

News briefs from California's Central Coast

Associated Press
September 26, 2006

The San Diego
Union-Tribune.
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MOSS LANDING – Resident complaints led the Monterey County agricultural commissioner's office to review a permit to use the fumigant methyl bromide on a strawberry field.

The fumigant had been scheduled to be applied for the first time Tuesday on a 26-acre San Juan Berry Farms field next to a development of about 40 homes. The field was used previously for artichokes and methyl bromide wasn't used.

Agricultural commission officials decided to review the permit and application of the fumigant was delayed because of the level of concern raised by residents.

Marilyn Lynds, who home schools her 10-year-old daughter, said methyl bromide use "concerns my house, my daughter, my daughter's friends."

San Juan Berry Farms distributed fliers in June alerting homeowners to the upcoming application. The fumigant, injected into soil covered with plastic sheeting, is necessary to prevent disease to strawberry plants.

Methyl bromide is being phased out worldwide because of its role in ozone depletion. Because of health concerns, California rules are more stringent than federal regulations.

California is the only state that requires farmers to notify local residents when pesticides are going to be applied, state Department of Pesticide Regulation spokesman Glenn Brank said.

Monterey
Herald.com
MONTEREY COUNTY'S HOME PAGE

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MOSS LANDING

Farmer alters plan to fumigate field

Sat, Sep. 30, 2006

The farmer who proposed to plant strawberries and apply methyl bromide on a 40-acre parcel near a Moss Landing neighborhood has withdrawn his application.

Officials from the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office delivered letters to residents in Moss Landing Heights on Friday notifying neighbors about the news.

The letter said Javier Manriquez of San Juan Berry Farms is modifying his proposal and plans to plant strawberries on another part of the field, farther from the neighborhood.

Eric Lauritzen, agricultural commissioner, told residents that the revised plans for fumigation "no longer (statutorily) require notifications to the resident.... It is our intention to keep your community informed of the fumigations that Mr. Manriquez plans to make."

Concerned residents raised questions about the original plan during an informational meeting held in Moss Landing by the commissioner's office Wednesday.