

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

Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2026

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

Operations Subcommittee Members:

Kevin Ball	Aaron Dillon	Jason Reynolds
Justin Brown*	Jose Lima	Roger Smith*
Brad Carmen	Kurt Metheny*	Keith Watkins

Subcommittee Members Absent:

Jim Gorden

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Staff:

Dr. Ravneet Behla	Lauren Murphy	Claudia Vazquez
Paul Figueroa	Keith Okasaki	Nilan Watmore
Anmol Joshi	Michael Soltero	Jennifer Willems
Alex Muniz		

Other Attendees:

Price Adams	Dr. Melinda Klein	Mia Neunzig
Dr. Rob Clark	Kurtis Lepper	Margaret O'Neill
Natalie DeAngelo	Jessica Leslie	Dr. Raju Pandey
Michael Frantz	Marcy Martin	Jessa Rosenthal
Dr. Subhas Hajeri	Mark McBroom	Judy Zaninovich
Meagan Lott	Dr. Ivan Milosavljevic	Sandra Zwaal

All attendees participated via webinar

*Subcommittee members declared their inability to use a camera

Opening Comments

Chair, Kevin Ball called the CPDPC, Operations Subcommittee meeting to order via webinar at 9:03 a.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026. Keith Okasaki welcomed Subcommittee members, guests, and staff.

Public Comments

Mark McBroom commented on the recent huanglongbing (HLB)-positive tree detection in the Calexico area of Imperial County and requested the CPDPC consider increasing funding for the Imperial County Agricultural Commissioner's office. Mark explained the funding will be used to strengthen Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) control along the US-Mexico border.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 – FIND AND ERADICATE HLB

HLB Detection, Delimitation, and Tree Removal

Anmol Joshi provided an update on HLB detections which included finds in Fallbrook, Mission Viejo, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Valley Center, as well as the first detection in the Calexico area of Imperial County. The positive tree in Calexico was detected through a routine multi-pest survey (MPS) performed by Imperial County in July, and the United States Department of Agriculture confirmed it was positive on August 6th. Following confirmation, the infected tree was treated and removed on August 11th, and a five-mile radius HLB quarantine area was established. The host site is less than one-mile from the US-Mexico border and 20-miles away from the nearest commercial citrus. Staff are currently conducting HLB delimitation surveys in Calexico, Fallbrook, Rancho Mission Viejo, and Valley Center. Between June and mid-August 2026, a total of 85 HLB-positive trees were detected, 52 removed, and 52 pending.

Update on Organic Insecticides

Keith summarized the organic insecticides discussion that occurred during the Science and Technology Subcommittee meeting held on July 30, 2026. There currently is no organic pesticide option available on the approved products list for spray and harvest and mandatory grower HLB treatment response. The Science Subcommittee recognized the spray and harvest list was outdated and needed to be reviewed. A working group was formed to review pesticide options for the spray and harvest and mandatory HLB treatment response list and will meet on September 1st.

Laboratory Update

Keith reported updated laboratory sampling numbers. Through August 2026, a total of 29,951 samples were submitted which equates to an average of 3,612 plant and 667 ACP samples per month. In 2026 to date, 356 trees and 37 ACP have tested positive for HLB, bringing the grand total to 10,769 trees and 970 ACP.

Multi-Pest Survey

Dr. Ravneet Behla reported that the 2025 MPS cycle two, which began in November 2025, has been completed and 2026 MPS cycle one started in July 2026. In the current cycle, there are a total of 716 grids assigned in 36 counties and approximately 3,500 properties have already been surveyed, with 423 insects and 535 plant samples

collected and submitted. Currently in the Southern District, 12 of the 247 assigned grids are completed; in the Central District, 83 of the 344 assigned grids are completed; and in the Northern District, 30 of the 125 assigned grids are completed.

Imperial County Survey Agreement

Keith reported that the Executive Committee, at the August 14, 2026 meeting, discussed increasing funds for Imperial County MPS in response to the recent HLB-positive tree detection. Currently, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division (CPDPD) has a \$50,007 agreement with Imperial County for border MPS activities. Keith provided multiple options on increasing CDFA and Imperial County's scope of work and how that would affect the budget. Mark stated that he has had preliminary discussions with Imperial County and that \$250,000 would be adequate to support the increase in border activities.

Motion: To recommend the Full Committee increase the Imperial County agreement amount to \$250,000.

First: Roger Smith

Second: Jason Reynolds

Motion Carries: The motion passed unanimously. Aaron Dillon was not present.

Sweet Orange Scab (SOS) Delimitation Response

Keith updated the Subcommittee that the SOS delimitation survey response will be updated to a 250-m max radius from the detection site (previously 800-m) to mirror ACP/HLB delimitation response.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 – ENFORCE REGULATIONS

Regulatory Activity Update

Keith reported on the regulatory activities from the County Agricultural Commissioners (CACs). Compared to the previous year, fruit seller inspections have increased due to greater emphasis on inspections as fruit sellers represent a high-risk pathway. In Fresno and Kern County, inspectors are emphasizing packinghouse inspections due to recent ACP detections.

Broker Discussion

Keith discussed rising issues around citrus brokers, who are entities without a compliance agreement that purchase citrus fruit from small growers and sell the fruit directly or to packinghouses. Brokers usually do not maintain records so tracking origin of fruit is often difficult and the quality of fruit sold is typically poor. Members suggested outreach to inform packers to only purchase/receive fruit from entities with a valid ACP compliance agreement.

Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Virus (CYVCV) Update

Keith reported that in early July 2026, a sample collected during a routine MPS inspection in the Lodi area of San Joaquin County was confirmed to be positive for CYVCV. This was the first detection of CYVCV in San Joaquin County and is the third

county in California where it has been detected (Los Angeles and Tulare). Following the detection, a ½-mi radius CYVCV quarantine area was established and has since expanded twice. Delimitation survey activities are ongoing, and to date, over 300 properties have been surveyed with at least one tree on over 70 properties testing positive for CYVCV. Field staff are focusing on the outer arc of the delimitation area with the goal of finding the leading edge. A test for CYVCV will be included in this year's Citrus Nursery Stock Pest Cleanliness Program mother tree testing.

HLB Retail Nursery Program Update

Keith provided an update on the HLB retail pilot program, which is set to expire on November 30, 2026, and opened discussions to the Subcommittee on whether the program should continue. Currently, the sale of outdoor CNS is prohibited in the HLB quarantine. In May 2025, the Full Committee voted to approve the limited-term program in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, which would allow for the sale of CNS in the HLB quarantine area under a systems-based approach to mitigate any pest risk associated with the sale of these trees. The intent of this program was to reduce illicit nurseries by providing an avenue for buyers to obtain clean CNS. Since the beginning of this program, a total of 108,174 plants have been shipped to 84 locations in Los Angeles and Orange Counties and has shown evidence of a reduction in illicit nurseries. Subcommittee members noted that the numbers show there is still a market for CNS in these areas and it may be better to continue to provide a way to obtain clean CNS rather than the alternative of buying possibly infected CNS from illicit backyard nurseries. Other members argued that introducing more CNS will increase bacterium load and CDFA workload due to mandated removals for newly infected trees.

Motion: To recommend the CPDPC extend the HLB retail pilot program for one year.

First: Roger Smith

Second: Justin Brown

Motion Carries: The motion passed with 8 yays (Kevin Ball, Justin Brown, Aaron Dillon, Jose Lima, Kurt Metheny, Jason Reynolds, Roger Smith, and Keith Watkins) and 1 nay (Brad Carmen).

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 – ACP CONTROL/SUPPRESSION

Operations and Staffing Updates

Southern District

Anmol reported that 250-m treatments were completed in Ladera Ranch (four properties), Loma Linda (54 properties), Rancho Mission Viejo (119 properties), and Riverside (169 properties), with Fallbrook (two properties) and Valley Center (two properties) only treating find sites and adjacent properties. Additionally, find site properties in eight cities have been treated with a total of 13 properties treated.

Central District

Jennifer Willems reported that in June, there were ACP detections in San Luis Obispo and Tulare Counties, and a detection in San Benito County in August. In San Luis Obispo County, multiple ACP were detected in a commercial citrus grove on CDFA

traps. In response to having continued ACP detections, the grower opted to apply multiple rounds of treatment. In the Santa Maria area of Santa Barbara County, which is adjacent to the grove, an abnormally elevated population of ACP was also detected. Treatment expenses will be paid by funds from the Ventura/Santa Barbara E-Fund. In Tulare County, ACP was also detected in commercial citrus on an Alliance of Pest Control Districts trap. The grower treated the grove, and the last ACP detection was in July. In San Benito County, the ACP was detected in residential citrus on a CDFA trap. Delimitation treatment and trapping soon followed the detection. In Santa Paula, 192 trees have tested positive for HLB with 179 removals with 10 pending.

Northern District

Nilan Watmore reported that in July 2026, CYVCV was detected in the Lodi area of San Joaquin County. Since the initial detection, over 300 samples have been collected from the delimitation area and staff are still working in the area to find the leading edge. Since June 2026, there have been five new ACP detections in Santa Clara County that caused a four-grid expansion in the Morgan Hill delimitation trapping area.

Biocontrol

Paul Figueroa provided an update on biocontrol activities. A total of 1,427,850 *Tamarixia radiata* has been produced in 2026. Between June and July 2026, 350,240 have been released, bringing the 2026 total to 864,460. Releases continue in HLB quarantine areas, borders, trade routes, area-wide management, and new ACP find sites.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 – OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION

Outreach Report

Natalie DeAngelo reported on the outreach activities since the last Operations Subcommittee meeting in May 2026. Nuffer Smith Tucker has been working to facilitate the CPDPC Industry Ad Hoc Committee meetings which include interviewing ad hoc committee members, scheduling meetings, and moderating discussions. In response to recent pest and disease detections throughout California, CDFA had multiple outreach campaigns to deliver key messaging to residents through multiple news outlets. CDFA continues to educate targeted audiences via digital outreach, paid media, events, and earned media.

Closing Comments and Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m. The date for the next Operations Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.