



Use of Bird Frightening Devices in San Joaquin County

Bird frightening devices, including propane cannons, can be an effective means of crop protection when properly used. While they are designed to be annoying to depredating wildlife, they are also a nuisance to neighbors living near these crops.

To ensure proper and effective use of propane cannons, in a manner consistent with proper and accepted customs and standards, following are guidelines for use in San Joaquin County:

- Propane cannons and electronic sound devices are only to be used when birds are present and damage is expected. Devices are to be turned off when birds are not present or threatening.
- Propane cannons and electronic sound devices are to be used with on-site monitoring, and in conjunction with other bird control techniques.
- Noise devices are to be used only during daylight hours; from one half hour before sunrise, to one half hour after sunset.
- The minimum frequency interval for each propane cannon is 3 minutes. For sites with more than one cannon, the minimum frequency is 5 minutes.
- When there are residences in close proximity to agriculture, propane cannons and electronic sound devices are to be positioned a minimum of 500 feet (line of sight) from residence(s), with the cannon barrel or speaker box pointed away from the residence(s). This distance may be reduced to a minimum of 300 feet with the addition of hay bale screening.

For further information regarding the use of bird frightening devices, please feel free to call biologist on duty at (209) 953-6000.

Helpful tips about birds and frightening devices:

Birds quickly habituate to noise

Change the location of the device every 2 or 3 days. Do not operate the device continuously. Birds will become accustomed to the noise. Using propane cannons as one part of a multi-faceted approach will help the program be effective for a longer period of time. Other methods such as bird noise machines, shooting, and blower driven dancing tubes can all work together at different times, in different parts of the affected area to keep menace birds away. Try a 2 to 3 day rotational program.

Your neighbors do not

Propane cannon noise is very disturbing to neighbors living nearby. Only use them if and when there is a need, and in a manner that protects neighbors from noise as much as possible. Face cannons into area to be protected, and away from nearby residences.

Birds roost at night

From sunset until dark, birds leave feeding areas and search their roosts. That means there is no need to run propane cannons at night or until birds arrive to feed. If the problem is birds roosting in your area, they are best controlled early morning, before they leave their roosts to feed.