

**SUPPLEMENTAL
CONDITIONAL RICE STRAW BURNING PERMIT PROGRAM
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

- 1. Once I have been issued a conditional rice straw burn permit, if I cannot burn a permitted field, can I substitute another field provided that it was inspected and met the criteria for the presence of significant disease?**

The local agricultural commissioner and air pollution control officer must approve any requests. The approval may include a verification inspection by the agricultural commissioner. Requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

- 2. I may not have time to deal with this program until after harvest. Can I still get a conditional rice straw burn permit?**

The inspection methods dictate that the inspections are performed prior to harvest. This includes the verification inspections by the agricultural commissioner, if required. If a grower waits until after harvest the agricultural commissioner may not approve the Application for Determination of Terms and Conditions for Rice Straw Burning and the grower will not be issued a burn permit.

- 3. Can I harvest my fields immediately after conducting the inspections?**

The agricultural commissioner may need to perform a verification inspection. This may not be possible if the field has been harvested. Consequently, the Application for Determination of Terms and Conditions may not be approved. The fields would not be eligible for a burning permit. Growers are encouraged to verify that their Application for Determination of Terms and Conditions is approved prior to harvest.

- 4. Can my neighbor and I go together and get one conditional rice straw burn permit?**

Growers who are not otherwise partners in the growing of rice cannot apply for a single burning permit as this constitutes the trading of burn acres, which is not allowed under state law.

- 5. I grow rice in several counties. Can I specify which county I want to burn my 25% eligible burn acreage?**

The local agricultural commissioner and air pollution control officer must approve any requests. The approval may include a verification inspection by the agricultural commissioner. Requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

- 6. I grow 300 acres in Butte County and 300 acres in Colusa County. Can I burn all 600 acres as part of the 400-acre exemption if they are all inspected and found to have significant disease present?**

Although each county administers the program separately, the grower is eligible to burn all acreage only when planted acreage *basinwide* is below 400 acres.

- 7. I own 600 acres but I'm only farming 400 acres this year. Can I burn all 400 acres if they are inspected and found to have significant disease present?**

Yes.

- 8. I have a fallow field I did not plant this year. Can I burn the weeds?**

Yes. The local district can issue a standard burn permit for this purpose. Inspections are not required.

- 9. I am a tenant farmer and I may not farm the same fields from year to year. Does the 400-acre allowance apply to the grower or to the fields after they are burned? For example, will I be eligible to burn acreage that was burned in entirety under the 400-acre allowance by the previous tenant?**

No. Once acreage is burned under the 400-acre allowance it may not be certified for disease and permitted for burning until after the fourth grow season following the entire acreage disease certification and subsequent burning regardless of ownership.

- 10. If I grow 400 acres this year and get to burn it all, and next year I grow 600 acres, what will I be eligible to burn next year?**

The initial 400 acres of rice fields are not eligible to be burned until after the fourth grow season following burning. The additional 200 acres will be eligible for certification of disease presence and issuance of a burn permit for not more than 25 percent of the 'new acreage.' The 'new acreage' will not be eligible for the 400-acre allowance because the grower farms 600 acres. The "new acreage" eligible would be $(0.25)(600-400) = 50$ acres.

- 11. If I grow 400 acres and get a conditional rice straw burning permit for all of it, but don't get to burn it all this year, will the acreage I didn't get to burn be eligible to burn next year?**

Yes.

- 12. If I bail straw on my fields will I still be able to 'discount' the acres used because of a reduction in rice straw fuel on the field?**

The burn plan allows for the 'discounting' of acres when a field has been bailed. The grower will need to place a request to the Ag Commissioner to certify the appropriate planted acreage if they intend on bailing their fields to receive an acreage discount and burn more bailed fields.

- 13. If my acres are discounted 75 percent for each field bailed and burned then I should be able to burn 100 percent of my planted acreage assuming I have proven disease in all planted acreage.**

Yes

14. I certified my field for disease and was able to burn the field this year. Can I use that inspection report to obtain a Conditional Rice Straw Burning Permit next year or do I have to re-inspect and certify the field before next year's harvest?

Once a field has been burned, re-burning the field in any subsequent year will require a new Application for Terms and Conditions and inspection report be submitted and approved by the Agricultural Commissioner.

15. I am a new tenant farmer and want to burn in this Spring. The previous tenant obtained a Conditional Rice Straw Burning Permit but was not able to burn. What do I have to do to burn this Spring?

1. Complete an Application for Terms and Conditions and attach the previous tenant's inspection reports for the fields to be certified (note: the inspections must have been conducted within the last 2 years and the field must not have been burned since the field obtained certification of significant disease presence).
2. Forward the Application to the local Agricultural Commissioner for approval;
3. If approved, forward the Application and other required forms to the local Air Pollution Control Officer and obtain a Conditional Rice Straw Burning Permit; and,
4. Obtain a burn authorization from the local District prior to burning.

Note: A Conditional Rice Straw Burning Permit will be issued provided that burning the acreage complies with the phasedown requirements (e.g. the total acreage to be burned does not exceed 25% of the growers planted acreage as specified in State Regulation).