program recognizes and rewards peak performing public sector fleet operations in North America. Fleet operations are evaluated on a variety of criteria including efficiency, savings and increased availability. The program also identifies and encourages performance improvement within the fleet industry.

Monterey County’s Fleet Management has been honored by this magazine for four consecutive years.

**UC Cooperative Extension**
The phrase “thin is in” certainly fit a special field day organized and sponsored by the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), Monterey County. The fieldtrip focused on demonstrating a cutting edge piece of farm field equipment called the Automated Lettuce Thinner.

On May 26th, 65 growers, shipper personnel, pest control advisors, fertilizer salespeople and other industry representatives gathered at the

Field trip participants observing plots.
USDA Spence Research Station on Old Stage Road just outside the Salinas City limits, to see the results of work done with this prototype thinner. The plots had been treated by the machine, developed by Dr. Mark Siemens from the University of Arizona, which utilizes a camera and computer to decide which lettuce plants to thin from the field.

The unwanted plants are sprayed with a chemical; the chemical can range from fertilizers to herbicides (both organic and conventional).

The machine and its performance prompted quite a bit of discussion, and in general the response from the attendees was positive. One grower expressed his interest in buying one of the machines as soon as they are commercially available.

This field trip showcases the key role the Cooperative Extension plays as an impartial party in developing and extending technology to the grower community.