



A.G. Kawamura

Title: Secretary

Organization: California Department of Food & Agriculture

Election Category: Appointed November 2003

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"A. G. Kawamura is widely respected for his experience as a third-generation grower and shipper. His depth of knowledge of California's agricultural industry will be vital to restoring the California dream."

-- Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

Governor Schwarzenegger appointed A.G. Kawamura as Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) in November 2003. Secretary Kawamura is a produce grower and shipper from Orange County, where his family grows strawberries, green beans and other specialty crops. He is a founding partner, along with his brother, Matthew, of Orange County Produce, LLC. As an urban agriculturist, he has a lifetime of experience working along and within the expanding urban boundaries of Southern California.

He began his agricultural career as a beekeeper and was a roadside stand operator before entering into his family business as a produce salesman for Western Marketing Company of California. In 1978, he managed sales and exports for eight years before transitioning to the production side of the company. In 1996, Western Marketing Company became Orange County Produce, LLC. He managed the company's growing and harvesting operations.

Secretary Kawamura has a long history of public service to his community and to agriculture. At the time of his appointment, he was a member of the California State Board of Food and Agriculture, where he had served since 1998. He is the immediate past chairman of the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Fruits, Vegetables and Horticultural Products, a USDA advisory position for international trade. He also held board positions with CDFA's Western Institute for Food Safety and Security, a partnership with U.C. Davis, and with the California Institute for Specialty Crops, a partnership with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

In addition, Secretary Kawamura has served as president of the Orange County Farm Bureau, chairman of Western Growers Association, and president of the Orange County Agricultural Association. He has also served as a director on the boards of the California Strawberry Commission and the California Celery Research Advisory Board. He was a founding trustee of Sage Hill High School in Orange County.

Secretary Kawamura is widely known for his passion for education and for his commitment to the issues of hunger and nutrition. As president of Orange County Harvest, a non-profit promoting agricultural partnerships with organizations combating hunger, he arranged for thousands of volunteers to harvest and glean over a million pounds of produce for area food banks. His nationally recognized urban projects, such as the 7-acre Common Ground project in San Juan Capistrano and 4-acre Incredible Edible Park in Irvine, are agricultural paradigms linking nutritional education and interaction with local schools and food banks.

Secretary Kawamura has received several awards and recognition for his work in and outside the agricultural community. Some of these include:

- 1991 California Junior Chamber of Commerce's Outstanding Young Californian

- 1995-96 California Association of Nurserymen Education Award
- Sustainable Northwest's 1999 Founders of a New Northwest
- California Hunger Action Coalition 2000 Hunger Fighter Award
- Orange County Second Harvest Food Bank's Humanitarians Against Hunger 2000 Award

Secretary Kawamura has a bachelor's degree in comparative literature from U.C. Berkeley.

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