



February 2026 CEO Report – Department of Agriculture / Weights & Measures (AWM)

The early spring agricultural season in Mendocino County is a crucial and busy time for farmers and gardeners to plant a wide variety of crops, including root vegetables and herbs that can withstand cold nighttime temperatures. As the soil warms and rainfall decreases, it becomes ideal for planting. Spring also allows for the initial fertilization of plants, promoting robust growth, pruning, and soil preparation.

As we transition into spring, residents can look forward to renewing permits and licenses and to workshops on topics such as cannabis, soil health, cover crop planting for erosion control, and frost monitoring in vineyards. These efforts foster connections with local farms while emphasizing conservation and environmental stewardship.

In alignment with this seasonal renewal, our Certified Farmers Markets play a pivotal role in supporting local producers and enhancing food security. We are proud to highlight the tremendous value of our Certified Farmers Markets and the essential role our department plays in supporting them. Certified Farmers Markets are a cornerstone of our local food system and rural economy. They connect consumers directly with the farmers who grow our fresh produce, fruits, vegetables, nuts, eggs, flowers, and more, right here in Mendocino County. Markets in places like Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Laytonville, Mendocino, Redwood Valley, Willits, Hopland, and others bring vibrant community gatherings, boost farm incomes through direct sales, promote healthy eating, and preserve our agricultural heritage. They support small-scale growers, reduce food miles, and provide residents with access to the freshest, locally produced food.

For example, the Certified Farmers Markets in Fort Bragg, Ukiah, Laytonville, and Willits continue to thrive year-round. Shoppers can build family meals around an incredible bounty, including fruits like tomatoes, melons, berries, apples, and plums; vegetables such as carrots, eggplant, peppers, cucumbers, squash, cauliflower, potatoes, beets, radishes, and onions; greens like microgreens, collards, kale, lettuce, salad mixes, and fresh herbs; mushrooms; meats including beef, pork, lamb, chicken, and eggs; specialty items like kimchi, sauerkraut, wine, kombucha, fresh salsa, infused oils and vinegars, spice mixes, tea, coffee, jams, and olives; garlic (dried, marinated, and fresh); and baked goods from seven unique bakeries (two gluten-free), featuring pies, cookies, bread, pizza dough, sourdough loaves, macarons, caramel corn, berry hand pies, maple cake, focaccia, brownies, challah, pastries, croissants, and pretzels. Flowers (stems, bouquets, and dried), knife sharpening, and ready-to-eat hot foods like tamales. Even in midwinter, the market offers root crops, greens, microgreens, walnuts, fermented foods and drinks, infused olive oils and balsamic, eggs, beef, lamb, pork, and occasional chicken. It's an essential local grocer with a short supply chain, powered 100% by the community, offering a perfect way to support local farmers and small businesses.

Importantly, all markets managed by the Mendocino County Farmers' Market Association (MCFARM) accept EBT and WIC coupons. They offer an EBT Market Match Program that doubles the spending power of EBT/CalFresh recipients, redirecting subsidies from industrial food sources to local farmers.

This makes fresh produce more affordable for low-income community members. For instance, if a customer spends \$15 in EBT funds at the market's EBT machine (which works like a debit or credit card processor), they receive an extra \$15 (up to a \$30 match per visit) in tokens to spend on fruits and vegetables.

This department works closely with these markets in accordance with California Department of Food and Agriculture regulations. We issue Certified Producer Certificates (CPCs) to farmers after verifying their growing sites and confirming that the products sold are their own production—this helps maintain integrity and prevent misrepresentation. We also register and certify the markets themselves annually, conduct on-site inspections to confirm compliance, and enforce direct marketing rules to protect both producers and consumers. We ensure that scales, measuring devices, and packaging used at markets are accurate, fair, and sealed—building trust in every transaction. These inspections verify that produce and other agricultural products are grown or produced by the seller, upholding the Direct Marketing regulations established in 1976. This supports local foodsheds and smaller farmers who might otherwise struggle to compete with larger operations due to standard packaging and shipping requirements. We greatly value our small producer communities, both inland and coastal, and support them by issuing CPCs and market certificates. Food security is a critical community need, and we are committed to serving our stakeholders.

In short, Certified Farmers Markets are vital for economic vitality, food security, and community connection in Mendocino County. Our department is dedicated to facilitating this direct-from-farm experience while upholding the highest standards of fairness and quality.

[Fort Bragg Farmers Market](#)

Wednesdays • All Year

May-October 2:30 pm-5:30

Nov-April 2:30 pm-4:30 pm

Downtown Fort Bragg at Laurel & Franklin

[Willits Farmers Market](#)

Thursday All Year 3 PM - 5:30 PM

December- April, Little Lake Grange

May- November - Willits City Park, Humboldt & State St

[Ukiah Farmers Market](#)

Saturdays • All Year Summer 9-12:30 & Winter 10-12:30

Alex Thomas Plaza at School & Clay Street

[Laytonville Farmers Market](#)

Tuesdays 2-5 • All Year

Harwood Hall 44400 Willis Ave

[Mendocino Farmers Market](#)

Fridays Noon - 2:30 pm • May-October

Downtown Mendocino at Howard & Main Street

[Redwood Valley Farmers Market](#)

Sundays 9:30 am-12:30 pm

June-October

Lion's Club Park, 8920 East Road

Bud break is around the corner in the winegrape and pear industries here in Mendocino County, which means it is that time of year for growers around the county to bring in their thermometers for calibration. Once frost season begins, it is essential that growers have accurate thermometers in their fields to predict frost, which can damage developing plants and harm the current season's crop. These tools help growers

when to deploy frost mitigation strategies more efficiently. Make sure your frost-protection thermometers are accurate. Bring them to the Department of Agriculture at 890 N. Bush St., Ukiah, for testing. Drop-offs are welcome, or call to schedule. Remember to label each thermometer with your name and phone number and allow at least one week for testing. Drop-offs run from February 23 to March 9; please pick them up by 4 p.m. on March 20, 2026.

It's also time to renew Ag Passes for 2026. Our county-based "Ag Pass" program provides a uniform way to identify vetted commercial farm and ranch owner-operators and their employees to emergency personnel. Possession of an Ag Pass during a wildfire or similar disaster may allow limited emergency access to restricted areas. Contact Traci Haggett for a streamlined renewal process. For more information, contact 707-234-6830 or agcomm@mendocinocounty.gov.