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County of El Dorado Clerk of the Board <edc.cob@edcgov.us>

### Sheepherder Compensation - Letter to Governor Newsom

2 messages

Liz Simms <LSimms@kscsacramento.com> Thu, Jun 3, 2021 at 11:25 AM  
 To: "bosone@edcgov.us" <bosone@edcgov.us>, "bostwo@edcgov.us" <bostwo@edcgov.us>, "bosthree@edcgov.us" <bosthree@edcgov.us>, "bosfour@edcgov.us" <bosfour@edcgov.us>, "bosfive@edcgov.us" <bosfive@edcgov.us>  
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The attached is provided for your information.

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 DATE 6/3/2021  
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K.S.C

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**Sheepherder Compensation Data--May 2021 Letter.pdf**  
 2002K

County of El Dorado Clerk of the Board <edc.cob@edcgov.us>  
 To: Donald Ashton <don.ashton@edcgov.us>

Thu, Jun 3, 2021 at 12:04 PM

Fyi

Office of the Clerk of the Board

6/3/2021

Edcgov.us Mail - Shepherdher Compensation - Letter to Governor Newsom

El Dorado County  
330 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667  
530-621-5390

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[Quoted text hidden]

 **Shepherdher Compensation Data--May 2021 Letter.pdf**  
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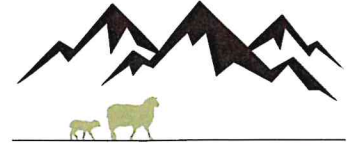
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WESTERN RANGE ASSOCIATION

international shepherd resource

AFRICAN-AMERICAN



FARMERS OF CALIFORNIA



FARM BUREAU



American Sheep Industry Association  
Sheepusa.org



Resolutions:

- Fresno County Board of Supervisors, No. 22
- Kings County Board of Supervisors, No. 21-027
- Madera County Board of Supervisors, No. 2021-042
- Merced County Board of Supervisors, No. 2021-27
- Tulare County Board of Supervisors, No. 2021-0277

Letters in Support:

- Kern County Board of Supervisors (5/11/21)
- Mariposa County Board of Supervisors (5/25/21)
- Tulare County Board of Supervisors (4/6/21)



# California Sheep and Goat Industry

(Future in Jeopardy)

June 1, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Governor:

While ringing-in the New Year is usually cause for celebration, this upcoming January 1, 2022, may signal the end of operations for many California sheep and goat producer families and the loss of jobs for their valued, indispensable employees.

New overtime pay requirements for farms and ranches with 25 or fewer employees will take effect in 2022 with shepherd compensation increasing by over 50 percent which is not economically feasible for most sheep and goat family operations. California shepherders are already the highest paid in the United States and this level of compensation will exceed neighboring sheep/goat producing states by 40-80 percent.

For decades, shepherders have been compensated in accordance with a specific set of regulations designed to reflect the unique, remote nature of their work. The new law failed to consider this and now the industry faces a catastrophic situation.

Recently the industry was surveyed about actions producers are taking to survive this new law. The survey results are alarming and indicate the following.

- **One-third of respondents will completely cease operations.**
- **Over three-quarters of respondents will reduce their herd size; more than half in almost all instances. Some are already downsizing.**
- **At least 175 employees will lose their jobs or receive reduced wages due to operational changes.**
- **Nearly 250,000 animals (50% of the industry) will be sold, slaughtered or leave the state.**

This data means more than lost jobs and severe negative impact on local economies; it also means significant loss of grazing which has significant environmental benefits by reducing excessive vegetative fuel loads which greatly contribute to devastating wildfires in both urban and rural areas. Never in California's history have we needed these four-legged firefighters more than we do now.

Fortunately, these losses are preventable! Governor, we are asking you to exercise your authority to provide administrative relief in accordance with a 2015 U.S. Department of Labor action which set the estimated hours worked by shepherders at

48 hours per week. Further, several county boards of supervisors have already adopted resolutions asking you to take such action with more counties expected to do the same in the next few weeks. This will bring the level of sheepherder compensation back into reality and stop the downward economic spiral of the industry.

We cannot wait until the end of the year to solve this crisis; producers are making herd dispersal decisions now! Once the industry is gone, it will not come back. We need you to take this action immediately.

Sincerely,

California Wool Growers Association  
California Farm Bureau  
Fire Safe Council of San Diego County  
Fresno County Farm Bureau  
Nisei Farmers League  
San Diego County Farm Bureau  
Resource Conservation District of Greater  
San Diego County  
Sonoma County Farm Bureau  
Fire Safe Marin  
California Sheep Commission  
Mendocino County Farm Bureau  
Madera County Farm Bureau

Central Valley Latino Mayors and  
Elected Officials Coalition  
African-American Farmers of California  
Merced County Farm Bureau  
Western Range Association  
Colusa Farm Bureau  
Sacramento County Farm Bureau  
American Sheep Industry Association  
San Benito County Farm Bureau  
National Lamb Feeders Association  
Tulare County Farm Bureau  
Kings County Farm Bureau

cc: Maria Gallegos Herrera, Central Valley  
Deputy Regional Director, External Affairs,  
Governor's Office

Senator Toni Atkins  
Senator Andreas Borgeas  
Senator Anna Caballero  
Senator Brian Dahle  
Senator Bill Dodd  
Senator Susan Eggman  
Senator Shannon Grove

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