

MEETING OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
(ALL MEETINGS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC)

Location: CA Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N Street – Main Auditorium
Sacramento, CA 95814

Contact: Joshua Eddy, Executive Director
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MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 2, 2016

Item
No.

(1) CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order on Tuesday, August 2nd at approximately 10:05 a.m., President Craig McNamara presiding.

(2) ROLL CALL

Roll call taken by Joshua Eddy, Executive Director.

Present:

Craig McNamara
Don Cameron
Ashley Boren

Mary Holz-Clause
Ben Drake
Nancy Casady

Joy Sterling
Donald Bransford
Bryce Lundberg

Absent:

Miles Reiter
Eric Holst

Mike Gallo
Martha Montoya

Helene Dillard

(3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 5th

Board member Don Cameron moved to approve the minutes of the July 5th meeting. Board member Ben Drake seconded the motion and a unanimous vote (9-0) carried the motion.

(4) DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE

Secretary Karen Ross provided a brief update to the Board. The update included pest detections (gypsy moths in Mendocino County), increased potential for invasive pest impacts in forest regions with tree mortality, and the lack of biomass plants for orchard and forest wood waste. Other updates included the implementation work that CDFA is doing in relation to the antibiotic legislation and medical cannabis implementation.

(5) PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD – Healthy Soils

The Board heard an update from the California Department of Food and Agriculture on Climate Smart Agricultural Programs as well as an overview from the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. This grant program (if approved) would provide technical assistance related to California’s Climate Smart Agriculture programs.

Speakers included:

- Jenny Lester Moffit, California Department of Food and Agriculture
- Karen Buhr, California Association of Rural Conservation Districts

The presentation concluded without formal action by the Board

(6) PANEL DISCUSSION – GMO Labeling

The Board heard presentations from representatives of two national organizations representing viewpoints on national GMO labeling.

Speakers included:

- Kent Bradford, Seed Biotechnology Center, University of California

- Colin O’Neil, Environmental Working Group (via Skype)

The panel discussion concluded without formal action by the Board

(7) PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD – Medical Cannabis

The Board heard a keynote presentation on medical cannabis from one of the leading advocates of marijuana legalization in California.

Speaker:

- Steve DeAngelo, ArcView Group

Mr. DeAngelo also introduced Sunshine Johnston, Southern Humboldt Community (SHC) Alliance, who provided perspective as a cannabis grower.

The presentation concluded without formal action by the Board

(8) BREAK

(9) PANEL DISCUSSION – Medical Cannabis

The Board heard presentations from several agencies and departments with oversight and enforcement authority on medical cannabis.

Speakers included:

- Amber Morris, CA Department of Food and Agriculture
- George Farnsworth, California Department of Pesticide Regulation
- Asif Maan, California Department of Public Health
- Lori Ajax, Bureau of Medical Cannabis Regulation

The panel discussion concluded without formal action by the Board

(10) PANEL DISCUSSION – Medical Cannabis

Continuing the Board’s discussion on medical cannabis, the Board heard from representatives from California’s medical cannabis growers and cultivators.

Speakers included:

- Hezekiah Allen, California Growers Association
- Nate Bradley, California Cannabis Industry
- Dan Grace, Dark Heart Industries

The panel discussion concluded without formal action by the Board

(11) PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD – Invasive Species

The Board heard presentations on Invasive Shot Hole Borers and the pest’s impact in the Southern California region.

Speakers included:

- Edith Hannigan, California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
- Sheryl Landrum, Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego
- Tom Smith, CAL FIRE

The presentation also included perspective from Stephen Brown (CA Department of Food and Agriculture) and Joe Deviney (Agricultural Commissioner of Santa Clara County).

The presentation concluded without formal action by the Board. A request was made by Board members to have staff prepare a briefing for review at next meeting of the Board.

(12) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Seven individuals provided public comment:

Sheara Cohen, CARCD, spoke on the significance of the shot hole borer and that pest and drought concerns are damaging California's water supply.

John DeFriel, Central Coast Agriculture, spoke on the need for best management practices for the cultivation of cannabis. The medical cannabis program reduces the direct relationship that growers have with consumers. Examples include: 1) track and trace programs reduce diversion out of the industry, 2) canopy caps make it difficult to adapt to the market, 3) Restrictions on the licenses and type of licenses farmers can have will reduce margins.

G.V. Ayers, SICPA, commented on the pilot program occurring in Humboldt County that will track product from the producer to dispensary. This pilot program goal is to prevent inversion/diversion of the product and could help inform the development of the track and trace program.

William Brooks, member of the public, provided a rebuttal to the anti-GMO labeling argument. Consumers should be protected and farmers given a choice on the food they produce. Glyphosate is serious problem in our food production as a result of pesticide use.

Mary Solecki, Environmental Entrepreneurs, spoke in favor of SB 32, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent to 1990 levels by 2030. SB 32 would provide validity and value to the credits system and also provide national influence on cap and trade programs.

Joe Deviney, Agricultural Commissioner (Santa Clara) spoke on the need for leadership on the shot hole borer issue. It is alarming the amount of devastation that has taken place.

Jessica Denning, Moms Across America, commented on the GMO labeling issue and advocated that GMOs need to be listed. Also provided testimony by Zen Honeycutt (Moms Across America) included as an attachment.

No further public comments were provided.

(13) BOARD DISCUSSION/OTHER BUSINESS

No further items were discussed.

(14) CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:55 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A

To members of the Board, specifically JLI, OTA, EWG and Whole Foods

In your attempts to protect organic, by supporting S 764, you have successfully destroyed labeling and our faith in you- JLI, OTA, EWG and WF and our government. NO WHERE on the package will the words GMO appear. 90% of GMos that are "labeled" with a QR code, website, phone number or symbol, without penalties for not complying, will not be included in the category of GMO, this is NOT a mandatory GMO labeling bill this is a betrayal of the American people on a catastrophic scale.

You should not only be ashamed of yourselves, you should be working to reverse this decision or we request that you resign immediately.

We are disgusted with your pandering to GMO corporation, OTA, by deciding to "not speak disparagingly" about conventional produce or food and by portraying conventional produce as just as safe as organic.

This is a bold faced lie which is harmful to American public and will not stand for it.

Conventional produce has been proven to be less nutritious, exponentially higher in pesticide and herbicide residue and vastly more detrimental to the soil and climate.

You defile the very intention of being on the board of the OTA and in position to protect organic by making any such claims.

You caved to industry pressure by supporting the Dark Act and you continue to lie to the American public by insinuating that conventional produce is as safe as organic.

If you do not have the courage to support the wishes of organic consumers and to speak "disparagingly" about a chemical food system that is destroying life on the planet, then step down. Others will.

Zen Honeycutt

Moms Across America