

**Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC)  
Operations Subcommittee Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes  
June 26, 2025**

There was a quorum of the Operations Subcommittee, and the following were in attendance:

**Operations Subcommittee Members Present:**

Kevin Ball	John C Gless	Jason Reynolds
Aaron Dillon	Kurt Metheny	Roger Smith

**California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Staff:**

Dr. Ravneet Behla	Lucita Kumagai	Grace Radabaugh
Joseph Damiano	Dr. Cheol Min Lee	Michael Soltero
Kiana Dao	Dahmoon Maesomy	Fabian Velasco
Paul Figueroa	Raymond Niem	Nilan Watmore
Anmol Joshi	Keith Okasaki	Jennifer Willems
Dr. Marina Kaiser		

**Other Attendees:**

Dr. Rob Clark	Dr. Melinda Klein	Kiran Sigdel
Dr. Dhiraj Gautam	Jasmine Lopez	Stephanie Stark
Christopher Greer	Dr. Ivan Milosavljevic	Keith Watkins
Dr. Subhas Hajeri	Margaret O'Neill	Sandra Zwaal
Hailey Jones	Paige Shewmaker	

All attendees participated via webinar

### **Opening Comments**

Kevin Ball called the CPDPC, Operations Subcommittee meeting to order via webinar at 9:03 a.m. on Thursday, June 26, 2025. Keith Okasaki welcomed Subcommittee members, guests, and staff. There were no public comments.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 – FIND AND ERADICATE HUANGLONGBING**

#### **HLB Detection, Delimitation, and Tree Removal**

Anmol Joshi highlighted major events that occurred since the previous Operations Subcommittee meeting in April 2025, which included expansions of the Huanglongbing (HLB) quarantine in the Coto De Caza area of Orange County and the Perris area of Riverside County. These expansions added an additional 48 square miles to the HLB quarantine area. Staff are currently conducting HLB delimitation surveys in the 250-meter area surrounding the Perris and Coto De Caza detections and have completed survey in Valley Center. Per the updated strategic plan, staff are conducting HLB survey on detection sites only in areas that are more than three miles away from commercial citrus in Rancho Santa Margarita, Anaheim, Brea, Irvine, Lake Forest, Midway City, Mission Viejo, Tustin, and Yorba Linda. Anmol reported that from March through June 2025, a total of 172 trees tested positive in Southern California, 94 of which came from Orange County, 52 trees have been removed, and 518 trees are pending removal. Anmol added that there are still many trees pending removal in Los Angeles and Orange Counties as CDFA has not been utilizing any outside vendors removal activities due to budgetary restrictions. CDFA will resume using outside vendor services starting in July 2025.

#### **Laboratory Update**

Lucita Kumagai reported the monthly total plant and Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) sample submission for 2025 is comparable to the 2024 numbers. Between the Citrus Research Board (CRB) and CDFA lab, a total of 31,950 plant and ACP samples have been tested since the beginning of 2025. The average number of plant samples submitted per month has decreased to 5,519 from 6,558 as reported in 2024. The average number of ACP samples submitted per month has increased to 871 from 388 as reported in 2024. In 2025, 27,593 plant samples and 4,330 ACP samples have been tested for HLB, with 675 trees and 36 ACP samples testing positive for HLB. Since 2012, a grand total of 10,101 trees and 904 ACP samples have tested positive for HLB.

#### **Multi-Pest Survey**

Dr. Cheol Min Lee reported that the 2024 multi-pest survey (MPS) cycle two, which began in October 2024, is complete. 2025 MPS cycle one, which began in May 2025, is currently 36 percent complete. Survey is completed in 5 of the 32 allocated counties. To date, approximately 10,000 properties have been surveyed, from which approximately 1,900 ACP and 2,100 plant samples were collected and submitted. Currently in the Southern District, 19 staff from 6 offices are actively working on MPS for this cycle, with 39 percent of the 209 assigned grids completed. In the Central District, 17 staff from 4 offices are actively working on MPS for this cycle, with 34 percent of the 428 assigned grids completed. In the Northern District, 2 staff are actively working on MPS for this cycle, with 36 percent of the 98 assigned grids completed. Of the samples collected this

cycle, there has been a decrease in HLB positive detections compared to the previous 6 months due to CDFA moving surveys away from the core HLB area.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 – CONTROL ACP MOVEMENT AND ENFORCE REGULATIONS**

### **Regulatory Activity Update**

Keith Okasaki reported that laboratory permits have been amended and assigned for research/non-regulatory labs who report unofficial, suspect HLB-positive samples. These labs were previously only permitted to notify CDFA of suspect HLB-positive samples but are now permitted to notify the owner of the tree at the same time as CDFA. This gives the owner of the tree the opportunity to remove any suspect HLB-positive trees before CDFA can collect an official sample. CDFA will still survey neighboring hosts and collect samples from any symptomatic trees. In the absence of an official HLB-positive tree, there would be no regulatory action or quarantine expansion. This change will hopefully incentivize growers to voluntarily submit samples to these research labs and potentially lead to identification and rapid removal of suspect HLB-positive trees.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 – ACP CONTROL/SUPPRESSION**

### **Trapping, Treatment, Staffing, and Right-Sizing Updates**

#### *Southern District*

Anmol Joshi reported that delimitation treatments were conducted in Coto De Caza, Mission Viejo, Riverside, and Valley Center and are now complete. Public meetings were conducted in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino to treat hosts within delimitation areas. Staff are conducting HLB survey only on detection sites in areas that are more than three miles away from commercial citrus in Anaheim, Brea, Costa Mesa, Foothill Ranch, Garden Grove, Irvine, La Habra, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Santa Ana, Yorba Linda, Tustin, Villa Park, Orange, Commerce, Duarte, Pico Rivera, and Rancho Cucamonga. Staff are revisiting properties in these areas that refused treatment or were unable to be contacted. Currently, staffing numbers in the Southern District are 75, but will be 57 starting July 1, 2025, as part of right-sizing updates.

#### *Central District*

Jennifer Willems reported that there has not been an official ACP detection since January 22, 2025. One adult ACP was detected on an Alliance of Pest Control Districts (APCD) trap in a commercial citrus block in Arvin, Kern County. CDFA was notified on May 30, and staff were immediately sent to perform a tap sampling and survey on the tree where the APCD trap was located, check surrounding traps, and set an additional 13 traps as a modified delimitation. The ACP suspect was sent to the CDFA lab on June 2 and confirmed as ACP on June 3. No treatment action was taken by CDFA as it is not an official sample. The sample was too old to be tested for *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLas). Detection and grove trapping is ongoing and delimitation trapping activities are being conducted by county staff. Citrus commodity survey has been completed for the spring and will resume in the fall. In Santa Paula in Ventura County, 3,418 properties have been surveyed as part of HLB delimitation activities with 112

trees testing positive for HLB, 102 HLB-positive trees removed, and 1,224 properties treated. Public meetings occurred on June 10 and June 24 for treatment activities. The last HLB-positive trees were reported on June 6 and June 13. There are currently no pending hires or staff vacancies in the Central District; staffing changes starting July 1 as part of right-sizing updates will be reported at the next Operations Subcommittee meeting.

#### *Northern District*

Nilan Watmore reported that new county trapping agreements, beginning October 1, 2025, are being executed with agreement dollar amounts being reduced by 20 percent from the previous year, totaling around \$220,000. 2024 MPS cycle two has been completed. 2025 MPS cycle one began May 2025, with 36 percent of survey completion so far in the Northern District. Since the previous Operations Subcommittee meeting on April 9, 2025, ACP has been detected on 17 properties in Santa Clara County, 16 in San Jose and one in Morgan Hill. One property contained a breeding population where 48 ACP suspects were collected, none of which tested positive for CLAs. The ACP detection in Morgan Hill resulted in a new delimitation area covering three grids. Treatments are planned for the week of June 23 for 40 properties in San Jose and six properties in Morgan Hill.

#### *Biocontrol*

Grace Radabaugh provided updates on biocontrol releases. As of May 2025, 32,797,257 *Tamarixia radiata* have been released since the start of the biocontrol program in 2011, with 764,100 releases in 2025 to date. The program is on track to release 2 million *T. radiata* in 2025, which is a slight decrease relative to previous years as the program no longer receives insects from University of California Riverside (UCR), CRB, or other insectaries, as well as there being a few pest problems. Biocontrol releases continue to be focused in HLB quarantine areas, making up 83 percent of releases. Releases on the United States border have increased from two to five percent due to the United States Department of Food and Agriculture (USDA) and Texas Agriculture Department halting border releases in April. The program continues to do releases along trade routes, area-wide management areas, and newly established ACP find sites.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 – OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION**

#### **Grower Liaison Discussion**

Keith Okasaki presented slides regarding Grower Liaison (GL) contracts and suggested changes to align with current budget restrictions. Historically, GLs have bid on two-year contracts with a maximum spending allowance of \$70,000.00 per year. In fiscal year 2024, the GLs were asked to reduce expenditures by 20-percent per contract, and in March 2025 GLs were asked to pause activities due to budgetary restrictions. Over the years, GLs have provided support with outreach and grower participation in pest prevention activities. They act in a non-regulatory capacity by providing e-mail notification of CDFA activities, coordinating grower meetings, encouraging commercial treatments in response to ACP and CLAs-positive ACP detections, and have historically coordinated area-wide treatments. CDFA has allocated \$240,000 as a maximum budget

for GL contracts for the 2025-26 fiscal year. The APCD is planning to contract with a few GLs in the San Joaquin Valley. Keith presented two options for the subcommittee to discuss for budgeting for GL contracts: awarding \$80,000.00 max for GL contracts in Southern California or cancelling the GL program.

Recommendation:

1. The Operations Subcommittee members unanimously supported the recommendation to allocate \$80,000.00 for one year for one Grower Liaison contract covering Southern California counties, which will be presented at the upcoming full CPDPC meeting.

**Outreach Report**

Dahmoon Maeesomy reported on Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division (CPDPD) outreach activities in 2025. CPDPD staff attended the California Association of Pest Control Advisor's Spring Summit, the California Citrus Mutual showcase, the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Conference, the California Contract Cities Association's annual municipal seminar, the Highland Citrus Festival, the California State Historic Park Citrus Festival, and various Rare Fruit Grower Meetings statewide.

CPDPD held a webinar for Master Gardeners providing information on the state of ACP and HLB and regulatory best practices for residents. Keith Okasaki presented on regulatory best practices and Margaret O'Neill provided an overview on the state of ACP and HLB, pest and disease symptoms, and gardening best practices to prevent pests.

CPDPD created Chinese, Vietnamese, and English language social media encouraging residents to limit the movement of citrus plant material and follow best practices for ACP and HLB management amid Lunar New Year celebrations. CPDPD also created targeted social media ads to residents in HLB quarantine areas warning to not take citrus trees with them if they plan to move outside of the HLB quarantine and emphasizing the risks of moving citrus. CPDPD coordinated with a social media gardening influencer (The Coastal Homestead) who created a seven-part social media series to educate and encourage residents to incorporate beneficial insects into their gardens.

CPDPD coordinated with the USDA's "Hungry Pests" billboard campaign ahead of Memorial Day, targeting summer travel in the Southern California area. These billboards are free for CDFA and are part of a multi-state collaboration campaign to warn residents of the risks of spreading pests.

CPDPD also coordinated with the San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner's (SDCAC) office to provide the San Diego County Farm Bureau with informational materials and resources encouraging residents to cooperate with agricultural officials conducting surveys and treatments in quarantined areas. CPDPD supported SDCAC by distributing informational emails and providing informational materials to distribute at grower meetings following the quarantine expansion in Valley Center. CPDPD, in

coordination with Nuffer, Smith, Tucker (NST), the San Diego Mission Resource Conservation District, and SDCAC, held an informational session for growers and residents sharing information on the status of ACP and HLB, pest prevention best practices, and quarantine regulations.

CPDPD developed a biocontrol media package that included images and interview clips of Dr. David Morgan to be utilized for media outreach around *T. radiata* releases. NST developed an informational article for Citrograph Magazine's summer edition. CPDPD distributed four Citrus Insider email bulletins regarding critical industry updates. CPDPD also finalized an informational video titled "HLB in the Grove" that provides an overview of the steps that would be taken by CPDPD and actions required of a grove owner/manager if a plant sample from their grove tests positive for HLB. Lastly, CPDPD has continued to refresh the functionality, design, and content of the California Citrus Threat website, which includes the development of two new ACP and HLB informational videos.

#### **Other Item(s) and Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m. An interim Operations Subcommittee meeting will be scheduled in advance of the full CPDPC meeting in September.