Greetings Ventura County Planning Commissioners.

My name is Jonathan Pinkerton. I’m a third generation family farmer currently growing lemons and avocados at Pinkerton Ranch in Ventura. I reside in Camarillo.

During the public outreach segment of the general plan update process, local farms and ranches have been identified by the public as one of the most cherished assets of Ventura County. As a family farmer who farms on primary income (farming is my only job), it is increasingly difficult to farm in Ventura County. Multi layered land use regulations, the impending development of farmland for wildlife corridors, lack of farmworker housing, drought, and an overarching lack of respect of Ventura County agriculture as a business (and not solely a view shed), are all immediate threats that are contributing to the “death by a thousand cuts” of Ventura County agriculture.

There is not enough emphasis in the General Plan updates addressing what is described above. Like Wal Mart or the Patagonia clothing company, Ventura County agriculture is a business. Any policy regarding the future sustainability of Ventura County agriculture must include economics.

The aesthetically pleasing agricultural view sheds that are intensely popular with Ventura County voters are only possible if our farms and ranches have access to water, affordable labor, and prime farmland that isn’t going to be paved over for bike paths or developed for wildlife corridors. Please consider the firsthand experience I have described above during your deliberations during the General Plan Update process.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Jonathan Pinkerton

Camarillo

805-320-8121