



State Water Board releases Revised Draft Dairy Order

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Officer

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SACRAMENTO – Advancing California’s nation-leading approach to protecting water sources from agricultural practices, the State Water Resources Control Board today released a Revised Draft Dairy Order that aims to safeguard groundwater quality from milk cow dairy manure.

The [revised draft order](#) requires dairies to conduct stricter nitrogen monitoring, ensure dairy manure retention ponds are not leaking at rates that affect groundwater and provide alternative drinking water supplies for households on nitrate-affected wells. The revised draft order also develops new requirements that will progressively restrict dairies’ application of manure to dairy croplands and prevent unsafe concentrations of nitrate in groundwater.

California produces more milk than any other state and the vast majority of the state’s dairy farms are in the Central Valley. The overapplication of dairy manure to dairy croplands has been shown to harm drinking water supplies in the Central Valley, including communities that rely on groundwater as a drinking water source. The revised draft order seeks to encourage and facilitate the large-scale export of treated dairy manure from dairies to other agricultural lands, where it can be applied at rates that both fertilize crops and protect groundwater.

The revised draft order incorporates some of the public comments that were received on a previous draft version that the State Water Board released in October 2024. The board is holding a public workshop on July 8 and is accepting written comments from the public until July 30. The five-member board may consider adopting the draft order during a September public meeting.

You can find more information on the dairy order [program page](#).