

CALIFORNIA CITRUS PEST AND DISEASE PREVENTION COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 11, 2019

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Full Committee was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on September 11, 2019 in San Bernardino, California by Chairman Jim Gorden.

Committee Members Present:

Craig Armstrong	Jim Gorden	Dr. Etienne Rabe
Kevin Ball	Ted Grether	Kevin Severns*
Ed Civerolo	Nick Hill*	Roger Smith
Aaron Dillon*	Mark McBroom	Keith Watkins
Bob Felts, Jr.	George McEwen	
John Gless	James McFarlane*	

Committee Members Absent:

Brian Specht

CDFA Staff:

Jonathan Babineau	Victoria Hornbaker	David Morgan*
Cassandra Davis*	Gavin Iacono*	Keith Okasaki*
Ryan Fong	Sara Khalid	Lea Pereira*
Tina Galindo*	Matthew Lai*	Nawal Sharma*
Craig Hanes	Magally Luque-Williams	

CRB Staff:

Caleb Ayin	Diana Fernandez	Kelly Salinas
Franco Bernardi	Lisa Finke	Qijun Xiang
Rick Dunn	Dr. Melinda Klein	

Guests:

Bob Atkins	Leslie Leavens*	Margo Sanchez*
Price Adams	Link Leavens*	Jason Sapp
John Balles	Jessica Leslie*	Jason Schwartz
Jill Barnier*	John Nehrig	Cressida Silvers*
Teri Blaser*	Maggie O'Neill	David Wirta*
Casey Creamer	Curtis Pate*	Helene Wright
Holly Deniston-Sheets	Gavin Poole*	Judy Zaninovich*
Dr. Beth Grafton-Cardwell*	Sylvie Robillard*	Sandra Zwaal
Subhas Hajiri	Robert Roma	
John Krist*	Alexis Salveras	

* Participated via Webinar

Opening Comments:

Jim Gorden welcomed the Committee, staff, and members of the public participating in person and online. He stated that there was a quorum for the meeting.

Public Comment:

None.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Victoria Hornbaker noted one edit to the consent agenda, that Ted Grether and Brian Specht have declined reinstatement on the Committee. She specified that only John Gless and Kevin Severns have requested reinstatement.

Motion: To recommend approving the Consent Agenda as amended.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: Kevin Ball

Motion carries: All in favor.

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**Review 2018/2019 Budget Expenditures and Revenue**

Bob Felts, Jr. stated the Subcommittee met on August 13, September 3 and September 10 to discuss expenditures and the upcoming proposed budget. As of August 2019, the program has expended \$14,082,000, which is short of the proposed \$40,000,000 budget. He noted there is a lag time for posting expenditures due to the State accounting system, Financial Information System for California (FI\$Cal). He explained that a new coding system was put in place beginning July 1, 2019. The new coding system will allow the program to track expenditures to the appropriate budget line items. He noted that there are still some pending reallocations between budget line items on the Fiscal Year (FY) 18-19 Budget Display. He stated that California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) staff are manually going through and looking at invoices for this purpose.

Victoria explained that the FI\$Cal, is only closed out through April, making it difficult to make projections. She explained that the program hired a Staff Services Manager who will hire three staff to assist Ryan Fong in tracking salaries, expenditures and contract invoices. She hopes to return to only a one-month lag in expenditures. She noted that general funds allocated in contracts can be held for longer than one year prior to spending. She stated that Ryan will track the funding source and the expenditures hitting the funding source separately. Jim Gorden noted that the first half of the year, the division only expended \$8,000,000, which is less than one fourth of the projected expenditures. Bob stated that the July revenues were \$975,000, with an additional \$755,000 received in August. The total revenues through August were \$17,383,000 which is short of projected yearly revenue.

2019/2020 Funding Sources*2019/2020 Citrus Crop Projections*

Bob explained that the revenue projections for FY 19/20 are based on 193,000,000 cartons compared to the FY 18/19 crop projection that was based on 200,000,000 cartons. He stated that

Navel orange estimates are down, and mandarins are significantly down, with Valencias and grapefruits slightly up. Victoria noted that this was based on the National Agricultural Statistics Service June forecast. The projections were reviewed by the Committee and it was noted that 193,000,000 cartons at 0.09 cents per carton would generate approximately \$17,370,000 in assessment funds.

Citrus Health Response Program (CHRP)

Bob noted that the Division expects to receive approximately \$12,144,000 in Citrus Health Response Program (CHRP) funds, which is consistent with the stating amount received in FY 18/19

CDFA General Funds

Bob stated that CDFA general funds decreased from \$12,500,000 to \$5,000,000. This is because the program will not receive the one-time \$10,000,000 as in the prior two years. He stated there is \$5,000,000 in on-going general funds because there was an additional allotment of on-going \$2,500,000 general funds allocated in the 2019 Governor's Budget.

Other Funding Sources

Magally Luque-Williams stated that she hadn't heard anything for Citrus Commodity next year. Victoria noted that this is something Pest Detection/Emergency Projects (PDEP) asks for.

Ryan provided a revised fund condition statement and found the \$10,000,000 to be only AB281 money. The real-time revenues and expenditures will be available at the next Finance Subcommittee meeting. She expects the real-time reserve to be higher than the \$10,000,000. Dr. Etienne Rabe noted that this is not a reserve, but a carry-in. Bob stated that in FY 18-19 the Citrus Program received \$13,000,000 in CHRP funds, \$12,500,000 in general funds and approximately \$18,000,000 from assessment funds for a total revenue of \$43,500,000. He noted that judging by previous years, the program spends approximately \$35,000,000. Together with the carryover from the beginning of FY 18-19 of \$11,000,000, he judged that \$8,000,000 can be added to that for the FY 19-20 carry-in. This would give the program the reserve and additional carry-in. He noted that the Finance Subcommittee does not know if CHRP funds and general funds have been totally expended. He stated that if CDFA staff can provide those figures, the Finance Subcommittee will know better what funds the Committee has coming forward.

Set AB 281 Assessment Rate

Bob stated that the Finance Subcommittee recommended setting the assessment rate at 0.09 cents per carton to generate approximately \$17,370,000 in assessment funds. The Committee discussed the options for where to set the assessment rate and decided to stay at the 0.09 cent per carton rate.

Motion: To recommend that the assessment rate stay at 0.09 cents per carton.

First: George McEwen

Second: Etienne Rabe

Motion carries: All in favor.

Proposed 2019/2020 Budget

Bob stated that projected expenditure budget for FY 2019/2020 is \$40,487,145. Victoria noted the FY 18/19 budget was based on previous years expenditures and she is more confident in the new coding system and the FY 19/20 proposed budget, as it was developed with projected actual expenditures. Victoria explained that the budget includes hiring the 61 positions provided in the 2019 Governor's Budget and the vacancies provided by PDEP. Victoria noted that she is working on hiring the administrative and management staff and the PDEP is hiring from the bottom up to fill 106 field staff positions. She stated that she expects most positions will be filled by the end of the calendar year. She explained that the Citrus Division will continue to use PDEP staff until the positions are filled. The balance of the 226 needed positions will be filled with seasonal staff as the Citrus Division continues to work on seeking the remaining position authority. Victoria explained that the Southern Treatment line item is based on PDEP positions, vacant positions from the 2019 Governor's Budget and maximum budgeted contracts for treatment in Huanglongbing (HLB) treatment areas and tree removal. She agreed that expenses will be commensurate with HLB finds. Jim noted that the Committee can move funds from one area to another if necessary. Bob stated that it is unlikely for the program to spend the full proposed \$40,487,145.

Motion: To recommend the proposed 2019/2020 expenditures budget as presented.

First: Bob Felts, Jr.

Second: John Gless

Motion carries: All in favor.

EXECUTIVE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Update on Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division Progress

Jim congratulated Victoria on being promoted to Division Director of the Citrus Division. He stated that he approved requests from Mexico to release *Tamarixia* around Tijuana where HLB-positive psyllids have been found, pending approval by the Committee. Victoria explained that the request from Mexico and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) International Service (IS) was for the CDFR Biocontrol program to send 9,000 *Tamarixia* per week through December until Texas can get its production up. She noted that Mexico is performing treatments and survey work equivalent to California's efforts. She explained that Jim and she authorized the initial shipment but requested the Committee to recommend supporting the International Service's ask through December. Keith Watkins stated that Dr. David Morgan reported to the Operations Subcommittee that the Biocontrol program was projecting over 5,000,000 *Tamarixia* in production for 2019. He stated that an excess exists to send to Texas and Mexico.

Motion: To recommend sending 9,000 *Tamarixia radiata* (Biocontrol agents) per week (September 17, 2019 – December 31, 2019) to the USDA IS for release in the city of Tijuana.

First: Keith Watkins

Second: John Gless

Motion carries: All in favor.

OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1-3 – HLB Eradication, Regulations and ACP Suppression

Keith stated that an issue arose on the exception on bulk citrus moved into the Riverside quarantine. He explained that CDFA and the Data Analysis and Tactical Operation Center (DATOC) stated that bulk citrus should be treated in addition to tarping to avoid ACP being introduced into a quarantine zone with potential HLB. This is consistent with the Action Plan. It was stated that the Committee's broad-stroke decisions regarding quarantine zones cause economic hardships to growers in quarantine zones, and there should be no one-size-fits-all answer for the quarantine zones. Sara Garcia-Figuera explained that if Quarantine Zone 6 expands with new detections then the Quarantine Zone 6 exception will also expand, which may affect other packinghouses. As the exception stands now, there is no treatment required for moving fruit into Quarantine Zone 6 packinghouses. She explained that there is an impact component to risk. The risk of ACP being moved into Zone 6 was listed as medium in the DATOC model due to the small citrus component to Zone 6, but if additional acreage is added to Zone 6 due to a detection then the risk could become high due to an increased impact. It was suggested that there is a theoretical risk and a practical risk and performing treatments in areas where they are not necessary can wear out pesticides for no practical gain. It was noted that the effect of tarping on psyllid populations hasn't been quantified but it does seem to be working. Traps placed at packinghouse destinations prove that psyllid movement has lessened since tarping was introduced. Jim recommended that this discussion continue at the Operations Subcommittee level.

SCIENCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 – Improve Data Technology, Analysis and Sharing

Etienne reported that the toxicology studies for Ethyl Formate have been finalized and Dr. Spencer Walse is finalizing the environmental exposure studies. Dr. Jim Cranney can submit a package to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) between October and December 2019. He explained that the EPA has 19 months to respond and Jim Cranney will push for a 12-month evaluation time line. He noted they are looking into a concurrent submission to the Department of Pesticide Regulation. He stated that DATOC will have a meeting in Denver, mid-September. He requested that DATOC investigate the Southern California situation to ensure that current measures are effective and worthwhile.

Discussion on Early Detection Technologies (EDTs) and Messaging

Etienne discussed the HLB detector canine visit to Ventura, stating that the canines alerted on 211 trees out of 3,500 trees surveyed, which is approximately 6 percent. He noted that in the media release, these trees were described as HLB-positive. He considers this an erroneous statement, as there have never been polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-positive trees found in Ventura County. He noted that at the variety collection at University of California (UC), Riverside, the dogs have run three times and none of the trees have shown sign of being PCR-positive. He suggested that the trees in Ventura should have been caged or tested rather than removed. He stated that the message that goes out to the public should be consistent and calling the trees the dogs sat on HLB-positive is damaging to the industry. He suggested that Victoria will be discussing the issue with DATOC, Citrus Research Board (CRB), the UC system, and Nuffer Smith Tucker (NST) to see if communications can be more unified, and that public releases be consistent. Dr. Beth Grafton-Cardwell suggested that PCR is best used in controlled

circumstances and doesn't work well as a follow-up test for the dogs. She stated that the dogs' value has not been scientifically proven yet, but their use may help cause the growers to be more coordinated and alert in controlling psyllids. It was suggested that industry communications should be vetted by the Committee. It was stated that there is confusion surrounding early detection technologies and regulatory removal of trees, but that the Committee's reach is limited regarding controlling industry communications. It was noted that an early detection alert is not a positive indication of HLB and there will be false positives in the dogs used as an Early Detection Technology (EDT) but that it's still the most viable tool for early detection available.

Victoria stated that if an EDT includes removing articles from a property, CDFA in its regulatory capacity requires a permit and notification within 24 hours of the suspect positive. She explained that because the dog team EDT is not a validated technique, CDFA will not establish a quarantine. Quarantine can only be established in response to PCR analysis. She noted that CDFA field staff are available to visually survey suspect HLB-positive trees. It was suggested that in the event of a presumptive positive, the owner should treat the tree for psyllids prior to removing it. Beth noted that there is a significant lag time between infection and the tree showing PCR symptoms. Victoria stated that the best method would be to send out a member of the CDFA field staff when the dogs find large numbers of suspected infections to survey the trees and collect leaves or psyllids for PCR testing if they appear systemic. Sara stated that Dr. Neil McRoberts believes that there is evidence that the dogs are alerting on exposure to *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLas). She agreed that not all dog alerts will be HLB-positive but noted the dogs scored very high on specificity among EDTs. This means that the dogs will not alert on a PCR negative. She stated that the positive predictive value varies depending on the conditions and the experiment. Victoria explained that the 92 percent accuracy rate for the dogs visit to LA and Orange Counties only focused on known HLB PCR positive and negative trees and not on the unknowns. There were potted trees the dogs did not alert on and known PCR-positive trees that the dogs did not alert on. She stated that PCR indicates the presence of the bacteria, not necessarily that the tree is symptomatic. Magally noted that many infected trees do not show any symptoms. She added that she could be called upon for a visual survey of a suspect tree and regulatory steps can be taken if necessary. Helene Wright suggested the Committee keep trade ramifications in mind when messaging. It was requested that another press release be released to correct misunderstandings about the dog alerts. Casey Creamer stated that the importance of being consistent in messaging is clear. He intends to work with the Outreach team and Victoria to craft an appropriate message to correct existing misstatements, and an official message to the press should be released soon. Victoria noted that in a conversation with a reporter referred to her by Carolina, she explained that the only HLB-positive tree is a PCR positive via the USDA work instruction. There will not be a quarantine established because EDTs are not validated technology.

OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5 –Outreach and Education

CPDPC Outreach Update

Mark McBroom stated that the NST contract has been renewed. He suggested setting up an Outreach strategy meeting with California Citrus Mutual (CCM), CRB, grower liaisons and agricultural commissioners. Price Adams stated that year-to-date, NST secured media coverage for 300 earned news stories focused on Southern California. She stated that billboards were

secured in Los Angeles, Fresno and San Diego and movie theater ads in Anaheim, Garden Grove and La Habra. She explained that NST's focus has been to engage with Southern California residents at community events and with gardening enthusiasts at the Rare Fruit Growers' 2019 Festival of Fruit. She noted that NST is updating its collateral materials with stronger visuals. The Voluntary Grower Response Plan is being rolled out on citrusinsider.org, flyers, press releases, at the CRB Grower seminars and in communication training with the grower liaisons. She stated that a new public service announcement will be distributed, workshops for packinghouses and field crew will be held in the summer, flyers on CDFA's regulatory process are being developed and NST is attending the California League of Cities conference and manning the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program's booth in October.

Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division Mission and Vision Statements

Victoria stated that in the process of creating the Citrus Division, many small issues have cropped up such as defining the mission and vision statement. Teresa Siles stated that a mission statement is defined as an organization's core business or the needs that it meets, and a vision statement is the destination the organization is working towards. The vision is the centerpiece of the strategic plan and builds off the priorities that support that vision. She suggested that this includes existing elements of the CPDPC strategic plan such as quickly detecting and eradicating diseased trees, controlling movements of psyllids, suppressing psyllid populations, outreach and collaboration and improving data technology, analysis and sharing. New suggestions for the direction of the division are: for the Citrus Division to collaborate with stakeholders and industry; to use the resources and expertise of other stakeholder groups; that some portions of what we're working on may better live with CRB or CCM who have flexibility to do things the state agency cannot; to have good relationships with the community; and to maintain a successful partnership with the industry to ensure the industry has the input necessary.

Common themes in suggested mission statements were: to control pests and diseases and protect the citrus industry from them; a quick response to new issues and continued resources to deal with current issues like ACP, HLB and Tristeza; to minimize movement of disease; and to prevent the introduction of other diseases. It was suggested that the Citrus Division: protect California citrus by finding and eradicating invasive pests and diseases; help maintain the vitality, security, profitability and success of the California citrus industry; and to ensure citrus can survive in the years to come.

It was suggested the Citrus Division: address the pest prevention needs of the citrus industry; ensure its continued viability; facilitate programs and policies that support the viability of the citrus industry; and keep commercial citrus economically viable with residents still able to grow citrus. She explained that the draft vision statement is for California citrus to be thriving because of the division's effective response to pest and disease threats.

USDA UPDATE

Helene stated that in August the USDA added additional funding to the FY 18/19 cooperative agreement, increasing it to \$13,661,078. She explained that there were three CLAs-infected ACP found in a vacant lot east of Tijuana, two in the same tree and one nearby. She stated that delimitation surveys have been done in the area, the find site and adjacent properties have been treated and tissue samples of both trees in which psyllids were found are being analyzed. All

tissue samples tested negative, but USDA will continue to send in samples. She added that there are no commercial citrus or nurseries near the CLas-infected ACP find.

Helene stated that USDA funded multi-agency cooperative (MAC) projects to improve the CDFA *Tamarixia*-rearing facility, testing of antimicrobials, equipment for the New Biosafety Level (BSL)-3 lab, ACP detector dogs and a drone project to look for early ACP symptoms.

CCM REPORT

CHRP Update

Casey stated that the administration decided to cancel Chlorpyrifos. A Chlorpyrifos alternatives working group has been announced. He noted that the citrus industry has looked at Chlorpyrifos as a critical use for ants in a granular formulation, but that interim guidelines exist with some restrictions on granular formulations. He explained that granular formulations will be available without restrictions on toxic air-contaminants. He noted that there is some flexibility in the interim guidelines for CDFA and USDA to maintain an emergency exemption for the use of Chlorpyrifos, such as a large ACP outbreak. He stated that CCM will be holding regional grower meetings on October 8, 9 and 10.

CRB REPORT

CRB Update

Franco Bernardi stated that Marcy Martin will be taking over as CRB President. He noted that the BSL-3 lab in Riverside has been accredited and will open on September 26. He explained that CRB trustees will be taking over the board and will own the building, but the process will remain the same. Dr. Melinda Klein stated that the request for research project proposals is ending with an October 1 start date. She explained that CRB has 54 projects recommended for funding with three core programs. She noted that 65 percent of the projects are HLB- or ACP-related. She stated that CRB is collaborating with F1-K9, UC Riverside and CDFA on a MAC project starting October 1 to bring the canines to California permanently. She added that the projects being moved into the BSL-3 lab will primarily be variety testing and antimicrobial compound development.

CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m. The next meeting will be held in Ventura, California on November 12, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.