

**CALIFORNIA CITRUS PEST AND DISEASE PREVENTION PROGRAM
OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Operations Subcommittee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on May 1, 2019 in Visalia, California by Chairman Keith Watkins.

Committee Members Present:

John Gless*	Jim Gorden	Kevin Severns*	Keith Watkins
Zac Green*	Ted Grether*	Roger Smith	

CDFA Staff:

Tina Galindo*	Ray Leclerc	Keith Okasaki*	Nawal Sharma*
Sara Khalid	Magally Luque-Williams*	Lea Pereira*	

CRB Staff:

Franco Bernardi	Rick Dunn	Melinda Klein*	Holly Deniston-Sheets
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Guests:

Bob Atkins	Christopher Greer*	Neil McRoberts	Cressida Silvers*
Teri Blaser	Link Leavens*	Curtis Pate*	Jack Williams*
Colin Flippen*	Jessica Leslie*	Sylvie Robillard	Sandra Zwaal*
Sara Figuera-Garcia	Brianna McGuire*	Jason Schwartze*	

*** Participated via Webinar**

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

REVIEW STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND SUB-PRIORITIES

Keith Watkins suggested that the strategic plan be reviewed to ensure the plan is still pertinent. Ray Leclerc stated that discussion has taken place regarding high-priority items like some critical delimitations. It was suggested that risk-based survey reports should include more location data. Ray suggested comparing the old risk survey model to the new model to see if the survey should be moved out of Huanglongbing (HLB)-infested counties or weighted differently. Recalibrating the model requires knowledge of local geography and demographics. It was stated that Asian citrus psyllids (ACP) spread the infection faster than HLB-infected trees and should be watched closely. Ray suggested that as the disease moves into more security-conscious neighborhoods, based on his previous experience with the Department of Toxic Substance Control, he expects an increase in the soft refusal rate of up to 25 percent. He advised the Subcommittee to consider the level of refusal that would be acceptable and the resources that should be allocated to difficult neighborhoods. Neil McRoberts stated that he would be working with Dr. Tim Gottwald to operationalize these ideas into two scenarios: a worst-case scenario that changes program emphasis and includes a trade-off of resources and a best-case scenario that would add resources without reducing existing projects.

Magally Luque-Williams stated that maps charting out survey progress could be made available at Committee meetings. She stated that she could describe field strategies for the delimitation survey and how delimitation and risk-based survey are connected. It was noted that collection points for ACP are down in the core area, which Magally attributed to a low psyllid population. Tina Galindo agreed that surveys taken concurrently or after psyllid treatments will not find psyllids, but she also noted that surveys performed prior to treatment have also been low.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Ray stated that the biggest limiting factor in acquiring new surveyors is sufficient space. Renting a new building has a two-year timeframe. He noted that new hires are difficult to find in problem areas, like Orange and Los Angeles Counties, and once permanent staff are hired, moving them between counties is difficult. Ray explained that there are complications with the State Agencies adopting new paradigms such as having staff work from home or offering pay differentials in areas with a higher cost of living. He explained that the State is working on getting CalTrap into the field in spring and getting the Citrus Surveyor developed to track surveyor work. The Citrus Division is still on track for July 1, 2019. Victoria and Ray have been advertising and hiring for vacant citrus positions and identifying existing Pest Detection and Emergency Projects personnel who currently work 100 percent for the Citrus Program. John Gless stated that there are difficulties at the city level, with cities giving away citrus as shade trees or not following up on neglected and abandoned orchards, and asked if Nuffer Smith Tucker can work on this with the city of Riverside.

PROPOSAL FOR ALTERNATE FIELD CLEANING INSPECTIONS

Nawal Sharma stated that the grate-cleaning pilot project was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of an alternative mitigation method to meet the ACP-free performance standard. The project included two growers shipping from Monterey to Ventura, one grower shipping from San Diego to Fresno and Kern, and a packing house shipping from Ventura and Kern to Riverside. From January 15, 2019 to April 22, 2019, inspections were conducted on 53 percent of the 5,868 bins shipped from Monterey, 97 percent of the 907 bins from Ventura, 81 percent of the 224 bins from Kern, and 100 percent of the bins from San Diego to Kern. Only 29 percent of the bins from San Diego to Fresno were inspected, due to the Agricultural Commissioner's confidence in previous inspections. A total of 7,695 bins were shipped in 117 shipments, with 4450 bins inspected and averaging 1.9 leaves per bin.

Nawal stated that it takes one inspector two to three hours to inspect 48 bins at origin and two to four hours at destination, not including mileage and travel time. This costs \$84.54 per load in Monterey, \$124 to \$154 per load in Kern, \$90.54 in Ventura and \$138 to \$145 in San Diego, \$163 to \$238 in Fresno and \$200 to \$229 in Riverside. Nawal stated that this method could be added to compliance agreements. He explained that performing these inspections at the packing houses may increase the amount of work required by 10 to 15 percent. It was suggested that the pilot project justifies a smaller sample size for inspections, performing spot inspections to see if growers and packing houses are still in compliance. The Subcommittee unanimously recommended that the grate-cleaning performance be adopted as a mitigation measure, with spot checking and a fine structure in place to ensure shipments not exceed ten leaves per bin.

CLOSING COMMENTS & ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m. The next Operations meeting will be held in Visalia, California on June 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.