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Good Morning. My name is Erin Field and I am California Government Affairs Manager for Western Growers.

Western Growers is an agriculture trade association whose members grow, pack and ship ninety percent of the fresh fruits, nuts and vegetables grown in California and seventy five percent of the fresh fruits, nuts and vegetables grown in Arizona. Our members' collective production accounts for roughly half of the nation's fresh produce.

Specialty crops are a critical and growing component of the U.S. farm economy and California is the leading specialty crop producer in the country. The specialty crop industry is unsubsidized, lives and dies by the market place and depends on the implementation of cutting edge research and innovation to ensure its farmers keep farming and can compete on a global scale. A significant portion of this dynamic industry resides in the Ventura area.

The Ventura area is a large producer of strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, raspberries, herbs, spices and lemons. You will also hear from several growers, workers and industry representatives today. All of these commodities rely on the responsible use of fumigants to produce a quality product they can send off to the marketplace.

Growers in the Ventura area are already under numerous pressures such as urban encroachment, globalization, grappling at times to ensure a reliable workforce and extreme weather patterns. Although farmers desire to keep farming, there are a lot of variables on the table they must balance and manage. In addition to the marketplace, the impact of urbanization on land values helps dictate which crop a farmer chooses to grow. The high value crop choices the farmer has available to him all require the use of fumigants.

Although you will hear about how the industry has stretched itself to implement proactive actions to reduce emissions, I want to emphasize that Appendix H before the Board today is the breaking point for many Ventura farmers who will be left without the tools they need to grow a product acceptable to the retailer and consumer. This breaking point translates to 4,400 acres, 5,000 people losing their jobs and a \$135 million loss to the economy for no additional environmental benefit.

I also work on nutrition issues and the Dietary Guidelines for all Americans call for the consumption of 5 to 13 servings a day of fruits and vegetables as a cornerstone of good health. However, Americans are failing to meet the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables and eating about four of the recommended servings. We need to be cognizant that there is a relationship between the public policies we adopt and the increasing number of lost farmland that provides our state with healthy food. We are depriving ourselves of a local and regional supply of the best preventative medicine in the world – fresh fruits and vegetables.

For these reasons, the members of Western Growers respectfully request that the Air Resources Board adopt Appendix H and transfer 1.9 tons per day from motor vehicles to pesticides.