



2026 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Technical Review Committee

Public Meeting

March 13, 2026
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

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

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4242934460290442075>

Committee Members Present:

Christina Harrington	Amy Tesconi
Jim Dunbar	Sarah DeForest
Zach Bagley	Regan Penning

Committee Members Absent: N/A

CDFA Staff:

Karen Ross	Joey Valizan
Stephen Tachiera	Kyerra Jones
Isabel Lynch	Andrew Lawrence
Lauren McCawley	Edward Gebing
	Laura Ting
	Logan Dreher

Introductions and Opening Remarks

Karen Ross – Secretary, CDFA

Jim Dunbar, Chairman, Specialty Crop Technical Review Committee (TRC)

SCGBP Reports

Each subcommittee representative presented a brief summary, commented on the review process, and submitted the following Subcommittee Grant Proposal recommendations to the TRC Chair:

- **Grown In California** – Ms. Tesconi presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 32 Concept Proposals totaling \$13.7 million, and 15 Grant Proposals totaling \$6.3 million. **Motion to submit the Grown in California subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of the 2026 SCGBP Technical Review Committee made by Ms. Tesconi. Seconded by Ms. DeForest. Motion is unanimous.**
- **Healthy Specialty Crops for All Californians** – Ms. Penning presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 37 Concept Proposals totaling \$13.7 million, and 13

Grant Proposals totaling \$5.7 million. **Motion to submit the Healthy Specialty Crops for All Californians subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of 2026 SCBGP Technical Review Committee made by Ms. Penning. Seconded by Ms. Harrington. Motion is unanimous.**

- **Opportunity and Education for All California Specialty Crop Farmers** – Ms. DeForest presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 35 Concept Proposals totaling \$15.7 million, and nine Grant Proposals totaling \$3.9 million. **Motion to submit the Equity, Opportunity, and Education for All California Specialty Crop Farmers subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of the 2026 SCBGP Technical Review Committee made by Ms. DeForest. Seconded by Mr. Bagley. Motion is unanimous.**
- **Environmental Stewardship, Conservation, and Climate Smart Agriculture** – Mr. Dunbar presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 83 Concept Proposals totaling \$36.5 million, and 29 Grant Proposals totaling \$12.9 million. **Motion to submit the Environmental Stewardship, Conservation, and Climate Smart Agriculture subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of the 2026 SCBGP Technical Review Committee made by Mr. Dunbar. Seconded by Ms. Penning. Motion is unanimous.**
- **Plant Health and Pest Management** – Mr. Bagley presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 56 Concept Proposals totaling \$22.5 million, and 22 Grant Proposals totaling \$8.9 million. **Motion to submit the Plant Health and Pest Management subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of the 2026 SCBGP Technical Review Committee made by Mr. Bagley. Seconded by Ms. DeForest. Motion is unanimous.**
- **Additional Assistance for Limited Resource Applicants** – Ms. Harrington presented the subcommittee findings. The subcommittee reviewed 16 proposals totaling \$3.5 million. **Motion to submit the Additional Assistance for Limited Resource Applicants subcommittee recommendations to the Chairman of the 2026 SCBGP Technical Review Committee made by Ms. Harrington. Seconded by Ms. Tesconi. Motion is unanimous.**

Final Motion and presentation of the Technical Review Committee recommendations by Mr. Dunbar to Secretary Ross, seconded by All.

Remarks from Secretary Ross and a question for Technical Review Committee members.

Comments from Technical Review Committee regarding the TRC experience, themes noticed, and suggested improvements to the program.

Public Comment – No comments.

Closing Remarks by Secretary Ross.

Motion to adjourn by Secretary Ross.