

California Department of Food and Agriculture

Minutes

Meeting/Conference Call

California Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Committee

Held on Monday, June 21, 2010

Doubletree Hotel, 3100 Camino Del Rio Court, Bakersfield, CA 93308

CCP&DPC

Members Present: Richard Bennett, Dan Dreyer, Bob Felts, Gus Gunderson, Nick Hill, Mark McBroom, George McEwen, James McFarlane, Kevin Olsen, Dr. Etienne Rabe, Earl Rutz, Brian Specht, Kevin Severns.

OTHER ATTENDEES

Jill Barnier, Ted Batkin, Larry Bezark, Steve Birdsall*, Leo Charles (USDA), Damon Corey, Vic Corkins, Jim Cranney, Henry Gonzales, Nick Gutierrez (USDA), Gavin Iacono, Shirley, Kirkpatrick, Nuvia Maldonado, Joel Nelsen, Carlos Ortiz*, Jim Rudig, Jim Sebesta, Judy Stewart-Leslie, Bob Wynn.

*Denotes attendance via conference call

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Nick Hill called the meeting to order at 10:07 am.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Wynn conducted the roll call for the Committee. A quorum was present. There were introductions of members and guests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Chairperson Nick Hill welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: *Bob Felts moved that the Committee approve the minutes of the May 12, 2010 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Gus Gunderson and passed unanimously.*

COMMITTEE MEMBER TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT AND FORM 700

Larry Bezark, CDFA, updated the committee regarding procedures and protocols for the completion of the revised state travel expense claim form. Three members provided Form 700 materials; only one packet has not yet been provided.

UPDATE ON ELECTRONIC ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Larry Bezark, CDFA gave an update on the assessment form process. Inspection Services now has the system on-line, so handlers can access the appropriate forms electronically. A handout with details of the system was included in the member packets.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Kevin Severns presented a brief report for the Citrus Research Board (CRB) Transition Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee discussed the following issues:

- Hiring a manager,
- Transferring all CRB activities (lab, trapping and outreach) to the Committee as soon as possible,
- Increasing outreach funding (invasive species outreach would go from CRB to the Committee).

Discussion among Committee members followed. Comments were made on the key issues of each individual transition element. There was general discussion regarding the intent/purpose of AB281 and the work currently being done by the CRB.

Bob Wynn, CDFA presented a detailed explanation of the CDFA contracting process required to hire a company to perform Outreach. Bob described the limits under which the Committee could operate compared to the CDFA or the CRB. Potential funding resources and amounts for the Committee from AB281, CDFA and the federal government were also discussed.

The general consensus was to support Outreach as the first priority, followed by the

eventual transition of CRB field operations. Lastly, examine the feasibility of transition of the Lab operations.

MOTION: *Kevin Severns moved that the Committee supplement Citrus Research Board outreach by \$300,000 (incrementally over a 3 month period). The motion was seconded by Richard Bennett and passed unanimously.*

Committee Chairman Nick Hill appointed a Communications Subcommittee with Kevin Olsen acting as Chair. Hill charged the Subcommittee to work with CRB & CDFA.

The HLB Action Plan Subcommittee report was postponed until the next meeting.

REPORT FROM THE CHRP COUNCIL

Joel Nelsen indicated that approximately \$11.5 million (net) is expected for California. Ted Batkin provided a brief report on the research meeting held recently in Denver. The main themes for the CHRP were to organize and coordinate research activities and develop uniform plans for the following Outcome Groups:

Outcome 1 – Keep groves with ACP and HLB productive (mostly plant pathologists in this group)

Outcome 2 – Slow/no spread of HLB (mostly entomologists in this group)

Outcome 3 – Citrus groves/trees free of HLB and ACP (mostly molecular biologists and genetists in this group)

Joel Nelsen thought there was federal funding available for GIS/GPS systems. Ted Batkin was asked to come up with a proposal.

LUNCH

OVERVIEW OF CDFA ACP-HLB PROGRAM

Larry Bezark gave a brief update on the CDFA ACP-HLB Program operations and activities. During the May, 2010 meeting the Committee recommended () to fund Imperial County treatments for infested properties and those hosts within 400 meters (rather than infested properties and adjacent properties). Larry showed a slide that indicated where treatments in Imperial County have been completed. CDFA has been working to complete the new treatments.

UPDATE ON ACP ACTIVITIES AND STATUS OF HLB IN MEXICO

Nick Gutierrez, USDA APHIS, IS; presented two PowerPoint talks:

- Mexico HLB – ACP Program, 2010 Strategy (SENASICA)
- SENASICA – APHIS, ACP Suppression Program in Baja California & Sonora 2010.

His discussion included details on the latest HLB positives, in Sinaloa. Nick outlined the Program objectives giving details of the Sampling Program, Phyto-Sanitary Program, Lab activities, and treatments/plant removal. General questions and discussion followed.

VENTURA COUNTY OUTREACH PROPOSAL

Henry Gonzales, Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner, gave the history of the Ventura ACP/HLB task force. The Task Force was developed to coordinate education & outreach efforts; to alert residents to the threat of the pest & disease; and to mobilize detection and eradication support. Henry provided a handout with a budget and work plan. Henry asked if there was funding available from either CDFA or the Committee to support Ventura County ACP-HLB Task Force efforts.

Discussion followed. No action was taken.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Bob Wynn reminded the members that there is a requirement for the Committee to recommend a name to the Secretary for the Public Member. No specific qualifications are mandated. Public members typically fill knowledge gaps (eradication expert) or group gaps (environmental group).

Ted Batkin indicated that the CRB uses UC folks for outside perspective; someone without an economic interest.

Mark McBroom indicated support for Steve Birdsall, retired Agricultural Commissioner from the Imperial County Department of Agriculture.

Nick Hill suggested the committee develop a list of qualified candidates and then the Committee can evaluate the candidates and make a recommendation. Members were asked to e-mail suggestions to the Chairman, so the Committee can make a motion for a recommendation at the next meeting.

BUDGET/ASSESSMENT

Bob Wynn went over the financial documents provided in the packets. Bob reviewed the Year-to-Date expenses and the total current assessments accrued. He said CDFA will present a budget for next year at the next meeting. Additionally, Larry Bezark will fine tune the budget to include CDFA costs associated with the committee meetings and other expected costs. The Committee will need to develop a budget for treatment and other costs for next year.

Wynn stated it is reasonable to have 25% of the Budget as carryover (reserve). The Committee can provide a "prospective" budget line item, for major expected expenditures.

Wynn reiterated a DRAFT Budget would be prepared for the Committee's next meeting, by CDFA staff.

OTHER ITEMS

Jim Cranney reported the USDA is trying to harmonize "leaf numbers" allowed by USDA, APHIS for shipments coming into the US. Currently the USDA allows 8 leaves versus zero tolerance at CDFA for intrastate shipments. APHIS is currently performing a risk assessment to resolve this issue, with a report due in about 60 days.

General discussion followed regarding the different "judgment calls" by various quarantine inspectors.

Larry Bezark suggested Nick Condos, Branch Chief, CDFA Pest Exclusion, attend the next meeting to discuss all quarantine issues.

Bob Wynn noted the CDFA is currently working on alternatives for the following issues:

- Rejected loads
- Requirements for packing houses and truckers
- Compliance agreements.

DATE & LOCATION FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, July 27, 2010 to be held in Riverside, CA. Larry Bezark will find a location and provide details to members and stakeholders.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.