

Agriculture Element Executive Summary

This general plan should be about what is intended, allowed and encouraged, not about anticipated limits. The Refinement Group deleted policies that appeared to unnecessarily limit county options and/or appeared to give preference to certain programs or unintentionally omit viable alternatives. Policies that limit agriculture's value and productivity, along with those policies which appeared to give priority to one crop or farm commodity, were deleted or modified. Policies that were redundant and addressed in other Elements were also deleted.

Key policy concepts recommended by the Refinement Group in the Agriculture Element include the following:

- The list of "Routine and Ongoing Agricultural Activities" was moved from ERME and expanded to be included in the Agriculture Element. As it appeared in the draft GPU, its applicability would have been limited solely to the Environmental Resource Management Element and, even there, only under limited conditions.
- Deleted the policy proposing an Agricultural Planning Commission and recommended the development of a Representative Planning Commission per RG Policy AD 1.2.
- Refinements to agricultural buffer policies define the purpose and nature of buffers and clarify the circumstances of their application.
- Residential Clustering and a Transfer of Development Rights program were developed within the Land Use Element and removed from the Agriculture Element.
- Recommend that a county assign at least one Planner designated to process all applications for agricultural use or agricultural activities.
- The "Land Conservation Strategy" was modified to concentrate on uses within urbanizing areas, consistent with Guiding Objective #3 and Guiding Objective #7.
- General Plan policies should not give preference to types of crops and/or farm commodities.

Revised policies to accommodate future agricultural opportunities such as agricultural tourism and winery corridor.