

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Jim Venable

SUBMITTAL DATE: October 30, 2003

SUBJECT: Resolution to request reinstatement of State funding for local fire ant control programs.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board join with me in adopting the attached Resolution, to be sent to the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) requesting that the State reassess the impacts to public safety and the Agriculture Industry by it's suspension of funding for the Red Imported Fire Ant control programs.

BACKGROUND: On October 19, 2003, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), because of budget reductions, terminated funding for the Red Import Fire Ant (RIFA) Eradication Program in Riverside County, as well as throughout Southern California.

RIFA is a devastating pest of the environment, outdoor living, and agriculture. It is a serious health problem and causes havoc with underground utilities. Pesticide use in infested areas will increase dramatically as homeowners and parks departments are forced to fight a continuous control effort to keep their grounds safe for use.

If allowed to move unchecked, RIFA will eventually inhabit nearly all of Riverside County, as well as much of the State. It currently has a foothold in parts of Los Angeles County, all of Orange County and parts of Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. The huge and vigorous ornamental horticulture industry in Southern California has already been severely impacted by RIFA, and they will suffer more ongoing economic losses if we give up our efforts.

Since its discovery in Orange County several years ago, CDFA and county agricultural commissioners have waged war against the establishment of RIFA in Southern California. The successful efforts to limit its movement have given hope to the scientific experts that RIFA can be eradicated from California if we are given the necessary resources. By not continuing the fight, it will become a permanent resident in our State. We will then be left with the longterm problems and negative financial effects felt by states such as Texas.

We feel it is very important that this program, which will potentially impact the entire State of California, should receive financial support in affected counties by reinstatement of funding to those programs.

Supervisor Jim Venable

JV:vc

OCT 30 2003
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
REGISTERED MAIL/POST OFFICE

RESOLUTION #2003-516
Request to Reinstate Funding for the Eradication of the Red Import Fire Ant

WHEREAS, the Red Imported Fire Ant is a devastating pest of the environment, outdoor living, and agriculture and a serious health problem; and

WHEREAS, since October, 1999, and October, 2003, the number of Red Imported Fire Ant sites has increased from 16 sites in 2 communities of Western Riverside County to the identification of 772 sites in 13 communities; and

WHEREAS, currently known locations for the Red Imported Fire Ant in Riverside County include 663 residential sites, 36 business sites, 62 public areas including schools, parks, and churches, and 11 agricultural sites; and

WHEREAS, the potential yearly economic effects of the Red Imported Fire Ant to the State of California could exceed \$500 Million and the effects to the County of Riverside could exceed \$40 based on 2000 Census data;

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside have joined together this 4th day of November, 2003, to request the California Department of Food and Agriculture reinstate funding for the control and eradication of the Red Imported Fire Ant.

To be mailed to:

Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture
Mr. William J. Lyons Jr.
1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814