

**Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee
Executive Committee Webinar Meeting
August 3, 2023, Minutes**

There was a quorum of the Executive Committee, and the following were in attendance:

Executive Committee Members:

Bob Felts, Jr.*	Mark McBroom*	Keith Watkins*
John C. Gless*		

Executive Committee Members Absent:

Dr. Etienne Rabe

CDFA Staff:

Carl Baum*	Anmol Joshi*	Michael Soltero*
Paul Figueroa*	Sarah Kraft*	ThuyVy Truong*
Jim Gorden*	David Morgan*	Nilan Watmore*
David Gutierrez*	Alex Muniz*	Jennifer Willems*
Victoria Hornbaker*	Keith Okasaki*	Jason Wu*
Laura Irons*	David Phong*	

Other Attendees:

Price Adams*	Natalie DeAngelo*	Mia Neunzig*
Kevin Ball*	Jasmine Lopez*	

*Participated via webinar

Opening Comments:

Mark McBroom called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., welcoming Executive Committee (Committee), guests, and staff participating. There were no public comments.

Outreach Subcommittee Report:

Price Adams advised on upcoming outreach activities including community events and social media partnerships. Other projects include holding “Train the Trainer” workshops for field crew supervisors and creating a video outlining the expected response for a commercial grove Huanglongbing (HLB) find.

Kevin Ball was asked about the recent press coverage regarding an unofficial HLB find in Ventura. Kevin reported that many growers in the Ventura area are concerned, with some speculating HLB is already in groves but has avoided detection. Victoria Hornbaker added that the find was a presumptive ACP sample and was not an official regulatory sample. Victoria stated that she spoke with a reporter to clear up misconceptions on sampling and the process involved in determining a positive sample. Price added that Nuffer, Smith, Tucker is monitoring the situation closely for miscommunications.

Finance Subcommittee Report

2023/24 Budget Review

Bob Felts, Jr. reminded the Committee that CDFA was tasked with reducing the budget that was presented at the previous meeting. Victoria noted that the CDFA team worked to reduce the budget to \$43,675,272, with more reductions pending. Bob reported a smaller crop is expected and the assessment rate will have to be raised.

Bob gave an update on expenditures and revenues. He reported approximately \$3,000,000 was spent each month in May and June 2023, making the total spending roughly \$36,239,404. Bob added that revenues increased to \$11,700,000. With a large amount of the Valencia crop still pending, Bob is confident the goal will be reached. Bob and Mark McBroom discussed the assessment rate being raised to nine. Bob noted that the growers are expecting an assessment rate increase and although not ideal, the alternative would be costlier. Victoria stated that she is working on securing approximately \$13,000,000 in Citrus Health Response Program funding this year.

Program Efficiency Proposals

Mark McBroom discussed the roles of the grower liaisons and pest control districts and their associated costs. Mark advised he would like the full committee to approve any additional contractors or hiring. He added the number of grower liaison positions should be reduced from the current nine liaisons responsible for specific counties, to a smaller team with larger regions.

Victoria clarified the new grower liaison contract was not an additional charge, but rather previously allocated funds for this position. Victoria agreed with Mark that moving to a larger region model is a good cost savings option. David Gutierrez reported that he met with the grower liaisons, and they proposed a twenty-five percent reduction in their contracts, while keeping their current areas. John C. Gless added that he would like to see a total of three or four grower liaisons for the entire state. Mark concluded the committee should look further into this proposal.

Anmol Joshi presented a revised report for delimitation survey and treatment for Los Angeles and Orange Counties. He reported that CDFA staff detected 873 positive trees in Los Angeles and Orange Counties in the last three months and anticipates at least another 500 positive detections in the next six months. Anmol advised that roughly ten percent of the budget goes to treatment for these two counties alone. To reduce costs, Anmol proposed a revised response focusing on leading edges. Anmol explained leading edges are areas leading to the agriculture/urban interface. In these areas, CDFA contractors would treat and survey the 250-meter area and remove the positive trees. For non-leading edges, CDFA staff would conduct quadrant survey and treatment of the find site and adjacent properties, using CDFA treatment trucks. Anmol added that tree removals would still be done by contractors.

Anmol reported that HLB delimitation activities being focused in areas closest to the agriculture/urban interface will limit the activities in core urban areas and lead to

significant cost savings from treatment contract reductions. Anmol proposed these savings be utilized to increase sampling of commercial citrus, which is the program's focus. Jim Gorden commented that changing the focus of risk-based survey would also point us toward interface areas instead of new finds in urban areas. Victoria reminded the committee that this recommendation came from the Science Advisory Panel.

Grove Trapping

David Phong reported his team's analysis of grove sentinel trapping data showed significant overlaps. David explained this overlap is due to other CDFA programs' traps already deployed in the same areas. Victoria gave the example of the glassy-winged sharpshooter traps which are screened by the Peirce's Disease Control Program and then sent to the Citrus Division for Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) screening. David reported that if CDFA staff removed ACP traps within half a mile of other programs' traps, Fresno County would see an eighty-six percent reduction in ACP trap numbers, while Tulare County would see a ninety-nine percent reduction. These reductions would result in costs savings. Jim Gorden expressed concerns that a large reduction would negatively impact ACP trapping efforts. David advised that with over 5,000 various traps in the respective areas, any negative effect would be minimal. Victoria reminded the Committee that the budget must be reduced to the approved amount. As such, she proposed removing Cooperative Agricultural Support Services contractors and having CDFA staff conduct all trapping activities. Mark McBroom agreed, and the proposal will be sent to the full committee.

Operations Subcommittee Report:

John C. Gless stated that the operations subcommittee advised to not further fund the ACP canine detection team. Lisa Finke was encouraged to continue to work with pest control districts and growers. John also reported that Aaron Dillon's previous HLB-quarantine nursery proposal did not pass an operations subcommittee vote and will not be recommended to the full committee.

Science Subcommittee Report:

Keith Okasaki stated that the new Sweet Orange Scab regulations go in effect on October 1st, 2023. Keith also added that the science subcommittee will meet in August to discuss regulatory working group reports.

Closing:

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on October 25th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.