

CALIFORNIA CITRUS PEST AND DISEASE PREVENTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 20, 2024

Committee Members Present:

Kevin Ball	Jim Gorden	Roger Smith
Brad Carmen	Mark McBroom*	Ram Uckoo
Aaron Dillon*	Kurt Metheny	Keith Watkins
John C. Gless*	Rod Radtke	

Committee Members Absent:

Craig Armstong	Bob Felts Jr.	Etienne Rabe
Franco Bernardi	Jared Plumlee	

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Staff:

Carl Baum	Anmol Joshi	Keith Okasaki
Ravneet Behla*	Sarah Kraft*	David Phong*
Fernando Berber	Kahleen Loo*	Preetika Pratap*
Whitney Cotton*	Zachary McCormack*	Alisha Rios*
Kiana Dao*	Dahmoon Maesomy*	Rathkiry Siv*
Ariana De la Torre*	John Mansfield*	Michael Soltero
Traci Mae Ducusin*	Andrew Mitchell*	Fabian Velasco*
Paul Figueroa	David Morgan*	Nilan Watmore
David Gutierrez	Alex Muñiz*	Jennifer Willems
Victoria Hornbaker*	Deborah Nardo	Jason Wu*

Guests:

Price Adams	Airana Gehrig*	Libby Ouellette*
Rob Clark*	Subhas Hajeri*	Brenda Radtke
Casey Creamer	Jessica Leslie*	Diana Shima*
Natalie DeAngelo Neal	Jasmine Lopez*	Cressida Silvers*
Lisa Finke*	Mia Neunzig*	Judy Zaninovich*
Dhirag Gautam*	Margaret O'Neill*	Sandra Zwaal*
Saurabh Gautam*		

**Attended the meeting virtually.*

Opening Comments

Keith Watkins called the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC) meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Keith Watkins welcomed the committee, staff, and members of the public participating in person and online. There was a quorum for the meeting.

Public Comments

Victoria Hornbaker thanked the citrus industry and the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division (CPDPD) for supporting the Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division (PHPPS) in eradicating invasive fruit fly infestations at seven quarantines in California between 2023 and 2024. All fruit fly infestations are now eradicated.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

The consent agenda contained the following items:

1. Minutes from the May 8, 2024 Committee meeting.
2. 2024-2025 Committee and Subcommittee Calendars
3. CDFA – Alliance Pest Control District (APCD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Motion: To approve the minutes on the Consent Agenda as presented.

First: Mark McBroom

Second: Kevin Ball

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Member Term Renewals

Dr. Etienne Rabe and Aaron Dillon agreed to serve an additional term. Their new term will expire on September 30, 2028. Bob Felts Jr. and Craig Armstrong will not serve an additional term.

Motion: To move John C. Gless from the CPDPC nursery seat to the Southern District seat vacated by Craig Armstrong.

First: Kevin Ball

Second: Jim Gorden

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To present certificates of appreciation to Craig Armstrong and Bob Felts Jr. recognizing their hard work as original members of the CPDPC.

First: Kevin Ball

Second: Jim Gorden

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Budget Operational Impacts and Position Sweeps

David Gutierrez reported that the State of California's budget is in a deficit. As such, an eight percent funding reduction and position sweeps will be applied to all state departments. CPDPD plans to loan "harder to fill" positions to other divisions within

CDFA for cost savings. The California Association of Professional Scientists (CAPS) Union has also recently negotiated major salary increases for its members. A majority of CPDPD positions are covered by the CAPS Union bargaining unit.

Review 2023/2024 Budget Expenditures and Revenue

Carl Baum reported that Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/2024 closed one week ago and all possible encumbrances have been liquidated. CPDPD will provide the Committee with final numbers at the next Finance Subcommittee meeting. The Huanglongbing (HLB) Emergency Fund (E-Fund), \$247,683 has been expended leaving a balance of \$1,379,552. CPDPD has expended \$88,810 from the Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Virus (CYVCV) Los Angeles (LA) E-Fund, leaving a balance of \$161,190. These E-Funds has been extended and are available to be used through June 2025. CPDPD administrative staff are working to identify eligible expenditures and realize the credits to the CYVCV-LA E-Fund.

Carl reported that revenue received to date for the months of October 2023 through June 2024 increased by \$8,294,981 to a total of \$15,481,722. The Clean Nursery Stock Program received \$55,949 in revenue, \$83,543 in expenditures, and \$95,943 in reimbursements for a net balance of \$323,384 for July 2023 to May 2024. Total revenue for the program is estimated to close at \$17,000,000, exceeding the \$16,200,000 projected by the Committee.

Proposed 2024/2025 Budget Reductions

Carl reported that CPDPD has a budget authority of \$42,400,000 in combined general, agricultural, and federal funding for FY 2024/2025. On May 8, 2024, the Committee approved a budget of \$41,577,100 for FY 2024/2025. Annual expenditures average between \$36,000,000 and \$38,000,000. A rate of \$0.09 per carton for a total of \$16,236,000 to assess the revenue for 180,400,000 cartons results in a \$4,864,000 shortfall. The CPDPD has prepared several proposals for up to \$4,592,058 in total savings, which would reduce the deficit to \$271,942 if all proposals are implemented immediately. Those proposals will be discussed below. Reconciling the remaining deficit would require additional budget reductions or an increased assessment rate.

2024/2025 Assessment Rate Discussion

Victoria Hornbaker reported that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) crop projection report is expected in September 2024 and has not yet been released for reference in setting the assessment rate. Keith Watkins stated that the Committee is familiar with the current crop and wants to move forward with setting the assessment rate at the end of the meeting after considering all reduction proposals.

OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Laboratory Update

Kevin Ball reported that additional HLB-positive trees continue to be detected. CDFA laboratory staff continue to prioritize processing samples from the ag/urban interface areas.

Multi-Pest Survey

David Phong presented data for 2024 Risk Survey Cycle 1 using the online dashboard that is updated weekly. 2024 Cycle 1 began in May 2024 and is 59 percent complete with 6 of the 30 allocated counties completed. Approximately 14,000 properties have been visited, generating 1,100 entomology and 2,210 plant samples.

CDFA Regulatory and County Agreement Update

Keith Okasaki reported that CDFA and county staff continue to enforce regulations to mitigate the spread of HLB. CDFA and Tulare County staff are also looking into bins of dirty fruit from Ventura County recently transported to the Central Valley by a local citrus packer. Keith is also looking into standardizing the frequency of inspections among counties to identify and prevent future issues. New regulatory ACP county agreements will be effective October 2024. Three home nurseries in Orange, Alameda, and San Joaquin Counties have been growing their own citrus and CDFA staff are taking appropriate action.

Santa Clara Spot Treatment Update

Dr. Ravneet Behla provided an update on ACP treatments in Santa Clara County. A Proclamation of an Emergency Program was created in May 2024 and a public meeting was held on June 5, for spot treatments in Santa Clara County. Treatments were conducted on June 10, 2024, through June 25. Of the 75 properties contacted in the treatment area, 54 properties were treated, 19 properties had no hosts, 1 property refused treatment, and 1 property was no contact. Post-treatment survey is complete with a second round of treatments scheduled to start September 16. *Tamarixia radiata* has also been released in this area.

Winter Trapping Analysis and Northern California Winter Trapping Contracts

Nilan Watmore introduced a proposed budget reduction of \$348,702 to winter trapping operations in the Northern District. David Phong presented data for trapping in counties where County Agricultural Commissioner staff service traps for CDFA. Nilan proposed reducing trapping operations for low-risk grids and working with county staff to optimize the minimum number of traps deployed to maintain a sufficient detection trapping array.

Motion: To approve proposed reductions to winter trapping operations.

First: Ram Uckoo

Second: Roger Smith

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously.

Southern California Treatment Contracts

Anmol Joshi proposed reducing the frequency of multi-pest survey in Imperial County along the 2-mile border buffer of the United States and Mexico from three times a year to twice per year. Reducing the survey frequency aligns with the multi-pest survey conducted statewide. This proposed reduction would result in a net budget savings of \$62,000.

Motion: To approve the reduction of surveys in Imperial County along the 2-mile United States and Mexico border to twice per year for \$62,000 savings.

First: Jim Gorden

Second: Ram Uckoo

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 9 yays (Kevin Ball, Brad Carmen, Aaron Dillon, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins) and 2 nays (John C. Gless and Mark McBroom).

Anmol presented cost comparisons for treatment conducted by contractors versus CDFA in Orange and Los Angeles Counties. In Orange County, the projected cost for treatment to be conducted by a contractor is \$1,000,000 compared to \$300,000 if conducted by CDFA. In Los Angeles County, the projected cost for treatment to be conducted by a contractor is \$1,500,000 compared to \$200,000 if conducted by CDFA. To conduct treatment CDFA would retrofit six CDFA trucks with treatment rigs, which costs approximately \$20,000 per truck.

Motion: To approve up to \$120,000 to retrofit trucks into treatment trucks in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

First: Roger Smith

Second: Jim Gorden

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 9 yays (Kevin Ball, Brad Carmen, Aaron Dillon, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins), 1 nay (John C. Gless), and 1 abstention (Mark McBroom).

Central California County Contracts

Jennifer Willems proposed reducing county ACP detection agreements by \$164,428. Jennifer also proposed optimizing Central District treatment by prioritizing the use of state trucks retrofitted for treatment as described by Anmol and reducing the encumbrances for treatment contracts by \$745,000 (\$320,000 in the Central Valley and \$425,000 on the Central Coast).

Motion: To approve proposed reductions of \$909,428 to county agreements and treatment contracts in the Central District.

First: Jim Gorden

Second: Kevin Ball

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 9 yays (Kevin Ball, Brad Carmen, Aaron Dillon, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins) and 1 abstention (Mark McBroom).

Regulatory County Contracts and Grower Liaisons

Keith Okasaki presented a proposed reduced budget for 2024-2025 county regulatory agreements. The proposed twenty-six percent overall reduction would save \$723,228.47.

Motion: To approve reducing the overall regulatory budget to \$2,500,000.

First: Ram Uckoo

Second: Rod Radtke

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 7 yays (Kevin Ball, Aaron Dillon, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, and Keith Watkins), 3 nays (Brad Carmen, John C. Gless, and Roger Smith), and 1 abstention (Mark McBroom).

Keith Okasaki reported that grower liaison contracts are bid on 2-year contracts at a maximum of \$70,000 per year. Grower liaisons were asked to reduce expenditures by at least 25 percent per agreement for FY 2023-2024 for cost savings. There are currently 10 agreements, each on different cycles with proposed budget reductions realized for each cycle over time. Keith stated that CDFA can conduct grower liaison functions that include outreach to growers, provide detection and regulatory guidance, and coordinate grower meetings for additional cost savings. The Committee agreed to review the proposal at the next CPDPC meeting.

Outreach Contracts

Price Adams presented two budget scenarios for outreach conducted by Nuffer Smith Tucker (NST). Outreach Scenario #1 would provide a 35 percent overall budget reduction resulting in \$313,050 in savings primarily driven by reimbursements from the Plant Division for fruit fly work and PPA funding from USDA and a decrease in advertising and travel. Outreach Scenario #2 would provide a 47 percent overall budget reduction resulting in \$415,200 to include figures from Scenario #1 in addition to eliminating market research, audio news releases, and reducing exhibitor fees.

Motion: To approve Outreach Scenario #2 for savings of \$415,200 for NST.

First: Kurt Metheny

Second: Jim Gorden

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 9 yays (Kevin Ball, Aaron Dillon, John C. Gless, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins), 1 nay (Brad Carmen), and 1 abstention (Mark McBroom).

SCIENCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Ethyl Formate Registration

Keith Watkins reported that the California Department of Pesticide Regulation is still reviewing information regarding the registration of ethyl formate.

San Joaquin Valley Pest Control Districts (SJV PCD) Report

Dr. Subhas Hajeri reported that from April to June 2024, a total of 12,397 traps were deployed on 3,102 sites in the Central Valley. He also reported that from mid-September to mid-December 2024, a total of 14,868 traps will be deployed on 3,717 sites in the Central Valley. The Alliance of Pest Control Districts is also supporting citrus yellow vein clearing virus research conducted by Dr. Yokomi of USDA and Dr. Tian of CDFA by testing 722 samples.

OTHER ITEMS, CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

Set the Assessment Rate

Keith Watkins recommended that The Committee set the assessment rate.

Motion: To set the assessment rate at \$0.09.

First: Jim Gorden

Second: Ram Uckoo

Motion Carries: The motion passed 7 yays (Kevin Ball, Brad Carmen, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins) and 4 abstentions (Aaron Dillon, John C. Gless, Mark McBroom, and Ram Uckoo).