

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes approval from February 26, 2025 meeting

CALIFORNIA CITRUS PEST AND DISEASE PREVENTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Committee Members Present:

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

Committee Members Absent:

N/A

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Staff:

Deborah Ayala*	Luci Kumagai	Alisha Rios*
Carl Baum*	Lauren Murphy	Michael Soltero*
Fernando Berber	Kahleen Loo*	Keith Okasaki
Traci Mae Ducusin*	Zack McCormack*	Michael Soltero*
Paul Figueroa*	Dahmoon Maesomy*	ThuyVy Truong*
David Gutierrez	Jana Miscevic*	Fabian Velasco
Victoria Hornbaker	David Morgan*	Nilan Watmore*
Anmol Joshi	David Phong*	Jennifer Willems
Sarah Kraft*	Preetika Pratap*	Jason Wu

Guests:

Price Adams*	Ariana Gehrig*	Ivan Milosavljevic*
Ron Carter*	Hailey Jones	Margaret O'Neill*
Rob Clark	Melanie Kammerer	Cressida Silvers*
Mark Collins	Melinda Klein	Jacob Villagomez
Casey Creamer*	Jessica Leslie	Helene Wright*
Lisa Finke	Jasmine Lopez*	Judy Zaninovich*
Saurabh Gautam	WeiQi Luo*	Sandra Zwaal*
Dhiraj Gautam*	Marcy Martin	

**Attended the meeting virtually.*

Opening Comments

Keith Watkins called the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC) meeting to order at 9:00 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

Mark Collins of Evergreen nursery in Escondido, California, asked if Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) feed on California native chaparral and expressed concerns regarding the spread of ACP in remote areas and the costs for destruction of citrus plants for retail nurseries within Huanglongbing (HLB) quarantines.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

The consent agenda contained the following items:

1. Minutes from the December 10, 2024 Committee meeting.

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

First: Rod Radtke

Second: Ram Uckoo

Motion Carries: The motion passed 11 yays (Kevin Ball, Franco Bernardi, Brad Carmen, Aaron Dillon, John C. Gless, Jim Gorden, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Roger Smith, Ram Uckoo, and Keith Watkins) and 1 abstention (Mark McBroom).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Election of New Board Members

Keith Watkins reported that there were four open seats on the CPDPC. Candidates for the nursery seat included Lorena Stroller and Jose Lima. Candidates for the Tulare County seat included David Mabs and Jeffrey Steen. Candidates for the two Fresno County seats included Keith Bratiss, Jay Gillette, Jason Reynolds, Hardeep Singh, and Mike Stark.

Motion: To approve Jose Lima's candidacy for the vacant nursery seat on the CPDPC.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: John C. Gless

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 12 votes by secret ballot.

Motion: To approve Jeffrey Steen's candidacy for the vacant Tulare County seat on the CPDPC.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: John C. Gless

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 10 votes by secret ballot.

Motion: To approve Jay Gillette's candidacy for the first of two vacant Fresno County seats on the CPDPC.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: John C. Gless

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 11 votes by secret ballot.

Motion: To approve Jason Reynolds's candidacy for second of two vacant Fresno County seats on the CPDPC.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: John C. Gless

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 8 votes by secret ballot.

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Review 2023/2024 Budget Expenditures and Revenue

Carl Baum reported that Fiscal Year (FY) 23-24 expenditures have closed. After all encumbrances cleared, year-to-date expenditures were \$36,100,881.

Carl reported that year-to-date revenue received for the 23-24 crop year was \$18,036,377 with 200,404,189 cartons assessed.

Review 2024/2025 Budget Expenditures and Revenue

Carl reported that FY 24-25 expenditures in October were \$3,284,177, expenditures in November \$2,967,923, and expenditures in December were \$3,246,280, bringing the total year-to-date expenditures to a total of \$15,901,202. Expenditures to date for the Huanglongbing (HLB) E-Fund for detection in Ventura County were \$304,454 with \$1,131,746 remaining balance. Expenditures to date to the Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Virus (CYVCV) Federal Fund for detections in Los Angeles County were \$224,358 with \$25,642 remaining balance. Expenditures to date for Outreach were \$90,319 with \$56,925 remaining balance.

Carl reported that year-to-date revenue received since the last meeting in November 2024 increased by \$3,045,423 to a total of \$3,936,750 in January 2025. The Clean Citrus Nursery Stock Program has a current net balance of \$233,964 after expending \$21,191 and receiving reimbursements of \$156,890 during the months of July 2024 to January 2025.

OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Laboratory Update

Lucita Kumagai presented the laboratory update for the HLB testing program from the Plant Pest Diagnostics Center. She reported that in 2024 the lab received an average of 6,558 plant samples per month and received an average of 388 ACP samples per month for a combined total of 83,345 total samples received for the year. For the month of January 2025, the lab received a total of 6,656 plant samples and 180 ACP samples.

While the number of HLB samples is comparable to the previous year's totals, there is an observable reduction in ACP sampling. As of February 14, 2025, there were 6,092 total reported HLB positive sites, 9,589 total detected HLB positive trees, and 885 total detected *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLas) positive ACP samples. Sixty-seven percent of HLB positive trees were detected in Orange County.

With the recent loss of two full-time agricultural biological technicians and temporary hiring restrictions implemented by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), Luci will be working with management and Citrus Research Board (CRB) to continue processing incoming samples.

HLB Risk-based Survey

David Phong presented data for 2024 Risk Survey Cycle 2 using the online dashboard that is updated weekly. Cycle 2 2024 began in October 2024 and is 61 percent complete with 19 of the 31 allocated counties completed. Approximately 13,700 properties were visited, generating 1,100 entomology and 2,200 plant samples.

David reported that treatment survey and treatment information will soon be added to the dashboard.

CDFA Operational Update

David Gutierrez presented the operational update including ACP and HLB delimitation survey and treatment areas for the Southern, Central, and Northern Districts.

Southern District

The first detection of HLB-positive trees was found in the city of Yorba Linda, Orange County, on a 21-acre property owned by The Orange County Flood Control District. A total of 2,893 citrus trees were treated and removed from the property. In late November 2024, an HLB-positive tree was detected on a residential property in Mission Viejo, Orange County, triggering a delimitation survey which led to the detection of nine additional trees. Eight of the trees have been removed with one tree pending removal. The HLB quarantine boundary in Orange County extended farther south and included an additional 85 square miles. Monthly public meetings were held to conduct delimitation survey in different areas of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. A total of 353 trees were removed during the months of December 2024 through January 2025 with 306 cumulative trees still pending removal.

Central District

Since the last Committee meeting, one commercial and eight residential ACP detections were found in Kern County, one residential and four commercial ACP detections were found in Tulare County, and treatment was completed for all residential ACP detections. *Tamarixia radiata* releases were conducted in Ventura and Kern Counties near the recent detections. Multi-pest survey, citrus commodity survey, grove trapping activities are ongoing. The last HLB-positive tree detection in Santa Paula, Ventura County, was found on October 8, 2024. Warrants for refusal properties are scheduled to be served on February 25, 2025.

Northern District

Trapping is ongoing in 15 counties. In Santa Clara County, delimitation trapping activities were reduced in the core area while retaining traps around the border. Since December 10, 2024, 22 new ACP detections were found in Santa Clara County. CDFA staff completed Santa Clara hotspot treatments in October 2024. *Tamarixia* releases are ongoing in San Jose, Santa Clara County, with an average of 6,000 insects released per month. Multi-pest survey 2024 cycle 2 is currently sixty-four percent complete.

CDFA Regulatory and County Agreement Update

Keith Okasaki reported that the agreement period for regulatory agreements began in October 2024. The 85 square-mile quarantine expansion in Mission Viejo, Orange County, encompassed approximately ten citrus groves that ship citrus to Ventura, Kern, and Riverside Counties. Regulatory staff are working with these growers to ensure they ship citrus that has been subjected to the appropriate mitigations. CDFA and county staff conducted many market inspections, which increased in number when more citrus tends to ship around the Lunar New Year. One nursery in Orange County selling trees outdoors was served multiple notices of violations before the plants were taken. A small nursery was discovered outside of the HLB quarantine in San Diego County with 70 to 100 citrus trees from Florida. Some of the trees showed signs of grafting. CDFA staff partnered with San Diego County agricultural staff to visit the property and conduct enforcement activities, including consideration for testing trees originating from states where HLB has been detected.

HLB Retail Nurseries

Keith reported that the current HLB quarantine encompassed a total 2,507 square miles spread over 6 counties. Nurseries found within the quarantine are currently given the choice to either destroy citrus nursery stock, move stock indoors, or build an approved, insect-resistant structure to protect the plants. As the void of available citrus nursery stock increased in quarantine areas, the number of private and commercial nurseries selling illegal nursery stock also increased, leading to increased labor in regulatory enforcement. Keith presented information for an HLB Retail Nursery Program which would require that shipping nurseries utilize USDA-approved structures, treat citrus nursery stock with systemic and foliar products, tag stock with appropriate quarantine and program tags, and ensure trees are only sold within 90 days of treatment, and that HLB retail nurseries sign a compliance agreement with CDFA, store no more than 500 plants at a time, which cannot be sold outside of the quarantine, in a solid-wall structure more than 30-feet from doorways, and destroy the trees 90 days after treatment.

Motion: To accept the recommendation for allowing citrus nursery stock to be sold in the Huanglongbing (HLB) quarantine with the modification of 250 trees maximum at one time.

First: Roger Smith

Second: Jim Gorden

Motion Carries: The motion was rejected with 8 nays (Brad Carmen, John C. Gless, Mark McBroom, Kurt Metheny, Dr. Etienne Rabe, Rod Radtke, Ram Uckoo, and Keith Watkins), 4 yays (Kevin Ball, Aaron Dillon, Jim Gorden, and Roger Smith), and 1 abstention (Franco Bernardi).

Biocontrol Update

Dr. David Morgan presented the ACP biocontrol update for February 2025. David reported that biocontrol activities shifted focus to conducting releases as soon as pest detection reports (PDRs) are confirmed to identify where ACP is present. Staff released 32,199,957 total insects from 2011 through February 2025 with 2,643,660 insects released in 2024 and 166,800 insects released so far in 2025. The majority of releases occurred in areas with HLB detections, along the United States/Mexico border, on citrus movement corridors, and in new ACP detection areas to include San Diego and Santa Clara Counties. The Committee discussed *Tamarixia radiata* production.

Motion: To accept the recommendation that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) continue *Tamarixia radiata* production for the benefit of the citrus industry.

First: Mark McBroom

Second: Franco Bernardi

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 11 yays (Kevin Ball, Franco Bernardi, Brad Carmen, Aaron Dillon, John C. Gless, Mark McBroom, Kurt Metheny, Rod Radtke, Roger Smith, Ram Uckoo, and Keith Watkins) and 1 abstention (Jim Gorden).

SCIENCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Ethyl Formate Registration

Dr. Etienne Rabe reported that Jim Cranney stated that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are working to approve the registration of ethyl formate in March or April 2025.

Removing Counties from ACP Quarantine

Keith Okasaki reported that a regulatory package will be submitted to USDA for review to remove California counties from an ACP quarantine following two years without an ACP detection.

OUTREACH SUBCOMITTEE REPORT

Price Adams presented recent and upcoming outreach activities. Nuffer Smith Tucker (NST) distributed targeted English, Chinese, and Vietnamese language social media ads were centered around the Lunar New Year to encourage residents to follow best management practices when celebrating the holidays with citrus and received 872,170 touchpoints. NST also secured event attendance at the Highland Citrus Harvest Festival in March 2025 and the California Citrus Park Citrus Festival in April 2025. Outreach to both residents and local news outlets following the first HLB detection in Mission Viejo

was conducted, including target social media ads earning 70,296 touchpoints. Residential outreach following a spike in ACP detections was conducted in Kern County, including targeted social media ads with a focus on not bringing citrus trees into the area, earning 84,279 touchpoints. Development of CaliforniaCitrusThreat.Org continued with refreshes in design and website functionality. Social media content with gardening influencer, Coastal Homestead, and a media-ready video package were created to highlight the CPDPD's biocontrol efforts. A CitrusInsider.org e-blast was created and outreach to key industry stakeholders was conducted following HLB detections found on inactive citrus acreage in Yorba Linda, Orange County. NST staffed a booth at the California Association of Pest Control Advisors (CAPCA) Conference in Anaheim and secured CPDPP presence at the California Citrus Mutual (CCM) Citrus Showcase in March 2025 and the CAPCA Spring Summit in April 2025. Two articles for Citrograph Magazine's Spring and Summer issues were drafted and an "HLB in Grove" video was created. A Citrus Hero Award compilation video was created and posted on CPDPP social accounts. NST also attended the California League of Cities Annual Conference and Expo in Long Beach as well as the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Annual Meeting in Los Angeles County.

USDA Report

Helene Wright reported that a first-ever HLB-positive detection was confirmed in the state of Mississippi, which has declined interior quarantine in favor of a state HLB citrus quarantine. A first-ever HLB-positive detection was also confirmed on the southern end of the state of Arizona, which opted for an interior quarantine.

CRB Report

Marcy Martin reported that CRB recently sponsored and spoke at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) Citrus Day attended by California citrus growers and citrus industry members. CRB's other programs and projects are all ongoing. Marcy also stated that all research inquiries or ideas received by CPDPD, members of The Committee, or audience members should be directed to the CRB dashboard.

San Joaquin Valley Pest Control Districts (SJV PCD) Report

Dr. Saurabh Gautam reported that in spring and fall 2024 a total of 28,585 traps were inspected in 3,748 trapping locations in the Central Valley. He also stated that multi-pest inspections in spring and fall consisted of 6,888 trees with no ACP or other exotic pests detected. In summer and winter 2024, a total of 2,476 traps were inspected in 37 trapping locations in the Central Valley. ACP trapping at non-citrus sites also included weigh-stations, truck stops, and transportation corridors.

OTHER ITEMS, CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

Review Strategic Plan Action Items

David Gutierrez presented the Strategic Action Plan. Mark McBroom requested that NST add the words "all of" before the words "California commercial citrus" in the mission

statement and vision statement. Keith Okasaki reported that the Subcommittees will need to establish working groups to oversee the various tasks presented. The Committee discussed membership for each of the various working groups overseeing each of the corresponding strategic priorities outlined in the Strategic Action Plan.

Right-Sizing the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division (CPDPD)

David Gutierrez and Keith Okasaki presented information on right-sizing the CPDPD. In 2009, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program (CPDPP) was part of CDFA's Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division (PHPPS) with detection and eradication activities performed by the Pest Detection/Emergency Projects Branch (PD/EP) and regulatory activities performed by Pest Exclusion Branch (PE) with work on citrus placed on hold for emergency projects. The CPDPD was formed in 2019 with 168 of the 225 proposed positions realized. As requested during the Strategic Planning Meeting, the CPDPD performed a cost and impact analysis of four scenarios for continuing the CPDPP. Option A would transition the CPDPD to PHPPS as a Citrus Branch. Option B would re-integrate staff into existing branches within PHPPS with no dedicated citrus staff and staff pulled from citrus operations to respond to pest emergencies. Option C would right-size the CPDPD in alignment with strategic priorities with vacant and selected filled positions transferred to PHPPS. Option D would increase the assessment rate.

Motion: To accept the recommendation to move toward Option C to right-size the CPDPD.

First: Jim Gorden

Second: Mark McBroom

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m. The next meeting will be on May 14, 2025 in Riverside or San Bernardino, California.