



**COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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DATE: January 18, 2024

Equal Opportunity Employer

TO: County Clerk, State Clearinghouse, Responsible and
Trustee Agencies, and Interested Persons

FROM: Tiffany Ho, Deputy Director of Planning
Tiffany@countyofmerced.com
(209) 385-7654 ext. 4407

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT EIR FOR PUBLIC REVIEW FOR BORBA DAIRY
FARMS EXPANSION PROJECT (CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. CUP20-014, STATE
CLEARINGHOUSE NO. #2022050451)**

NOTICE is hereby given that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared by the County of Merced, State of California, and is available for public review pursuant to State of California, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for the project identified above and described below.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Borba Dairy Farms is located on 46± acres of an existing farm totaling approximately 742 acres in unincorporated Merced County. The dairy project site is located on the west side of Kelley Road and south of Turner Road in the Hilmar area of the County. The project cropland application area consists of 525± acres located on portions of four parcels, identified as Merced County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 045-080-003, 045-070-001, 045-060-009, and 045-080-040. With the addition of surrounding farmland encompassing 10 additional parcels (APN 045-060-004, 045-060-006, 045-060-011 to -013, 045-030-006, 045-030-023 to -025, 045-030-028), there would be approximately 887± acres of cropland available for wastewater and manure application with the proposed dairy expansion.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project proposes to modify and expand the existing dairy to house 4,000 milk cows, 500 dry cows, and 1,600 support stock, for a total of 6,100. Considering the existing animals as the dairy facility, the proposed expansion would represent an increase of 1,650 animals from the existing herd of 4,450 animals. The proposed project would include construction of supporting buildings and features at the dairy facility, including four new freestall barns, a new milking parlor and replacement dairy well, two new wastewater storage ponds, and an agricultural storage barn. With construction of the proposed facilities, an existing shade barn, shop, hospital milking parlor, and freestall barn would be removed. Cropped acreage associated with the expanded dairy operations would include approximately 887 acres, including the addition of 404 acres within fields 32 through 38. Construction of the proposed facilities would result in the conversion of approximately 24.2 acres of cropland.

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The Project's potentially significant environmental impacts include: Air Quality and Odors, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources, Greenhouse Gases and Energy Use, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Compatibility, and Cumulative Impacts. Mitigation measures will be recommended, where feasible, to mitigate potentially significant impacts.

Buildings and Safety Division
Robert Lindsey, Deputy

**Economic and Castle Airport
Development Division**
Mark Mimms, Deputy

**Environmental Health
Division**
Larry Fay, Interim Deputy

Planning Division
Tiffany Ho, Deputy

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EIR AVAILABILITY: The DEIR is available for review at the Merced County Community and Economic Development Department (2222 M Street, Merced, CA 95340, Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM). The EIR is also available online at: www.countyofmerced.com/414/Environmental-Documents under the “Environmental Impact Report” heading.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD: Consistent with the requirements of Section 15087 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this DEIR is being made available for public review for a period of 45 days, starting on **January 19, 2024** and ending **March 5, 2024**. During this period, the general public, agencies, and organizations may submit written comments on the content of this DEIR to Merced County. Comments received on the DEIR will be responded to in the Final EIR. Comments should be provided at the earliest possible date but must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of public review.

Any written comments on the DEIR should be sent to the Merced County Community and Economic Development Department, at the address noted above, to the attention of Tiffany Ho, Deputy Director of Planning or emailed to Tiffany.Ho@countyofmerced.com.

After the close of the public comment review period on the Draft EIR established by this notice, this matter will be set for public hearing before the Planning Commission at a date to be determined later. Notice of the date, time and place for such public hearing will be published and/or mailed as provided by law.