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Vegetable Farm to Pay \$40,000 to Settle DFEH Religious Discrimination Suit

Seventh-day Adventist employee fired for observing the Sabbath

SACRAMENTO - The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) announced today that a vegetable farm in Perris, California will pay \$40,000 and provide other relief to settle a religious discrimination lawsuit.

After an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the claim, DFEH filed suit against Defendants Family Herb Farm, Inc., Fresh Herb Farm, Inc. and Kevin Doan in Riverside County Superior Court. The lawsuit alleged the company refused to accommodate the request of a Seventh-day Adventist farmworker to observe the Sabbath on Saturday and terminated her employment when she observed the Sabbath. The case came to DFEH's attention when the Church State Council filed a complaint on behalf of the farmworker.

Such alleged conduct violates California's Fair Employment and Housing Act, which prohibits religious discrimination and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for an employee's sincerely held religious belief or observance so long as doing so does not pose an undue hardship on the employer.

"DFEH is committed to ensuring that reasonable religious accommodations are provided to workers who require them," said DFEH director Kevin Kish. "Unless the employer demonstrates undue hardship, the law specifically requires accommodation of observance of a Sabbath or other religious holy day."

In addition to paying a total sum of \$40,000 to settle the lawsuit, Defendants have agreed to develop written anti-discrimination policies and undergo training annually for four years.

DFEH is the state agency charged with enforcing California's civil rights laws. The mission of DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations, and from hate violence and human trafficking. For more information, visit www.dfeh.ca.gov.