

**MEETING OF THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE-  
BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) PRODUCER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(ALL MEETINGS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC)**

**Location:** Via Zoom Webinar

**Contact:** Thea Rittenhouse, Farmer Equity Advisor

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**MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

Item

No.

**(1) CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at approximately 10:06 a.m., Thea Rittenhouse, Farmer Equity Advisor opening the meeting.

**(2) ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

Hung K. Doan	Emily Burgueno
Dennis Hutson	Minkah Taharkah
Kenneth Sparks	Qi Zhou
Tania Zuniga	Mireya Contreras
Javier Cruz	Lena Ortega

**Absent:**

Arshdeep Singh  
Donald Sherman

**(3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 13 Meeting- Committee Chair Hung K. Doan**

Committee Chair Hung called for the Approval of minutes of November 13, 2023 Meeting. All present committee members approved.

**(4) DISCUSSION AND REVIEW: Committee By-Laws**

Upon review of the BIPOC Producer Advisory Committee's By-Laws draft document by CDFA's Farm Equity Advisor Thea Rittenhouse and edits provided by three committee members, the By-Laws have been approved and adapted by the committee via quorum and majority of votes. The by-laws can be found on the CDFA BIPOC Producer Advisory Committee webpage. There were no public comments provided on this item.

**(5) PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE: CA Legislative Process Overview**

Brain Cote, a CDFA legislative manager, led a presentation to the committee on an overview and roles of the California legislature. The presentation included the senate and assembly count and terms, the cycle process of legislation, how bills get introduced, and the 2024 Legislative calendar. The presentation concluded without formal action by the Committee. A copy of the legislative overview can be consulted in the BIPOC Producer Advisory Committee's website. No public comments were provided for this item.

#### **(6) PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE: Governor's Budget Overview**

Arima Kozina, CDFA deputy secretary for Admin/Finance, led a presentation to the committee regarding the budget, administration budget, reductions, contracts, proposals, and a rough timeline regarding funding. Arima Kozina gave a quick overview of investments in different agricultural programs. The environmental impacts of said investments throughout time and future investments. Investment of food, nutrition, and climate resistance is an area of pride despite the strict budget. Brought up reductions that are happening within this year and funding programs that work with absolute emergencies such as flood and diseases. Comments made by committee members included accountability of emergency relief grant programs (CUSP), and clarification on timeline for the Urban Ag grant program. The presentation concluded without formal action by the Committee and no public comments were provided on this item.

#### **(7) DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEM: Ag Land Equity Task Force Updates as Standing Agenda Item**

After reiteration of the appointment of committee member Qi Zhou as Liaison to the Ag Land Equity Task Force (ALETf), a motion was brought forward, and committee members voted to make the ALETf updates a standing agenda item.

#### **(8) UC DAVIS PRESENTATION – BIPOC PRODUCER SURVEY/ INTERVIEW RESULTS**

William Apgar, a UC Davis student led a presentation on findings and results from a survey and interviews conducted with members of the BIPOC Producer Advisory Committee. The results also included the committee's understanding of the Farmer Equity Act.

In the findings, the broadness of the term "socially disadvantaged" farmer/ producer was pointed out. Land access and capital were the most common challenges that farmers are facing, and the top priority of committee members was advocacy in the policy levels for BIPOC producers.

Final comments from BIPOC Producer committee members were how the survey findings would provide an opportunity for the committee to act on the issues and CDFA's response was that the survey was administered to assess each committee member's priorities and be brought to discussion as agenda items in future meetings.

#### **(9) TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETING DISCUSSIONS**

- Next quarterly meeting proposed in person in May (Fresno)
- Accountability of programs by block grant organizations managing funds
- Privacy protection and PII (personal identifiable information) through grant programs. CDFA will invite Legal Office staff to discuss parameters of privacy protection and what is and is not subject to Public Records Requests.
- Other topics proposed include food safety regulations, and pesticides for future meeting topics.

**(10) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Christina Harrington- Briefly introduced CDFA's Farms to Community Food Hub Program. The Program is seeking input from committee members on the program and challenges facing individuals who want to form a community food hub.

**(11) CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting concluded at approximately 12:29 p.m.