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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

SUN VALLEY FARMS, LLC,	)	Case No.: 1:20-CV-1665 AWI JLT
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	SCHEDULING ORDER <sup>1</sup> (Fed. R. Civ. P. 16)
	)	
v.	)	Pleading Amendment Deadline: 10/15/2021
	)	
WESTERN VEG PRODUCE, INC.,	)	Discovery Deadlines:
	)	Initial Disclosures: 8/16/2021
Defendant.	)	Non-Expert: 2/15/2022
	)	Expert: 6/1/2022
	)	Mid-Discovery Status Conference: 10/18/2021 at 8:30 a.m.
		Non-Dispositive Motion Deadlines: Filing: 6/15/2022 Hearing: 7/13/2022
		Dispositive Motion Deadlines: Filing: 8/1/2022 Hearing: 9/12/2022
		Pre-Trial Conference: 11/3/2022 at 10:00 a.m. Courtroom 2
		Trial: 1/10/2023 at 8:30 a.m. Courtroom 2 Jury trial: 5 days

<sup>1</sup> The Court finds the information provided by the parties in the Joint Scheduling Report and worksheet (Doc. 18) sufficient to schedule the matter without a hearing. Thus, the scheduling conference set for July 19, 2021 is VACATED.

1 **I. Information Concerning the Court's Schedule**

2 Out of fairness, the Court believes it is necessary to forewarn litigants that the Fresno Division  
3 of the Eastern District of California now has the heaviest District Court Judge caseload in the entire  
4 nation. While the Court will use its best efforts to resolve this case and all other civil cases in a timely  
5 manner, the parties are advised that not all of the parties' needs and expectations may be met as  
6 expeditiously as desired. As multiple trials are set to begin upon the same date, parties may find their  
7 case trailing with little notice before the trial begins. The law requires that the Court give any criminal  
8 trial priority over civil trials or any other matter. The Court must proceed with a criminal trial even if a  
9 civil trial was filed earlier and set for trial first. Continuances of any civil trial under these  
10 circumstances will no longer be entertained, absent a specific and stated finding of good cause. All  
11 parties should be informed that any civil trial set to begin during the time a criminal trial is proceeding  
12 will trail the completion of the criminal trial.

13 The parties are reminded of the availability of a United States Magistrate Judge to conduct all  
14 proceedings in this action. A United States Magistrate Judge is available to conduct trials, including  
15 entry of final judgment, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 73, and Local  
16 Rule 305. The same jury pool is used by both United States Magistrate Judges and United States  
17 District Court Judges. Any appeal from a judgment entered by a United States Magistrate Judge is  
18 taken directly to the United States Court of Appeal for the Ninth Circuit. The parties are informed that  
19 no substantive rulings or decisions will be affected by whether a party chooses to consent.

20 Finally, the Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California, whenever possible, is utilizing  
21 United States Article III District Court Judges from throughout the nation as Visiting Judges. Pursuant  
22 to the Local Rules, Appendix A, reassignments will be random, and the parties will receive no advance  
23 notice before their case is reassigned to an Article III District Court Judge from outside of the Eastern  
24 District of California.

25 Therefore, the parties are directed to consider consenting to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction to  
26 conduct all further proceedings, including trial. **Within 10 days** of the date of this order, the parties  
27 **SHALL** file a consent/decline form (provided by the Court at the inception of this case) indicating  
28 whether they will consent to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Judge.

1 **II. Pleading Amendment Deadline**

2 Any requested pleading amendments are ordered to be filed, either through a stipulation or  
3 motion to amend, no later than **October 15, 2021**.

4 **III. Discovery Plan and Cut-Off Date**

5 The parties are ordered to exchange the initial disclosures required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1)  
6 on or before **August 16, 2021**.

7 The parties are ordered to complete all discovery pertaining to non-experts on or before  
8 **February 15, 2022**, and all discovery pertaining to experts on or before **June 1, 2022**.

9 The parties are directed to disclose all expert witnesses, in writing, on or before **March 1, 2022**,  
10 and to disclose all rebuttal experts on or before **May 4, 2022**. The written designation of retained and  
11 non-retained experts shall **be made pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. Rule 26(a)(2), (A), (B), and (C) and**  
12 **shall include all information required thereunder**. Failure to designate experts in compliance with  
13 this order may result in the Court excluding the testimony or other evidence offered through such  
14 experts that are not disclosed pursuant to this order.

15 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(4) and (5) shall apply to all discovery relating to experts  
16 and their opinions. Experts must be fully prepared to be examined on all subjects and opinions  
17 included in the designation. Failure to comply will result in the imposition of sanctions, which may  
18 include striking the expert designation and preclusion of expert testimony.

19 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(e) regarding a party's duty to timely supplement  
20 disclosures and responses to discovery requests will be strictly enforced.

21 A mid-discovery status conference is scheduled for **October 18, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.** before  
22 Judge Thurston, located at 510 19th Street, Bakersfield, California. Counsel SHALL file a joint mid-  
23 discovery status conference report one week before the conference. Counsel also SHALL lodge the  
24 status report via e-mail to JLTorders@caed.uscourts.gov. The joint statement SHALL outline the  
25 discovery counsel have completed and that which needs to be completed as well as any impediments  
26 to completing the discovery within the deadlines set forth in this order. Counsel SHALL discuss  
27 settlement and certify that they have done so. Counsel may appear via teleconference by dialing (888)  
28 557-8511 and entering Access Code 1652736, provided the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Deputy

1 Clerk receives a written notice of the intent to appear telephonically no later than five court days  
2 before the noticed hearing date.

3 **IV. Pre-Trial Motion Schedule**

4 All non-dispositive pre-trial motions, including any discovery motions, shall be filed no later  
5 than **June 15, 2022<sup>2</sup>**, and heard on or before **July 13, 2022**. Non-dispositive motions are heard at 9:00  
6 a.m., before Judge Thurston at the United States District Courthouse located at 510 19<sup>th</sup> Street,  
7 Bakersfield, California.

8 **No motion to amend or stipulation to amend the case schedule will be entertained unless**  
9 **it is filed at least one week before the first deadline the parties wish to extend.** Likewise, no  
10 written discovery motions shall be filed without the prior approval of the assigned Magistrate Judge.  
11 A party with a discovery dispute must first confer with the opposing party in a good faith effort to  
12 resolve by agreement the issues in dispute. If that good faith effort is unsuccessful, the moving party  
13 promptly shall seek a telephonic hearing with all involved parties and the Magistrate Judge. It shall be  
14 the obligation of the moving party to arrange and originate the conference call to the court. To  
15 schedule this telephonic hearing, the parties are ordered to contact the Courtroom Deputy Clerk, Susan  
16 Hall, at (661) 326-6620 or via email at SHall@caed.uscourts.gov. At least three days before the  
17 conference, counsel SHALL file informal letter briefs detailing their positions. The briefs may not  
18 exceed 7 pages, excluding exhibits. **Counsel must comply with Local Rule 251 with respect to**  
19 **discovery disputes or the motion will be denied without prejudice and dropped from the Court's**  
20 **calendar.**

21 All dispositive pre-trial motions shall be filed no later than **August 1, 2022**, and heard no later  
22 than **September 12, 2022**, in Courtroom 2 at 8:30 a.m. before the Honorable Anthony W. Ishii, United  
23 States District Court Judge. In scheduling such motions, **counsel shall comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 56**  
24 **and Local Rules 230 and 260.**

25 **V. Motions for Summary Judgment or Summary Adjudication**

26 **At least 21 days before** filing a motion for summary judgment or motion for summary  
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28 <sup>2</sup> Non-dispositive motions related to non-expert discovery SHALL be filed within a reasonable time of  
discovery of the dispute, but in no event later than 30 days after the expiration of the non-expert discovery  
deadline.

1 adjudication, the parties are **ORDERED** to meet, in person or by telephone, to confer about the issues to  
2 be raised in the motion.

3 The purpose of the meeting shall be to: 1) avoid filing motions for summary judgment where a  
4 question of fact exists; 2) determine whether the respondent agrees that the motion has merit in whole or  
5 in part; 3) discuss whether issues can be resolved without the necessity of briefing; 4) narrow the issues  
6 for review by the court; 5) explore the possibility of settlement before the parties incur the expense of  
7 briefing a motion; and 6) to develop a joint statement of undisputed facts.

8 The moving party **SHALL** initiate the meeting and **SHALL** provide a complete, proposed  
9 statement of undisputed facts **at least five days before** the conference. The finalized joint statement of  
10 undisputed facts **SHALL** include all facts that the parties agree, for purposes of the motion, may be  
11 deemed true. In addition to the requirements of Local Rule 260, the moving party shall file the joint  
12 statement of undisputed facts.

13 In the notice of motion the moving party **SHALL** certify that the parties have met and conferred  
14 as ordered above, or set forth a statement of good cause for the failure to meet and confer. **Failure to**  
15 **comply may result in the motion being stricken.**

16 **VI. Pre-Trial Conference Date**

17 **November 3, 2022**, at 10:00 a.m. in Courtroom 2 before Judge Ishii.

18 The parties are ordered to file a **Joint Pretrial Statement pursuant to Local Rule 281(a)(2).**  
19 The parties are further directed to submit a digital copy of their pretrial statement in Word format,  
20 directly to Judge Ishii's chambers, by email at AWIOrders@caed.uscourts.gov.

21 Counsels' attention is directed to **Rules 281 and 282 of the Local Rules** of Practice for the  
22 Eastern District of California, as to the obligations of counsel in preparing for the pre-trial conference.  
23 The Court will insist upon strict compliance with those rules. In addition to the matters set forth in the  
24 Local Rules the Joint Pretrial Statement shall include a Joint Statement of the case to be used by the  
25 Court to explain the nature of the case to the jury during voir dire.

26 **VII. Trial Date**

27 **January 10, 2023**, at 8:30 a.m. in Courtroom 2 before the Honorable Anthony W. Ishii, United  
28 States District Court Judge.

- 1           A.     This is a jury trial.
- 2           B.     Counsels' Estimate of Trial Time: 5 days.
- 3           C.     Counsels' attention is directed to Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of  
4 California, Rule 285.

5 **VIII. Settlement Conference**

6           If the parties believe the matter is in a settlement posture and a conference with the Court would  
7 be fruitful, the parties may file a joint written request for a settlement conference.

8 **IX. Requests for Bifurcation, Appointment of Special Master, or other**  
9 **Techniques to Shorten Trial**

10          Not applicable at this time.

11 **X. Related Matters Pending**

12          There are no pending related matters.

13 **XI. Compliance with Federal Procedure**

14          All counsel are expected to familiarize themselves with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure  
15 and the Local Rules of Practice of the Eastern District of California, and to keep abreast of any  
16 amendments thereto. The Court must insist upon compliance with these Rules if it is to efficiently  
17 handle its increasing case load, and sanctions will be imposed for failure to follow both the Federal  
18 Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of California.

19 **XII. Effect of this Order**

20          The foregoing order represents the best estimate of the court and counsel as to the agenda most  
21 suitable to dispose of this case. The trial date reserved is specifically reserved for this case. If the  
22 parties determine at any time that the schedule outlined in this order cannot be met, counsel are ordered  
23 to notify the court immediately of that fact so that adjustments may be made, either by stipulation or by  
24 subsequent status conference.

25               **The dates set in this order are firm and will not be modified absent a showing of good**  
26 **cause even if the request to modify is made by stipulation. Stipulations extending the deadlines**  
27 **contained herein will not be considered unless they are accompanied by affidavits or declarations,**  
28 **and where appropriate attached exhibits, which establish good cause for granting the relief**

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**requested.**

Failure to comply with this order may result in the imposition of sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: July 14, 2021

/s/ Jennifer L. Thurston  
CHIEF UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE