



Aug. 4, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom

Governor, State of California

State Capitol

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom-

Our organizations represent over 60,000 farmers and ranchers in California who grow and produce the food that feeds our state, our nation and people around the world. Agriculture makes up an important part of our state economy and plays a particularly critical role in rural communities across the state. During the COVID-19 pandemic, California's agricultural community and our ancillary food and beverage processors became designated as essential critical infrastructure to ensure that Californians and those beyond still had the availability to purchase and consume the safest agricultural commodities in the world.

We are writing to ask you to join us in our opposition to Proposition 15, the "split roll" property tax measure on the November ballot, because it exposes California's farms and ranches to steep property tax hikes that will hurt family farmers and ranchers and drive up food costs for consumers.

Prop. 15 exempts agricultural land from reassessment and the inevitable higher taxes which follow, but it failed to exempt agricultural fixtures and improvements, which include a wide range of agricultural property including:

- Fruit trees
- Nut Trees
- Vineyards
- Irrigation systems
- Fences
- Dairies
- Wineries
- Barns
- Feedlots
- Processing facilities

Prop. 15 doesn't just increase property taxes on agriculture – it exposes critical support industries to property tax increases as well, like farm equipment dealers, transportation companies, warehouses and our food processors.

Every step in the process of producing food and getting it to your neighborhood grocery store or restaurant – planting, irrigating, harvesting, processing, transporting, storing – is exposed to higher property taxes under this poorly timed and flawed measure.

In other words, **Prop. 15 exposes much of California's food supply to steep property tax increases.**

The apples in our children's lunch, the orange wedges we have for breakfast, the cheese and avocado on our sandwich at lunch, the almonds we snack on and the wine we enjoy after a hard day's work – nearly all the food and drink we consume – is exposed to higher taxes by Prop. 15.

Our farmers and ranchers are already struggling with the impacts of COVID-19. Our state's consumers are already struggling with the high costs of living here. Hiking food taxes will hurt our state's farmers and ranchers and add a new cost burden to California families.

For these reasons, we ask that you consider joining us in opposition to Prop. 15. In the coming weeks and months, we will be educating our members and the general public about our concerns about Prop. 15 and how it will mean higher food costs for California families.

Respectfully,



Jamie Johansson, President
California Farm Bureau



Emily Rooney, President
Ag Council of California



Dave Puglia, President and CEO
Western Growers