



October 3, 2025

RE: Support of Extending Moratorium on New Agricultural Well Permits in YSGA Focus Areas

To the Honorable Supervisors of Yolo County,

Community Alliance with Family Farmers thanks you for your attention to Yolo County groundwater. We appreciate the efforts of the County, Board of Supervisors, and Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency to work together to ensure the long-term stewardship of our groundwater resources.

We are writing in support of the extension of the moratorium on the approval of new agricultural water well permits in the YSGA Focus Areas. We applaud the efforts of the county to identify issues related to groundwater permitting, and believe that extending the moratorium will provide sufficient time to address these issues.

Opposition to extending the moratorium will likely focus on the impact to current well applicants or those anticipating well related needs in the future. We take these concerns seriously and were relieved to hear in the County's presentation that the eleven outstanding well applications were long waiting on responses from applicants rather than any holdups within the county. We hear the concerns of farmers worried about the impact on their ability to secure financing, due to the increasing tendency of agricultural lenders to require two sources of water. CAFF strongly supports the exception to the moratorium for existing operations in emergency situations. Indeed emergency situations of wells going dry is precisely our concern, and what we hope the extended moratorium can better address.

For those interested in expanding their operations in the Focus Areas in a way that would require a new well, we believe the work completed during an extended moratorium would support their long-term success. The last thing we want to see is wells going in that are at risk of going dry or that lead to groundwater issues for their neighbors. We know that we share this goal with all agricultural stakeholders in this region, which is why we support extending the moratorium and creating the Working Group to ensure outstanding issues are resolved.

If the moratorium is not extended to answer the outstanding questions that originally prompted the moratorium, we would urge the County to work with the YSGA to consider well mitigation plans for those who lose their groundwater from increased pumping. If there are no groundwater issues, then a mitigation program in place would at minimum ease the concerns of those who are lowering their pumps and calling for changes in the permitting process.



Thank you very much for your consideration. The moratorium and subsequent study of these issues is a service to Yolo County's family farmers, to the communities in the Focus Areas, and to all of us who care about our precious water resources.

Sincerely,

Catherine Van Dyke
Deputy Director of Water Policy, Community Alliance with Family Farmers