



August 05, 2021

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Santa Barbara County
Attn: Holly R Owen
624 West Foster Road, Suite C
Santa Maria, California 93455

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, NOTICE OF PREPARATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE ARTIC COLD AGRICULTURAL PROCESSOR AND FREEZER PROJECT (PROJECT); SCH # 2020100453

Dear Ms. Holly R Owen:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Project Description (PD) as part of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Project. The State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (State Water Board) is responsible for issuing water supply permits administered under the Safe Drinking Water Act and may require a new or amended water supply permit for the above referenced Project. A project requires a permit if it includes water system consolidation or changes to a water supply source, storage, or treatment or a waiver or alternative from Waterworks Standards (California Code of Regulations title 22, chapter 16 et. seq.).

The proposed Project will include a new 449,248 square-foot (gross floor area) agricultural processor and freezer facility on a 40-acre project site. The processor will receive produce from local growers, as well as other regions through California and Mexico. Processing will include slicing, dicing, freezing, adding sugar and other ingredients, and making purees and puree concentrates pursuant to client requirements. Once processed, the finished product would be packaged and conveyed to cold storage for blast freezing and storage.

The freezer facility would specialize as a cold distribution warehouse. Products would be received and tracked in a computerized warehouse management system that determines their placement in cold room storage or blast freezers. The products would then be stored and shipped from their storage.

The Project will also include dry storage/warehouse space, administrative offices, shipping and receiving docks, maintenance and mechanical areas, trash and recycling areas, and parking. The Project would drill an on-site well for domestic and irrigation uses. Trucks would mainly come to the site during the May-September harvesting season to deliver the crops to the processor or freezer. Outbound trucks would occur throughout the year and deliver frozen produce to area and regional markets and national and international shipping facilities.

The State Water Board as a responsible agency under CEQA, has the following comments on the County's request for scope and content of the environmental information to include in the draft EIR.

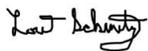
E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- The PD as part of the NOP indicates that during the non-harvest season (August to May) the Project would require 153 employees and during the harvest season (May to August) the Project would require approximately 623 employees. The PD mentions potable water use when talking about water demand and the need for a new well. And the PD also indicates the Project would include the installation of a new well to service the Project site for the associated demand.
 - Please note: Water Systems that serve at least 25 people per day at least 60 days out of the year is considered a public water system and would require a permit from the State Water Board. The EIR as a result, should include: the plans for the formation of the water system and permitting process, a description of the water system components that will be installed to provide potable water for the workers and any use of potable water in facility processes, information on the construction and operation of the components, and any environmental effects the construction and operation of the system might have. Please update your PD to include all of the Project elements.

Once the EIR is ready to be circulated for public review, please ensure that the State Water Board is notified. The State Water Board staff will review the draft EIR and provide additional comments, if necessary.

Please contact Jeff Densmore at the Santa Barbara District Office, at (805) 566-9021 or Jeff.Densmore@waterboards.ca.gov if you have any questions regarding permitting requirements.

Sincerely,



Lori Schmitz
Environmental Scientist
Division of Financial Assistance
Special Project Review Unit
1001 I Street, 16th floor
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Cc:

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse

Jeff Densmore
District Engineer
Santa Barbara District