

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)  
ENVIRONMENTAL FARMING ACT SCIENCE ADVISORY PANEL**

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Auditorium  
1220 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

May 18, 2016

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Panel Members**

Don Cameron, Member and Chair  
Jocelyn Bridson, MSc., Member  
David Mallory (ARB), Member  
David Bunn, PhD. (Natural Resources Agency), Member  
Doug Parker, PhD., Subject Matter Expert  
Luana Kiger, MSc., Subject Matter Expert (phone)

**State Agency Staff**

Amrith Gunasekara, PhD., CDFA  
Geetika Joshi, PhD., CDFA  
Kelly Gravuer, PhD candidate, CDFA

**AGENDA ITEM 1 - Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 AM by the Chair, Mr. Don Cameron. Introductions were made. Present at the meeting were all the members noted above under "Panel Members". A quorum was established.

**AGENDA ITEM 2 - Updates**

**Minutes**

Chairman Cameron introduced the minutes from the February 23, 2016 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Bridson to accept the minutes as presented by CDFA staff and the motion was seconded by Dr. Bunn. The motion was moved by all members present and accepted without further changes.

**The State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP)**

Dr. Gunasekara provided an update on the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) including the most recent status of the ongoing drought, which is now in its fifth year. Dr. Gunasekara noted the announcement of the next solicitation for applications is anticipated in June 2016. Aggregated greenhouse gas and water savings from the first three rounds of SWEEP funding were presented. All project information

from previous rounds has now being included on the SWEEP website under a link titled "Stakeholder Info". Dr. Parker requested staff to establish a link between the CDFA SWEEP website and the Air Resources Board (ARB) website where the SWEEP projects have been visually presented on an online California state map.

### **CalCAN Report**

The California Climate Action Network (CalCAN) had requested CDFA an opportunity at this meeting to present to the Science Panel a new report on their evaluation of SWEEP. CalCAN presented their findings of SWEEP and has made available the report on their website. <http://calclimateag.org/sweep-progress-report/>. CalCAN noted that some counties, such as Imperial, have not received any SWEEP funding. Dr. Gunasekara noted that additional outreach activities will be provided in that county for the next round of funding. Discussion ensued on establishing a funds cap one entity could receive. Suggestions were provided and Dr. Gunasekara noted that prior to the next solicitation for application for SWEEP, a cap would be established which will be consistent with other incentive program like SWEEP at the federal level.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3 – CDFA Healthy Soils Incentive Program**

#### **Proposed Programmatic Framework**

Dr. Joshi provided an overview of a framework for a Healthy Soils Incentive Program if funding is allocated. The Healthy Soils Program will be designed to provide incentives to farms and ranchers to build carbon and reduce greenhouse gases on agricultural lands. The framework was presented at this meeting at the request of Science Panel members. The request was made at the previous Science Panel on May 18, 2016. The framework presentation included estimated timeframes if funding was allocated. Discussion ensued including comments from the Science Panel members. Important points included using USDA NRCS to discuss the conservation practices, use of Resource Conservation Districts in the verification component, ensuring an user-friendly application process (especially for smaller agricultural operations), establishment of a funding cap per operation, eliminate duplicate funding with USDA NRCS, recognize the multiple benefits of practices, study established quantitative tools already available and create partnerships with industry to establish demonstration projects. The discussions facilitated public comment. Comments from the public included discussion on grant award size and recognize benefits already being done by growers.

#### **Compost Application Rates to Support the CDFA Healthy Soils Incentive Program**

Kelly Gravuer, a graduate student with UC Davis assisting CDFA, presented work completed on establishing compost use application rates to support a CDFA Healthy Soils Incentive Program. This work is a continuation of work completed through previous Science Panel meetings where a literature review, white paper report and public comment was facilitated to establish compost use application rates to support a CDFA Incentive Program that is designed to build soil organic matter in California agricultural operations. CDFA had received several comment letters and a summary of those comments were provided to the Science Panel as part of a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Gravuer noted that CDFA will work closely with CalRecycle to establish a definition for compost and also the State Water Board on the nutrient

component of the white paper document on compost use rates. Dr. Gunasekara noted that CDFA is in the process of revising the application rates based on the public comments and those rates will be presented to the Science Panel at the next meeting in August. Public comment was facilitated and a comment was made on the benefit of having a food safety section. There were comments also on the importance of defining compost in the white paper report. It was also noted that incentivized compost would be from a permitted or otherwise authorized facility under state law and subject to state inspections.

**Food hydrolysate and carbon sequestration**

Dr. Martin Burger presented a scientific presentation on the importance of food hydrolysate for building microbial communities and organic matter in soil. Discussion and public comment was facilitated.

**AGENDA ITEM 4 and 5 – Public Comment and future meetings**

Public comment was facilitated followed by discussion. The date and location of the next meeting is August 26, 2016 and will be in Salinas, California. Chair Cameron adjourned the meeting at 2:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:



Amrith Gunasekara, Ph.D.

8/26/16

Date