



Baker Manock & Jensen Continues Legacy of Representing Agriculture



In 1974, the firm became known as Baker Manock & Jensen (BMJ), but its beginnings date back over a century. Over

that long history, the firm and its attorneys have strongly focused on agriculture as one of its main areas.

During the 20th century, some of the partners were instrumental in forming irrigation and water districts, as well as bringing water from Northern California to the San Joaquin Valley. Evolving over time, BMJ today specializes in issues relating to agricultural real estate and production agriculture; water and irrigation districts; as well as flood control districts, food processors, suppliers and other public entities. Attorneys also provide general counsel services for cooperatives, processors and producers. Additionally, the firm offers tax and succession planning, as well as litigation services.

BMJ is composed of several attorneys whose families are farmers or are directly involved in agriculture. Many are originally from the San Joaquin Valley and often times go back two or more generations, said attorney Doug Jensen. "When you talk about family farms, we understand."

"The firm has a very broad and specialized agricultural focus with leading experts in a variety of areas," explained attorney Joe Marchini. "We're familiar with both the industry and the applicable law."

BMJ practices law throughout California. The firm is also a member of Meritas, a worldwide affiliation of law firms. This gives BMJ the ability to work with counsel from other law firms in many foreign jurisdictions to see that their client's needs are met.

"So much of what is grown here is exported," said Jensen. Therefore, it is important to have legal connections domestically and internationally.

BMJ is unique because the lawyers are deeply involved in the industries of their clients. This involvement requires having good relationships with legislators and regulators at the local, state and federal levels of government. Some of the firm's past employees work for those government agencies.

"Knowing farming and its challenges and politics is important," said Marchini. "It certainly helps when you are representing someone to know what they are talking about."

"The proof of our success is that we have represented many clients for more than 20 years and over multiple generations."

The firm's goal is to help its clients succeed and grow. "Whether it is with family farms or corporations, we want to help our clients meet their goals," said Marchini.

"Our goal is to make our clients' jobs easier," added attorney Lauren Layne. "We try to help them avoid litigation and fines or other issues they may face down the road."

"We are problem solvers," said attorney Carl Refuerzo. "We figure out the problem and come up with a solution."

The firm is known for having experience in agriculture. BMJ often gets calls from national and international companies because it's known to have expertise in specific agricultural areas, said Refuerzo. The firm also gets referrals from clients and other law firms.

"The proof of our success is that we have represented many clients for more than 20 years and over multiple generations," said Refuerzo.

BMJ is community oriented and civic minded. Many of the lawyers serve on boards of charitable organizations throughout the community. If they aren't already on a board, they are seeking to be involved.