

**Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC)  
Executive Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes  
April 27, 2026**

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

**Executive Committee Members:**

Kevin Ball	Mark McBroom*	Roger Smith
John C. Gless	Kurt Metheny	

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

David Gutierrez*	Keith Okasaki	Jennifer Willems*
Anmol Joshi	ThuyVy Truong*	Claudia Vazquez
Raymond Niem*	Nilan Watmore*	

**Other Attendees:**

Price Adams*	Frances Dunn*	Jim Phillips
Al Bates	Zak Laffite	Elaine Trevino*

*\*Attended the meeting virtually.*

## **Opening Comments**

John C. Gless called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m., welcoming the Executive Committee, guests, and staff. There were no public comments.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Kurt Metheny recommended approving the minutes from the previous Executive Committee meeting held on March 6, 2026. The recommendation was seconded by Roger Smith and passed unanimously.

## **Frequency of Executive and CPDPC Meetings**

Committee members felt that quarterly meetings were insufficient and discussed increasing the frequency of meetings. The Executive Committee opted to have Executive Committee meetings scheduled monthly and cancelled if not needed while the CPDPC Full Committee meetings will be scheduled to occur every two months. A new calendar will be presented at the upcoming Full Committee meeting on June 10, 2026, and voted on for approval.

## **Santa Barbara and Ventura Detections Update**

In March, the first *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* positive (CLas-positive) Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) was detected in Santa Barbara County on a residential property. Treatment activities and delimitation surveys occurred following the detection, with zero samples testing positive for huanglongbing (HLB). A CLas-positive ACP was also detected in a commercial grove in the Fillmore area of Ventura County. Following the detection, CDFA staff sampled all border trees from groves that fell within the 250-meter delimitation area. A total of 3,183 plant samples were collected and all tested negative for HLB. These areas will be prioritized in future survey cycles.

## **Discuss California's Effort to Protect its Industry from HLB**

At the previous Full Committee meeting on March 10, 2026, Zak Laffite, President of Wonderful Citrus, distributed a document and called for discussion amongst California citrus industry stakeholders about the future of the industry and how to best protect it from ACP and HLB. Committee members agreed that discussions are needed regarding the future of the industry, direction of the program, and forming a long-term plan, especially following the recent CLas-positive ACP detections. Al Bates, president of Sun Pacific; Jim Phillips, president of Sunkist Growers; and Zak Laffite, President of Wonderful Citrus, whose companies all represent a large portion of California citrus growers, joined the meeting and committed to taking part in ongoing discussions. Discussions began with identifying whether it would be more beneficial to critique and suggest changes to the current program or approach discussions as a blank sheet. Attendees mostly agreed that a blank sheet approach would promote more ideas which would lead to better discussions and planning for the future. Other attendees countered by noting operational challenges in the program that must be included in discussions.

To further continue discussions, the Executive Committee members expressed the need for an Ad Hoc Committee that includes all stakeholders and representatives across all California regions, and hosted by a neutral moderator. Ad Hoc Committee

member candidates will be provided to John C. Gless in advance of the next Executive Committee meeting on June 5, 2026.

**Other Item(s) and Adjournment**

The Executive Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.