

California Department of Food and Agriculture

Minutes

Meeting/Conference Call

California Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Committee

Held on Wednesday, March 3, 2010

DoubleTree Hotel, 3100 Camino Del Rio Court, Bakersfield, CA 93308

CCP&DPC

Members Present: Craig Armstrong, Don Barioni, Jr., Richard Bennett, Dan Dreyer, Bob Felts, John Gless, Jim Gorden, Gus Gunderson, Nick Hill, Link Leavens, Mark McBroom, George McEwen, James McFarlane, Kevin Olsen, Dr. Etienne Rabe, Earl Rutz*, Brian Specht

OTHER ATTENDEES

Jill Barnier, Ted Batkin, Larry Bezark, Adriana Boyajian, Thomas Chao, Joel Nelsen, Carlos Ortiz, James F. Rudig, J.E. Surco, Debbie Tanouye, Glenn Wright, Bob Wynn

*Denotes attendance via conference call

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Nick Hill called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. The Chairperson asked the California Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CCP&DPC/Committee) members to review the minutes from the January 20, 2010 meeting and if there are corrections to be made to let him know.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Wynn conducted the roll call for the Committee. A quorum was present. There were introductions of members and guests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Chairperson Hill welcomed members and guests to the meeting. Larry Bezark, Branch Chief of Integrated Pest Control, discussed issues related to the Committee members, i.e. the Statement of Economic Interests, Form 700. Larry and CDFA staff would later provide them with the appropriate forms to complete for "Assuming Office" as new Committee members.

OVERVIEW OF ACP-HLB PROGRAM

Debbie Tanouye, Branch Chief of the Pest Detection/Emergency Projects Branch, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Department's ACP-HLB Program. She discussed in detail the history of the trap finds, their delimitation and treatment program, and described current activities regarding increased trapping in citrus-growing counties north of the infested areas. Debbie also covered the regulatory aspects of the program and the budget. There were several questions asked regarding the budgets and a discussion of costs associated with the CDFA Plant Pest Diagnostics Laboratory.

OVERVIEW OF ACP-HLP PROGRAM

Ted Batkin, President of the California Citrus Research Board, gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee members. He provided an overview of the ACP-HLB Program including new operational activities of trapping commercial citrus using handheld GPS units, converting the data quickly into databases and maps showing the location of traps. Ted covered the new laboratory facilities and their role in the overall cooperative program. He briefly discussed a research project with potential for use in California entitled, "The Systems Approach to Detection Assays: Achieving High Throughput and High Content." He discussed public outreach and education and provided handouts that are available for events.

ACP/HLB TASK FORCE INFORMATION FLOW

Larry Bezark reported on the ACP/HLB Task Force Information Flow. Larry and Ted Batkin are co-chairs for the HLB Task Force that has three Subcommittees:

- Regulatory – Co-Chairpersons Nick Condos and Joel Nelsen
- Communications and Outreach – Chairperson vacant
- Science and Technology – Chairperson MaryLou Polek

The three Subcommittees and ACP/HLB Task Force will meet quarterly in Visalia, Fresno, or Sacramento and periodically will hold interim conference calls.

Larry described the process for obtaining recommendations from the Subcommittees, the review of the recommendations by CDFA, and the documentation of whether the recommendations were implemented or not. This process was put into place a few months ago and should help with the flow of information.

BUDGET/ASSESSMENT

Bob Wynn provided budget and assessment information to the Committee. The budget presented is the best estimate at this point in time. Administrative costs of CDFA, committee activities, meeting preparations and salaries are being charged to the Committee's budget.

Total administrative costs for Fiscal Year 2009/10 (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010) are estimated to be \$34,000. CDFA is still working through some of the assessments, which is a large portion of the Committee's budget. Bob Wynn is working with Rick Jensen from the Inspection Services Division who presented specifics on collecting the assessment at the last meeting. **Please note a date correction**--the bill was effective on October 11, not October 9. CDFA will be communicating with any industry members that this may have affected. The information on the assessment collection will be presented in detail at the next meeting.

The anticipated assessments between October 11 and September 30, 2010, are estimated to be approximately \$1.7 million.

Bob Wynn discussed the terms of the members and the ability for the Secretary to re-appoint termed-out members. In order to give the Secretary as much flexibility in terms of appointing members, the district nominees may include those who have been termed out, and the termed out members can be re-appointed.

James McFarlane provided a handout displaying the conditional terms of expiration for the Committee members. A motion was made to accept these as the Committee's conditional terms of expiration. See attached handout that was distributed at the meeting.

- It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed by the Committee to accept the recommendations for members' term expiration dates as presented by the Initial Terms Subcommittee.

Details of Committee Vote

Motion: James McFarlane; Second: George McEwen
In Favor: Armstrong, Barioni, Bennett, Dreyer, Felts, Gless, Gorden, Gunderson, Hill, Leavens, McBroom, McEwen, McFarlane, Olsen, Rabe, Rutz*, Specht
Against: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DRAFT HLB PROTOCOL

Larry Bezark presented an overview of the draft HLB protocol developed by CDFA's Primary State Plant Pathologist Kathy Kosta. This plan was created to guide CDFA in its actions in the event the HLB disease is detected in California either in a psyllid or in a host plant. Elements of the plan include methods for allowing movement of plant material, survey, delimitation and treatment actions, discussion of nursery stock production, implementation of quarantines and trace back and trace forward activities. This plan will be reviewed in a future conference call of the Science and Technology Subcommittee of the HLB Task Force.

REPORT FROM THE STRIKE COMMITTEE

Joel Nelsen, President of California Citrus Mutual, reported on his recent trip (the week of February 22) with a California delegation to Washington, DC and partners from Florida and Texas. They discussed funding appropriations for the next fiscal year with Congressional representatives. The appropriations request is for more than what they are currently assessing. The President's Citrus Health Response Program (CHRP) budget is set at \$45 million, which was \$24 million the previous year. This year, the USDA reduced their overhead charges significantly for the entire program, only taking \$5 million.

For Fiscal Year 2011/12, a total of \$58 million will be requested for the four states, with additional funding for California. A portion of the new funds will need to be appropriated to Arizona due to its recent detection, and approximately \$2 million to be used for Mexico. The USDA has made this program a significant priority for U.S. agriculture and is confident the President's budget amount will be similar next time.

In Dallas, USDA representative Osama El-Lissy put together an organizational chart that outlined how he wanted the entire national program to work. Osama wanted a national CHRP council to be the final decision-maker on all activities that are associated with the citrus health response plan, which will be headed by members of the industry. This will avoid any disputes that take place between the states, because he felt the industry can come together quicker and would force activity that needed to be done.

Gus Gunderson asked how information is distributed to the public in regards to psyllid finds. Ted Batkin responded that suspect samples are sent to CDFA, and they make the determination if an HLB find is positive. If the find is in a new area that prompts a quarantine, CDFA will initiate a press release. Occasionally, there is leakage and a reporter gets information beforehand. Once there is official confirmation of a positive find, the CDFA will immediately notify the Committee members via email.

Dr. Etienne suggested that a two to three hour workshop be held at the next meeting to organize a concise program and propose research ideas.

Chairperson Hill scheduled the next meeting of the Committee for Wednesday, April 14, 2010, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bakersfield, CA.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.