

1 PROCLAMATION OF EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY  
2 BY THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES  
3 COUNTY OF FRESNO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
4

5 IN THE MATTER OF  
6 PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL  
7 EMERGENCY DUE TO THE MIGRATION  
8 OF THE BEET LEAFHOPPER IN FRESNO  
9 COUNTY

PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

10 WHEREAS, the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code, section 8630,  
11 *et. seq.*) establishes procedures for proclaiming emergencies and for responding promptly to  
12 the needs that arise during emergencies; and

13 WHEREAS, under section 2.44.050 of the Fresno County Ordinance Code, the County  
14 Administrative Officer is authorized as the Director of Emergency Services of the County; and

15 WHEREAS, section 2.44.060 of the Fresno County Ordinance Code and section 8630  
16 of the Government Code empower the County Administrative Officer acting as the Director of  
17 Emergency Services of the County to proclaim the existence of a local emergency when the  
18 County is affected by, or likely to be affected by, a public calamity and the Board of  
19 Supervisors is not in session; and

20 WHEREAS, the Director of Emergency Services does hereby find and declare that a  
21 disaster, which can severely impair public security of an important food product, is created by  
22 conditions of extreme peril to the processing and fresh tomato crop and is imminent within  
23 Fresno County, due to the beet leafhopper (BLH), the vector of beet curly top virus (BCTV), a  
24 disease known to cause serious damage to tomato crops. California is the largest producer of  
25 tomatoes in the United States. Fresno County is a top producer of processing tomatoes and a  
26 significant producer of fresh tomatoes; and

27 WHEREAS, BCTV stunts young plants and can result in complete loss of crops in  
28 heavily infected fields. About 50% of the total fresh market and processing tomato acreage in

1 the San Joaquin Valley is at risk of infection in years when insect and virus pressure are high;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, processing tomatoes are annually grown in California on approximately  
4 228,000 acres, including 64,400 acres in Fresno County in 2024, representing a production  
5 value of \$429,400,000; and

6 WHEREAS, commercial tomato growers heavily rely on neonicotinoids to combat the  
7 BLH and the BCTV, as no effective alternatives exist. Without effective control of the BLH,  
8 damage to affected tomato crops in Fresno County could be as high as 70% to 90%; and

9 WHEREAS, the full scope of damage of the BLH in Fresno County cannot reasonably  
10 be determined at this time but can be mitigated in part if immediate action is taken on an  
11 emergency basis, as stated below; and

12 WHEREAS, the use of neonicotinoids on certain crops is restricted under Title 3,  
13 California Code of Regulations, section 6990, effective January 1, 2024, an exemption in  
14 section 6990(c)(2) allows their application during a local emergency declared under  
15 Government Code, section 8630. Under this exemption, commercial tomato growers must  
16 obtain written recommendations from a licensed pest control advisor and retain records of the  
17 application for at least two years; and

18 WHEREAS, the Fresno County Director of Emergency Services, after consulting with  
19 the Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner, has determined that the BLH is imminent; and

20 WHEREAS, on April 1, 2026, the Fresno County Office of Emergency Services was  
21 informed of the emergency.

22 NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that a local emergency now exists  
23 concerning the threat of tomato crop failure as a result of the imminent infestation of the BLH  
24 in Fresno County; and

25 IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that during the existence of said  
26 local emergency, the powers, functions, and duties for the emergency organization of this  
27 County shall be those prescribed by state law, ordinances and resolutions of this County, and

1 by the Fresno County Operational Area Master Emergency Services Plan, as approved by the  
2 Board; and

3 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the Director of Emergency Services shall take appropriate  
4 steps to notify the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services of this Proclamation  
5 and of the steps taken hereunder to address this local emergency; and

6 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED this Proclamation of Local Emergency is in effect for sixty  
7 (60) days from the date of Board ratification, if given, after which the need for the local  
8 emergency herein shall be reviewed by the County Administrative Officer, acting as the  
9 Director of Emergency Services, and the Board to determine whether to continue the local  
10 emergency herein or to terminate it; and

11 CEQA EXEMPTION: this Proclamation of Local Emergency and the application of  
12 neonicotinoid pesticides hereunder are hereby declared to be exempt from the provisions of  
13 the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the provisions of the CEQA  
14 Guidelines, section 15269, which provides an exemption for emergency projects.

15 This Proclamation of Local Emergency is proclaimed in the County of Fresno, State of  
16 California, on the 1st day of April, 2026, to-wit:

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19 Paul Nerland  
20 County Administrative Officer /  
21 Director of Emergency Services  
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