

DETERMINATIONS, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

*Public Hearing to Determine if the California Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program
and the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee will be Authorized to Continue.*

June 18, 2021

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department) held four public hearings on, May 25 and 27 and June 1 and 3, 2021 to determine whether operation of the California Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program (Program) and the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (Committee) should be continued. [Food and Agricultural Code 5921]

If the hearing record documents that the affected producers are supportive of the Program and feel that the Program has protected the citrus industry as well as the general well being of the citizens of California, the Department may authorize the Program to operate for an additional four years. However, if a substantial question of opposition exists among affected producers regarding whether the operation of this article should be continued, the article shall be submitted for approval through the referendum process. [Food and Agricultural Code 5922]

DETERMINATIONS

In reviewing the citrus industry and public comments, the Department has determined that the Program and the Committee have adequately met their purpose and obligations as described in the Food and Agricultural Code 5911 through 5940.

- In 2009 an industry-funded program was established within the Department to assist in protecting California citrus from citrus specific diseases, vectors, and pests. The Program is supported by industry funds secured in the Citrus Disease Management Account in the Department's Agricultural Fund.
- In 2009 the Committee was created to advise the Department on issues pertinent to the citrus industry, while serving the public interest. The Committee maintains a record of their meetings in the form of meeting minutes and makes recommendations to the Department in the form of motions submitted for the Secretary's consideration.
- Affected producers and the general public have benefitted from the Program and Committee efforts to control and suppress the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), vector of the deadly citrus disease Huanglongbing (HLB) and the efforts to act swiftly and decisively to remove any citrus trees infected with the HLB disease. To date the Program has identified 2,375 HLB positive trees from residential properties in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and all of the trees were

quickly removed from the properties and destroyed. The Program under the direction of the Committee and in collaboration with the Department continues to survey for HLB symptomatic trees and to survey and treat for ACP in defensible areas of the State, thereby slowing the potential spread of HLB.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Most of the comments received at the public hearings and in written submissions to the Department were supportive of the program, however, several letters received were seeking better collaboration with local pest control districts, as well as financial support for local pest control districts. One commentator noted that the Program has done an excellent job thus far but is not sustainable in the long run. There was not a substantial question of opposition raised at the public hearings or in written submissions to the Department. Therefore, the Department has determined that a referendum is not warranted.

ORDER

It is hereby ordered that the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program and the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee shall be authorized to continue.



Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture

Signed and entered in the Office of the Secretary
of Food and Agriculture at Sacramento, California,
on June 18, 2021