December 31, 2015

Michael Cohen, Director
California Department of Finance
915 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Cohen,

In accordance with the State Leadership Accountability Act (SLAA), the Department of Food and Agriculture submits this report on the review of our systems of internal control and monitoring processes for the biennial period ended December 31, 2015.

Should you have any questions please contact Kevin Masuhara, Deputy Secretary for Admin. and Finance, at (916) 654-0433, Kevin.masuhara@cdfa.ca.gov.

BACKGROUND

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) was established in 1919 by the legislature to protect and promote agriculture. California has held the status of the most productive agricultural state in the nation for over fifty years. The mission of CDFA is “To serve the citizens of California by promoting and protecting a safe, healthy food supply, and enhancing local and global agricultural trade, through efficient management, innovation, and sound science, with a commitment to environmental stewardship.” The core values the department adheres to in conducting our business are:

Integrity: We are truthful and trustworthy, and we operate in a fair and ethical manner.
Transparency: We conduct all of our operations in an open manner.
Accountability: We are responsible to ourselves and others for our actions and decisions.
Thoughtful Communication: We listen and share information openly and honestly with the goal of mutual understanding.
Respect: We treat everyone with courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
Creativity: We believe in fostering a creative environment.
Balance: We strive to maintain effective partnerships so that our decisions are fair to all our stakeholders.
Diversity: We are committed to maintaining a diverse workforce.

To effectively achieve this mission, the department operates a myriad of programs administered by several divisions and offices located throughout the state. This organizational structure allows the department to operate in a manner that optimizes the various funding sources and unique human resource skill sets necessary to effectively deliver the program activities.

Executive Office- The Executive Office provides leadership to the department and includes the Office of the Secretary, Legislative Office, Office of Public Affairs, Office of Information Technology Services, Legal Office, Audit Office, and the County Liaison Office.

Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services- The division is legislatively mandated to protect California from the damage caused by the introduction or spread of harmful plant pests. The division is organized into the following branches: Pest Detection and Emergency Projects, Pest Exclusion, Integrated Pest Control, and the Plant Pest Diagnostic Laboratory.

Animal Health and Food Safety Services Division- The division protects the public and animal health through prevention, detection, and eradication of livestock and poultry diseases. The division also protects cattle owners against loss of animals by theft, straying or misappropriation through ongoing inspections and investigations. The division is organized into the following branches: Animal Health, Milk and Dairy Food Safety, Livestock Identification, and the Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety branch.
Inspection Services Division - The division provides professional services that support and contribute to a safe, abundant, and quality food supply. The division is organized into the following branches: Inspection and Compliance, Feed, Fertilizer, and Livestock Drug Regulatory Services, and the Center for Analytical Chemistry.

Division of Marketing Services - The division provides administrative oversight to agricultural marketing programs and assists the dairy industry in maintaining stable marketing conditions. The division also provides leadership to the Network of California Fairs and builds collaborations among the fairs and industry stakeholders. The division is organized into the following branches: Fairs and Expositions, Market Enforcement, Marketing, Dairy Marketing, and Milk Pooling.

Administrative Services Division - The division provides core services essential to the day-to-day operations of the department and is organized into the following branches: Budget Office, Financial Services, Human Resources, Departmental Services, and the Office of Grants Administration.

Pierce’s Disease Control Program - The program works to minimize the impact of Pierce’s Disease and the glassy-winged sharpshooter. The glassy-winged sharpshooter can spread the disease from infected grapevines to non-infected vines and the disease ultimately kills the grapevine.

Division of Measurement Standards - The division is responsible for the enforcement of California’s weights and measures laws and regulations that protect both buyers and sellers, and promote fair competition in the marketplace. The division is organized into the following branches: Weighmaster and Petroleum, Metrology Laboratory, and Compliance and Evaluation.

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The risk assessment process utilized by the department begins with direction from the Executive Office. The Deputy Secretary of Administration and Finance is responsible for providing leadership and direction to the various division directors as well as communicating the various risks to the Secretariat in terms of impact to the department’s ability to carry out its mission. The basic methodology uses the State Leadership Accountability Act’s Risk Aggregation worksheets as the foundation for identifying risk factors from each of the divisions. Each division is responsible for engaging their program business units in completing the worksheets in a manner that clearly identifies their risks, mitigating controls, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the controls. The divisions utilize input from various management levels within their organizations depending on the nature of the risks relative to how and where their program activities operate. Typical staff engagement in this part of the process is with midlevel and senior management. Risks that have more complex, technical aspects receive input from operational staff in order to accurately assess impacts, likelihood of occurrence and control effectiveness. The senior management from each division presents and discusses the results from their Risk Aggregation worksheets with the Deputy Secretary. These discussions are focused on calibrating a uniform departmental assessment of the various risks and their subsequent management throughout the department. This uniform assessment is important so the Executive Office can objectively focus its efforts in providing the necessary guidance for corrective actions that may be identified. These efforts are managed so the highest impact risks are more closely monitored than lower impact risks, especially with respect to their likelihood of occurrence. A uniform departmental assessment is also important for prioritizing how scarce funding resources should be allocated to effectively mitigate the various risks.

EVALUATION OF RISKS AND CONTROLS

Operations- Internal- Resource Management

The department is responsible for organizing and deploying professional veterinary staff to prevent, protect, and if necessary, mitigate the negative impacts from catastrophic animal diseases. These
diseases can potentially harm California’s livestock populations, consumers, and the agricultural economy. Under some circumstances, some animal diseases can pose a risk to human health. Due to the potential for how quickly these diseases can be spread statewide, the department must continually maintain adequate staffing levels, ensure staff persons are fully trained in how to respond to disease outbreaks, and have the ability to mobilize resources necessary in handling large animal disease outbreaks.

The department continually evaluates staffing levels and the training staff has received to insure we have the ability to respond quickly in the event of a large animal disease introduction. Staff persons responsible for responding to outbreaks are located throughout the state and maintain local networks with partner agency staff as well as other stakeholders to keep informed of local conditions important to a response. The department also has identified key staff people that collaborate with various other local, state and national entities for the purpose of information sharing on effectively managing disease outbreaks. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- Internal- Staff—Safety

The department must rely on many business processes to carry out its responsibilities in handling foreign animal diseases and pest detection and prevention efforts, and other inspection activities. Components of these processes require the use of materials or methods that could comprise the health and safety of the staff involved. These risks are from potential contact with infectious animal material, pesticides applied in pest eradication and control efforts, laboratory equipment and materials that are dangerous, and challenging field conditions due to weather or other natural hazards.

These risks are mitigated through a combination of efforts at the program level where the unique nature of the risks are well understood. Safety training and Accident and Injury Prevention plans are conducted on an annual basis for staff involved in these activities. When necessary, these activities involve experts from other agencies as well as consultants with specific expertise in the subject matter. Divisions with staff involved in these activities utilize a Health and Safety Officer role in their management structure to insure this risk is monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- External- Business Interruption, Safety Concerns

The department is responsible for insuring many agricultural products meet certain requirements for food and feed safety, product composition, and compliance with labeling requirements as specified in various laws and regulations. If food and feed safety non-compliance occurs, there is a risk that people, pets, or livestock may consume products harmful to their health. Non-compliance in product composition and labeling requirements carries the risk that products may not fulfill the requirements of those who purchased them and result in unintended misuse.

This risk is mitigated by conducting routine inspections of products in various trade supply channels to insure they meet specified requirements. These requirements, as well as inspection protocols are developed in conjunction with technical experts and stakeholders subject to inspection to insure efficacy. All aspects of the department’s inspections are continually monitored to insure they are consistent with current practices and methodologies in how the products are produced, transported and distributed. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- Internal- Oversight, Monitoring, Internal Control Systems
The department operates laboratories that provide testing and other analytical support for various program activities. These laboratories must satisfy specific requirements in order to have the appropriate accreditation. Accreditation provides the essential assurance the results are accurate, especially in cases where regulatory enforcement is a consequence. If laboratory processes or personnel do not receive the necessary accreditation, the results from the samples processed could be questioned as to their validity. A lack of validation jeopardizes the ability to carry out the regulatory action since regulatory actions are subject to appeal. Lack of accreditation would provide justification in an appeal.

The laboratories carry out the necessary activities on an annual basis to maintain their accreditation by the corresponding accrediting body. If new or expanded accreditation is required for laboratory activities that were not previously performed, then the new requirements are analyzed and incorporated into the ongoing process. The management staff for each laboratory is responsible for ensuring all staff related training requirements are fulfilled and laboratory control documentation is maintained in the proper format. Performing accreditation activities is given a higher priority over other activities when necessary due to workload levels. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

**Operations- Internal- Technology—Data Security**

The department’s programs collect and utilize data from many sources and in many different formats in the course of its day-to-day activities. The requirements for securing this data are specified in the State Administrative Manual, Section 5305.5. To fulfill this requirement, all of the department’s information assets must be classified and categorized so that appropriate levels of protection can be determined and provided to adequately secure the data. The risk from not completing and maintaining these information assets in compliance with this requirement could lead to inadequate data security and subsequent uses of confidential and/or sensitive data for purposes they were not intended to be used for.

The mitigating controls for this risk are specified in the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s Special Publication 800-53. These controls are in the format of a Risk Management Framework that addresses the selection of security controls to satisfy security standards for federal information systems. The department has only partially implemented these controls. Currently all new projects and services as well as new requests for changes to existing systems must meet these requirements. To fully implement this control, these requirements need to be applied to the remaining existing information assets that have not met this requirement.

**Operations- Internal- Staff—Key Person Dependence, Succession Planning**

The department relies on many specialized functional units within the divisions to carry out the day-to-day program activities. Specialized functional units help achieve greater efficiencies and satisfy requirements for allocating resources based on what funding source supports the activities. The risk from this organizational structure is a high degree of dependence on key staff in these units and the resulting challenges when staff turnover occurs. This condition is even more pronounced when staff is assigned on a regional basis and their knowledge of local conditions is important to program effectiveness. Many staff in this situation carry out their responsibilities independently and a sudden departure is disruptive to the program activities in that region.

This risk is mitigated by a combination of strategies at the program level, division level, and department level.

- At the program level, staff carrying out the day-to-day activities are the primary resource for developing desk manuals, training materials, and process documentation. These staff are also utilized in cross-training that can be accomplished between functional units.
• The division level management supports mitigating this risk by providing assistance for the
development of the materials mentioned above as well as coordinating and identifying
opportunities for cross-training. Division management is also responsible for managing
succession planning by working with the Administrative Services division to insure their
training, examination, and any other recruitment needs are addressed.
• The department wide strategies to mitigate this risk consist of leadership and management
training designed to develop and encourage upward mobility.
This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- Internal- Technology—Outdated, Incompatible

The department relies on numerous technology solutions that are outdated. Many of these solutions
involve legacy databases that need upgrading to newer technologies, especially in the area of mobile
computing devices. A large component of the department’s data collection originates from staff
cconducting inspections at sites throughout California. Relying on outdated technology that cannot be
easily integrated with mobile computing devices requires manual data entry, which increases the risk of
errors, is costly, and is not timely. The inspections performed by the department’s staff in the field impact
food and animal feed safety, as well as the ability of a large number of businesses to conduct their daily
activities in compliance with the laws and regulations the department enforces.

The department continually analyzes its program activities from a process improvement
perspective to identify opportunities to implement new technology. Because of the potential
lengthy timeframes required to fully implement identified solutions; including securing the
necessary funding, the programs closely monitor these processes. The monitoring focuses on
fulfilling the required responsibilities and includes quality control checks to minimize input
errors. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- Internal- Oversight, Monitoring, Internal Control Systems

The department’s programs utilize funds from various sources such as assessments, collected fees, and
appropriations. If these programs do not adequately monitor their activities, they will risk overspending
the funds available.

The department requires programs to complete expenditure projections at the mid-year mark.
These projections are completed interactively with the program staff and the Budget Office.
The senior management of each division within the department reviews their projections and is
responsible for making any necessary adjustments to program work plans so the projections
are within the available funding. These projections are also reviewed by the Executive Office.
All programs utilizing General Fund appropriations and any others that were identified at the
mid-year as possibly overspending their funding are required to complete and submit another
expenditure projection at the close of the third quarter. These results are also reviewed by the
Executive Office and any necessary program activity adjustments are decided and implemented
at that time. Management is also responsible for monitoring their program budget on a monthly
basis by reviewing expenditure reports that are provided by the Financial Services Branch. This
is an existing control and is working as intended.

Reporting- Internal- Information Collected—Inadequate, Inaccurate, Misinterpreted, Untimely

The department carries out many program activities in cooperation with or on behalf of the United States
Department of Agriculture (USDA). These activities are primarily due to responding to foreign animal
disease or plant pest detections requiring management from a federal perspective. Due to the
department carrying out these activities for a federal agency, federal funds are provided to cover the cost
of this. Various reports are generated from the data and information collected while carrying out day-to-day activities. These reports are important in informing USDA on the status of the effort and what progress has been made in achieving their objectives. These reports also are the basis for obtaining reimbursement for the department. Reports that are not submitted in a timely fashion or that have inaccurate or inadequate information will result in delays for federal funds reimbursement.

This risk is mitigated by routine monitoring of report development and submission by multiple levels of management within the divisions performing this work. When potential reporting deficiencies are identified, the deficiencies are corrected as soon as possible. This is an existing control and working as intended.

Operations- External- Litigation

The department is responsible in providing oversight to various boards, commissions, and councils established by legislation to promote agricultural commodities or conduct research to improve the production of agricultural products. These entities operate on assessment funds collected from various producers and/or handlers of agricultural commodities specific to the entity they are operating programs on behalf of. The payments of these assessment funds are required of all producers and/or handlers subject to the law. A lack of oversight by the department carries the risk these assessment funds could be expended for ineffective, inappropriate, or illegal purposes. If this were to occur, the ability of these entities to carry out their programs on behalf of the assessment payers could be jeopardized and expose them, as well as the department to litigation.

The primary mitigation control for this risk is to have designated staff to attend all board meetings for these entities. This attendance insures actions taken and contemplated by these boards receive the necessary level of oversight and guidance. Another important control feature is periodic meetings with the operational management of these entities to review and discuss various department policies they must comply with. When management changes occur with these entities, the department also provides orientation training to insure the incoming management is fully aware and understands the compliance issues. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Compliance- External- Complexity or Dynamic Nature of Laws or Regulations

The department relies on input and recommendations from various advisory boards established either by statute, or the department as authorized by statute. These entities are comprised of stakeholders; that pay assessments or licensing fees, or are impacted by the regulatory and other activities of that program. In this capacity, these entities are considered instrumentalities of the department and must comply with the requirements of the Bagley-Keene Act and any applicable requirements from the Fair Political Practices Commission. The risk from noncompliance with the Bagley-Keene Act is legal action, invalidation of actions taken by the entity and inefficient and ineffective program delivery. The Political Reform Act requires the Department, via the completion of Form 700, to ensure that members of its advisory boards do not have a conflict of interest when making decisions and recommendations to the Secretary. Failure to meet the Form 700 filing requirements may result in legal action, fines and penalties, the invalidation of board recommendations and subsequent negative impact to the department.

The department’s Legal Office provides Bagley-Keene Act training and consultation to the employees responsible for overseeing the activities of advisory boards. The training sessions are scheduled on an as needed basis and the frequency is driven by changes in the law. Employees responsible for board oversight may also seek legal advice on an as needed basis. Similarly, the department’s Form 700 Filing Officer is responsible for the training of program/advisory board filing officials to insure conflict of interest requirements are fulfilled.
The Form 700 filing requirements are managed and coordinated at the departmental level by the Administrative Services Division. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- External- Fraud, Theft, Waste, Misconduct, Vandalism

The department provides vehicles for staff to travel and carry out program responsibilities throughout California. These vehicles are often utilized by staff in field locations with a high degree of independence in conducting their work activities. Due to this, there is a certain degree of risk that the assets may be utilized for non-work related purposes. This could lead to unnecessary expenses.

All staff that operate vehicles are required to complete a daily travel log in compliance with departmental policy. These logs are reviewed monthly by the employees’ direct supervisors to insure the daily entries are consistent with the work activities assigned and completed during that time frame. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- External- Fraud, Theft, Waste, Misconduct, Vandalism

The department deploys information technology (IT) assets to effectively carry out its various programs. The main risk for IT assets is the portability of laptops, tablets, i-Pads, and smart phones which could lead to them being lost or stolen. These risks can result in unnecessary expenses and the potential for the loss of sensitive or confidential data.

The department tracks these assets as they are issued by use of searchable archived IT service ticket records. This system ensures that the enterprise asset management agent software is installed, running, and automatically reporting correctly. Processes are currently being set up to automate the process of notifying the centralized IT services desk when an asset stops reporting in. In addition, reconciliations of IT assets to the asset database of record are performed annually. In the event an IT asset is lost or stolen, a report is required to be immediately filed with the department’s Information Security Officer (ISO). The ISO takes the necessary steps to determine the type of data contained on the device and files any necessary reports. This is an existing control and working as intended.

Compliance- Internal- Staff Not Adhering to Policies, Procedures, or Standards

The department has a significant number of staff whose accumulated leave balances exceed the 640 hour maximum allowed by bargaining unit contracts (for represented employees) or California Code of Regulations (for excluded employees). A majority of the staff in this group are within a few years of being eligible to retire and the current projected cost to support cashing out these leave balances is several million dollars. When a staff person retires with a large leave balance, the program must leave the position vacant long enough for the resulting salary savings to cover the expense against that year’s budget. The 640 hours allowed represents almost four months of salary savings to cover and any amount above this allowed maximum further lengthens the period of time before a replacement can be hired. The workload of the retired staff person must be absorbed by others in the program or backlogs will occur.

In January 2015, all employees with a leave balance in excess of 640 hours were required to submit a leave usage plan to bring their balance down below 640 hours by the end of 2017. Current provisions in the California Code of Regulations and various bargaining unit contracts allow the department to require these plans to achieve the required reduction level in one year; however this timeframe would have severely impacted the department’s ability to effectively operate its programs. During 2015, various staff had the responsibility to monitor the progress
of these employees and communicate with employees that were not making adequate progress with their plan. As a result of those communications, some employees submitted revised plans to reflect how they would make up for the lack of progress and in some cases, employees were directed by management to take the required amount of time off to reduce their balance down to match their submitted plan. This is a new control and is working as intended.

**Operations- Internal- FI$Cal Conversion**

The department has programs with multiple funding sources that support the core activities. Many of the funding sources have restrictions on the type of activity that can be carried out with the funds. If funds are not utilized and supported by documentation in accordance with these restrictions, the programs risk losing reimbursement. This is currently mitigated by the use of specific Program Cost Accounts (PCA) to closely track and report expense activities and satisfy this requirement. The upcoming FI$Cal conversion carries the risk that the accounting structure of the department’s existing use of PCAs for this type of tracking will not integrate easily with the accounting structure of FI$Cal.

The department has staff from the Budget Office and Financial Services branch participate in technical training on FI$Cal requirements. These trained staff will provide consultation to programs that need to utilize PCAs to satisfy tracking requirements related to their funding sources. The department is working on a coding structure using FI$Cal requirements and is working closely with FI$Cal to ensure a smooth transition. To fully implement this control, the department must go live on the FI$Cal system. Currently management monitors and tracks expenditure reports on a continuous basis and includes quality control checks to minimize input errors and if any are identified, they are corrected as soon as possible.

**Operations- External- Economic Volatility**

The department receives fees from various sources related to the programmatic activity being provided. The major sources of these fees originate from assessments on various commodities, fees for issuing licenses, and fees from inspections performed. Since all of these fees are for activities tied directly to the production of agricultural commodities, which are inherently economically volatile, this volatility can impact the department. Natural events such as drought and other adverse weather events, as well as national and global events affecting the demand for agricultural commodities drive this volatility. When collected fees that support program activities vary from the forecasted amounts, especially when reduced in a short period of time, the necessary adjustments to the activities levels can be difficult to achieve in alignment with the new amounts available to operate the program.

The programs in the department that experience this risk primarily mitigate against it by maintaining a sufficient funding reserve to operate for six months with no collected fees. This amount of reserve allows for decisions to be analyzed and carried out to adjust program activities to align with requirements related to managing human resources and physical asset liquidation. This risk is also managed by closely monitoring various factors that could result in economic volatility on a continual basis so that other management actions can be taken in a timely fashion. These actions include adjusting staff levels or redeploying staff to other programs when feasible, consolidating functions to better align with new program needs, and delaying expenditures, if feasible, to a time when forecasted fee collections return to normal levels. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

**Reporting- External- Information Collected—Inadequate, Inaccurate, Misinterpreted, Untimely**

The department is required by various statutes to collect annual financial and other information from external entities. This information is necessary to allow the department to file its reports in a timely
manner to various state entities that need the information for their processes. When the information is not submitted timely, the department and other entities are unable to complete their required reporting by established deadlines.

The department mitigates this risk by setting and communicating deadlines to the various external entities. If deadlines are not met, immediate contact is made with the entities to determine what issues are preventing meeting the deadline. If the reporting is connected to the department calculating and providing funding to the external entities, it is withheld until the required reporting has been fulfilled. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

Operations- External- Partner Agencies/Grantees—Conflicting Objectives, Program Coordination

The department conducts numerous programs utilizing contracts, cooperative agreements, and grants with external partner agencies in order to gain efficiencies in program delivery. The external agencies we partner with have more specialized knowledge of conditions that exist at the local level. This arrangement carries the risk that if adequate coordination and alignment of objectives are not achieved, these efficiencies will not occur and program delivery will be compromised. Another component to this program coordination is adequate training for staff in the partner agencies by the department so the program activities are carried out in a uniform, consistent manner statewide.

To mitigate this risk, the department utilizes a dedicated staff person as a liaison between the partner agencies (County Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers of Weights and Measures) and the department. This position is responsible for maintaining communication between the partner agencies and the department and attends statewide and regional meetings where program coordination factors are discussed. This liaison also oversees competency testing and licensing of partner agency staff persons carrying out program activities. Additionally, the department continually surveys and assesses training needs and materials to ensure they are effectively delivered at the local level. This is an existing control and is working as intended.

ONGOING MONITORING

Through our ongoing monitoring processes, the Department of Food and Agriculture reviews, evaluates, and improves our systems of internal controls and monitoring processes. As such, we have determined we comply with California Government Code sections 13400-13407.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the head of Department of Food and Agriculture, Karen Ross, Secretary, is responsible for the overall establishment and maintenance of the internal control system. We have identified Kevin Masuhara, Deputy Secretary for Administration and Finance, as our designated agency monitor(s).

Frequency of Monitoring Activities

The Agency Monitor meets with each of the division's Unit Monitors on a monthly basis to discuss management issues concerning risk mitigation. The Director for each division is required to be a Unit Monitor. They can delegate this role to their Assistant Director if necessary, however the Unit Monitor role cannot be delegated lower than this level. This requirement insures senior management in each division is actively engaged in the process. These meetings allow the Agency Monitor to keep current with the ongoing effectiveness of the risk mitigation controls in place. Semi-annual meetings are held with all of the Unit Monitors attending and facilitated by the Agency Monitor for the purpose of discussing overall effectiveness of the risk mitigation controls enterprise wide.
Reporting and Documenting Monitoring Activities

In conjunction with the semi-annual meeting of all Unit Monitors, each division is required to submit a written status report for their division that provides the following information:

- Current effectiveness of their mitigation controls.
- Specific identification of ineffective controls.
- Consequences arising from any ineffective controls.
- Any new risks to add or existing risks to drop from monitoring activities.

A management report summarizing the above information is prepared and distributed to the Secretariat after each semi-annual meeting.

Procedure for Addressing Identified Internal Control Deficiencies

The Agency Monitor meets with and informs the Secretariat semi-annually on any deficient controls as well as the addition or deletion of risks to the monitoring process. The Internal Audit office provides consultation in developing risk mitigation controls for any newly identified risks and for all risk controls identified as being ineffective. Ineffective risk controls are evaluated by the Internal Audit office prior to the next semi-annual monitoring meeting and report submission. All existing risks proposed to be dropped from the monitoring process are also evaluated by the Internal Audit office prior to the next semi-annual monitoring meeting and report submission. The results of this evaluation are discussed with the Secretariat and a decision to discontinue monitoring is made at that time.

CONCLUSION

The Department of Food and Agriculture strives to reduce the risks inherent in our work through ongoing monitoring. The Department of Food and Agriculture accepts the responsibility to continuously improve by addressing newly recognized risks and revising risk mitigation strategies. I certify our systems of internal control and monitoring processes are adequate to identify and address material inadequacies or material weaknesses facing the organization.

Karen Ross, Secretary

cc: Department of Finance
    Legislature
    State Auditor
    State Library
    State Controller
    Secretary of Government Operations