



# CDQAP Quality Assurance Update - October 2020

## Animal Rights Activists Increasingly Aggressive, Dangerous

By Dr. Michael Payne, UC Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine and Director, CDQAP

For producers who have not experienced animal activism directly, it can be difficult to fully understand the scope of illegal activities. Animal rights activists have turned to impersonating federal employees and job applicants, theft, and even violence. Here's a summary of recent activist incidents and some practices you can use to protect your family and farm.

### Impersonating Government Employees

In Wasco, California two activists flying a drone near a dairy wore vests indicating they were from the Federal Aviation Administration, the FAA. In Wisconsin, an activist identified herself to dairy workers as a USDA employee conducting a welfare audit. In both Indiana and Oklahoma, activists gained entry to poultry farms claiming to be from the Census Bureau. It's worth noting that impersonating a federal employee is a federal crime punishable by up to \$10,000 in fines and five years' imprisonment.

### Impersonating Allied Industry

Activists have not limited themselves to impersonating federal employees. In April of this year an activist posing as a technician entered a Central Valley pork processing plant, concealing a camera to record plant activities. Activists have requested producer farm tours and ride-alongs with large animal veterinarians as a "learning experience." At least one activist boasted online of becoming a member of a County Farm Bureau in order to pass on farmer security information to her group.

### Impersonating Job Applicants

The most common scam California producers have been subject to has been activists posing as potential employees. In 2018, one activist discussed employment with several San Joaquin Valley producers, switching license plates in between stops. The fraudulent trespass became so frequent, the Fresno Sheriff's Department put out an all-state advisory to law enforcement. In September of this year a PETA activist, who had previously recorded undercover video at an Indiana duck farm, made employment inquiries at more than a dozen North Bay and Ferndale dairies.

### "Open Rescue" / Theft

Perhaps the practice with the highest consequence for activists has been the publicized theft of livestock and poultry from farms and processing plants. Activists define "open rescue" as "directly liberating animals from places where they are being exploited and spreading the act publicly." In October 2018, three activists were arrested for felony grand theft for taking a calf from an Oakdale dairy. The same year, during the last of a series of poultry plant demonstrations in Sonoma County, 68 of some 500 protesters were arrested and charged with felony conspiracy and burglary. The

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## Virtual California Dairy Sustainability Summit: Nov 5-6



California Dairy Sustainability Summit

Virtual Event  
November 5-6, 2020

[www.cadairysummit.com](http://www.cadairysummit.com)

California's dairy producers are leaders in developing the most sustainable practices. Meeting ever-tightening environmental standards can also be one of their greatest challenges. The virtual California Dairy Sustainability Summit will showcase dairy families' achievements, while helping them meet the challenges ahead. Session highlights include valuable panel discussions on SGMA, methane-reduction strategies, local drinking water efforts, manure management technologies, and a conversation among some of the nation's top dairy executives. The online, educational event will take place this November 5-6. Dairy farmer registration is \$25. Many organizations are sponsoring their farmer members' participation, so ask your field rep if you're interested. See the full agenda, and sign up today at [www.cadairysummit.com](http://www.cadairysummit.com).

## Fall is in the Air

By Deanne Meyer, Ph.D., Livestock Waste Management Specialist Dept. of Animal Science, UC Davis and UC ANR

Mornings are cooler. Solid manure is hauled daily. Fall is here. It's that time of year to remember all of the areas that need winterizing on the dairy.

Sample solid manures that are land applied and manifested. Sample liquid manure as it's applied to fields. These results are important to prevent Notices of Violation either during an inspection or when your Annual Report is reviewed.

Irrigate where and when appropriate. Using lagoon nutrients for the winter crop is important. These help the crop grow and the irrigation makes storage capacity in the lagoon. Check your nutrient budgets to see when irrigations are appropriate. Lagoon

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## Animal Rights Activists Increasingly Aggressive, Dangerous (continued)

leadership of the activist group involved also faces numerous felony charges in multiple states for similar incidents.

### Acts of Violence

The most deeply disturbing activist incidents relate to violence against either property or farmers. In May, a North Coast producer reported that a male activist was recording their facility with a camera and drone. When a female associate of the dairy approached to take photos of him and his vehicle, he became angry, putting her in a choke hold and trying to damage her smart phone. In June of last year, an Ohio veterinarian reported that he was called out to a local vegan sanctuary to help with rescued livestock. Noticing a severe shimmy on his way home, the vet drove directly to his mechanic who reported that some lug screws had been cut with bolt cutters and his ABS wiring had been tampered with.

### What Can You Do?

**Report Activist Activities** – The first action during any activist incident is to call 911, asking for response from the police or sheriff. CDQAP’s webpage [Dealing with Trespass and Drones on California Dairies](#) provides comprehensive information on how to most effectively assist law enforcement. It’s also critical to report incidents to your processor and/or trade organization. This information is shared within the industry as well as county Sherriff’s offices, so producers throughout the state can be alerted to developing threats.

**Check Credentials & References** – During the COVID pandemic almost all legitimate government agencies will arrange farm visits in advance. The identification credentials of any unfamiliar or unexpected government employee should be scrutinized, photographed, and confirmed by phone call to the agency’s main office. Activists making false inquiries about employment is a growing problem. A CDQAP newsletter article [Vigilance in Your Hiring Process](#) highlights important precautions to identify an activist intent on collecting undercover video recordings.

**Emphasize Employee Training** – Train your employees to contact local law enforcement or the farm manager at the first sign of activist activity. Keep employees current with annual National Dairy FARM Program training. Short [dairy stockmanship videos](#) are available online in English and Spanish. The FARM standards emphasize that the only movement aids that should routinely be available to employees are lightweight [paddles or flags](#).

## Fall is in the Air (continued)

water irrigations outside of the nutrient budget have resulted in Notices of Violation. Check lagoons for structural integrity and sufficient storage capacity. Fall is the time to manage lagoon solids if needed.

Clean gutters and prepare to divert roof runoff. Be sure flex hose is functional to divert roof runoff from storage lagoons. This helps with lagoon capacity over winter.

Scrape corrals. Mound resting areas for winter. Haul out manure solids. Grade corrals and fill in holes. For coastal dairies, seed corrals to protect soil from winter rains. Carefully analyze animal lots to be sure that when rains come, the runoff can be directed and then pumped or transferred to the dairy pond. Winterize the feed center. Be sure drains are open and ready for winter runoff. Manage dried manure and/or bedding from calves or special needs animals. Remove or relocate solids that can cause puddling of rain. Now is the window of opportunity to spread.

Inspect corrals today. Take 17 minutes to drive around the dairy. Pay special attention to:

- fencing and posts,
- fenceline manure,
- stanchions/locking gates (if present),
- areas where manure is collected,
- watering troughs,
- upslope areas where rain water may runoff and go through corrals,
- any area where lot runoff should be collected to be sure it’s open and not plugged by other materials, and grade, slope and low spots in open lots.



Review your facilities Operation and Maintenance Plan. It contains your dairy’s specific list of things to remember to do before winter arrives. Remember that all manure leaving the production facility needs to be either manifested off farm, or records associated with what and how much goes to each field need to be maintained. Consult Tab 6 of your Water Quality Regulatory Binder for [North Coast](#), [San Francisco Bay](#) or [Central Valley](#) regions, should you need record keeping templates.