**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)**
**CA CITRUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (CCAC)**
**Visalia, CA**
**Meeting Minutes**
**December 18, 2008**

| **Members** | **CDFA Representatives** | **Interested Parties** |
|---|---|---|
| Robert LoBue | Rick Jensen | Scotti Walker, Fresno County |
| David Hines | Amadou Ba | Myron Kimmel, Kern County |
| David Roberts | Steve Patton | Nancy Holland, Kern County |
| Ken Chipchase | Andrew Valero | Marilyn Kinoshita, Tulare County |
| James Sherwood | Thea Lee | Bob Blakely, CCM |
| Etienne Rabe | | |
| Kevin Severns | | |
| John Eliot | | |

## ITEM 1: ROLL CALL

Mr. Robert LoBue called the meeting to order at 10:07. Roll was called and a quorum was not established. Several members arrived late and once seated a quorum was established.

## ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF APRIL 15 AND SEPTEMBER 25, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

**MOTION**: Mr. LoBue moved to approve the April 15, 2008 minutes as submitted. It was moved and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. LoBue commented that there was a mistake on the September 25, 2008 meeting minutes, page 4, Item 6 New Business, first paragraph. Mr. LoBue stated he did not make the statement regarding Brim A, but that Mr. Bob Blakely had made the statement and requested the correction be made. Dr. Etienne Rabe noted that there was a mistake in Item 6, last paragraph; should read, “Mr. Bob Blakely reported back that Mr. Joel Nelson, and Mr. David Roberts met with USDA…..”.

**MOTION**: Mr. LoBue moved to approve the September 25, 2008 minutes with the changes described. It was moved and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## ITEM 3: COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND TERMS

Dr. Amadou Ba stated he has received completed applications from members of the committee who were re-appointed, Mr. LoBue, Mr. Brett Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Ron Matik. The Committee now has three (3) open vacancies for which applications have been received, and are now being reviewed and processed. Dr. Ba indicated that he had not received Mr. Ken Chipchase paperwork because it had been sent to an incorrect

address. Dr. Ba noted that the total members on the committee are 12 maximum; 9 active members now, and 7 members needed for a quorum. Mr. LoBue inquired as to the procedure to fill vacancies. Dr. Ba explained that California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) sends inquiries statewide to people interested in being appointed by the Secretary. Based on the responses received, CDFA reviews the applications looking at geographic location, specific criteria, etc. The applications of selected candidates are sent department wide for review and comment, if no objections they are then submitted to the Secretary for appointment.

Mr. Bob Blakely commented that there are two applications from CCM members, Mr. Franco Bernardi and Mr. John Gless Jr. Mr. Bernardi specifically for the position vacated by Mr. Damon Corey. Mr. John Gless for Kern County south.

## ITEM 4: REGULATION UPDATE

Dr. Ba provided an update on the citrus assessment regulation. The Office of Administrative Law (OAL) approved the regulation on citrus assessment. In the content, California Code of Regulations Section 1430.43 had a minor change; the word “oranges” was replaced by “citrus” regarding the late evidence of freezing. The new California Code of Regulations Section 1430.142 sets assessment rates; the regulation has been filed with Secretary of State, effective November 1, 2008. The Department had requested the regulation to be effective October 1, 2008, but OAL was unable to accommodate that request. Some of the elements in the modified regulation include amendments to reflect in clear language that the assessments would be revised to the maximum rate allowable under Food and Agricultural Code Section 48002, specifying how the assessments will be collected, and proposing the repeal of California Code of Regulations Section 1430.44.5 since it overlaps with the proposed regulation.

Mr. Rick Jensen commented that citrus has always been the subject commodity; however, now the language is more specific. When an inspection officer suspects freeze damage, although it isn’t showing yet, they will issue a notice to the shipper. The shipper then takes shipment under their own risk. If the sample shows positive evidence of freezing damage, that load was shipped illegally.

## ITEM 5: COUNTY INSPECTION REPORTS

*Tulare County*: Ms. Marilyn Kinoshita reported that inspections were a couple of weeks late because everyone was waiting for color; the maturity was fantastic for the time of year. Ms. Kinoshita went on to explain that for October, there were a total of 231 tests at 120 houses for a total of 260,000 cartons inspected. There was one test below 8, but the official test was above 8. Ms. Kinoshita reported that for November there were 624

tests for a total of 750,000 cartons inspected, and only one test below 8, but the official test was above 8 so there was no action taken. The county cost was $18,924 for the month of October and $47,219 for November.

*Kern County*: Mr. Myron Kimmel explained that in October, Kern County inspected 58 premises, and 69 lots, of which 4 were rejected for a total of 3950 containers rejected in October, a cost of $17,000. For November 1098 lots inspected at 228 houses with no rejects and none testing below 8. Mr. Kimmel went on to explain that the inspectors spent 671 hours in the field for a cost of $28,732. Mr. Kimmel continued that the actual cumulative cost incurred by Kern County was $45,735 or 26% of the budget. Mr. Kimmel explained that activity was slow due to the weather.

*Fresno County*: Ms. Scotti Walker explained that in October 1300 containers were inspected at 18 houses with 2 maturity tests and none rejected. Ms. Walker went on to explain that in November there were 858,000 containers inspected at 784 houses with 782 tests with only 2 below 8, each passed on the official test. The inspection hours were 879 for a cost of $42,180 for October and November.

Dr. Rabe noted that only 34% of the budget was spent this year. Historically what is spent of the budget by this time of year? Mr. Steve Patton indicated that 62% of the budget had been spent for the same time period in 2007. Mr. Jensen indicated that 65-70% of the total budget is typically expended over the total year.

**ITEM 6: CONTINUATION OF MATURITY TESTING**

Mr. LoBue asked the committee if there was a need to continue maturity testing. Mr. Steve Patton reminded the committee that traditionally Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino counties are still harvesting and should continue with inspections until January or February, 2009.

Mr. Jensen inquired that when compared to last year, or traditionally, how do the number of tests below 8 compare? Ms. Kinoshita noted that there were 6 testing below 8, in 2007 and only 1 in 2008. Ms. Walker stated that there were 12 in 2007, and only 2 in 2008. Mr. Patton explained that for all of 2007 there were 47 at this time, and for 2008 there were 8.

The members continued discussions on the feasibility or necessity of continuation of maturity testing.

**MOTION**: Mr. Kevin Severns moved to suspend maturity testing for the current season, except for Ventura, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Mr. James Sherwood seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## ITEM 7: SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT ONSTANDARDIZATION CONTAINERS

Dr. Rabe distributed the sub-committee minutes and thanked Mr. Blakely, California Citrus Mutual (CCM), for having compiled the minutes. Dr. Rabe reported that those attending the subcommittee meeting were himself, Mr. Ron Matik, and Mr. James Sherwood, representing CDFA were Mr. Patton, and Dr. Ba, also attending were Mr. Jack Rutz, USDA/NASS, Mr. Bob Salcedo, California Citrus Growers Association (CCGA), and Mr. Blakely, CCM. Dr. Rabe distributed a table highlighting which entities report in different volumes as well as assess in different units. Dr. Rabe went on to explain the table of contents.

Dr. Rabe highlighted the two recommendations or suggestions that came out of the sub-committee meeting. First of all, a letter to industry saying how we wish to assess mandarins and tangelos. And, for the subcommittee to recommend to the industry that the assessment should be on 40 pound units, it is currently interpreted that mandarins and tangelos 25 are pounds. Dr. Ba stated that the committee could suggest to the standardization program as well as the industry that we assess everything at 40-pound equivalents as far as citrus is concerned.

The members continued discussions on the issues faced with standardizing the reporting unit and unit of assessment across the citrus industry.

Mr. Jensen stated that no one should have received any response from CDFA to convert anything other than bulk containers. Everything should be reported as the shipping container; a master container is the shipping container, and each should be assessed the same amount. The language for the assessment comes in under the Standardization law and covers all commodities including citrus. Mr. Jensen stated that a significant challenge would be trying to get background information so there is not a significant change in revenue.

The committee will write a draft letter to various organizations in the citrus industry for their feedback stating that for citrus industry assessment should be on a 40-pound units or metric conversion equivalent standard container with a date for them to respond. Dr. Rabe will have a draft letter ready for discussion at the next meeting.

## ITEM 8: STANDARDIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE AUDIT

Dr. Ba explained that October 22, 2008 the advisory committee recommended to pilot an audit process. An outreach letter was sent to all the industry informing them of the early 2009 start of the Phase I pilot project. These audits are a random process; various commodities may be selected, gathering information as to what assessment is being paid and what standard container they have. The pilot project is set to gather data from audits and reconcile what is occurring. Based on the results may be built structurally into the Standardization process. The budget for the audits is coming from Standardization Advisory Committee. These informational audits will find gaps, if any, and those will be corrected. The citrus advisory committee will be informed of the findings.

Mr. Jensen explained that no selection had been done yet and audit results will be shared with the citrus committee. This audit is to assure that there is a high level of compliance in the industry.

**ITEM 9: AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Ms. Kinoshita reported that Tulare County has been receiving inquires from packing sheds who want to bring fruit from Imperial County, the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) quarantine area, to package. Everybody has to be under a compliance agreement from Imperial County project manager. Treatment in the quarantine language, requires picking, without leaves and stems, in new bins and brushing the fruit. Comment was made that the treatment is a dry brush where they are taking off all the leaves and stems. Ms. Kinoshita raised issues not necessarily of the packing sheds, but of juicing plants as they do not always have the best compliance and it is not clear as to where fruit comes from. Comment was made that the nursery's at the Home Depot's, and Lowes, that move a lot of product from region to region are a bigger concern. Mr. Severns recommended that it be best not to bring commodities out of quarintine area.

**ITEM 10: CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Mr. LoBue asked that since this is a new committee should new officers be elected for coming term? Dr. Ba noted that since this was not an action item on the agenda it would need to wait until the next meeting and placed as an action item.

**ITEM 11: NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Bob Blakely updated the committee on the Brim A evaluation in Chicago. The second round of testing will be conducted today and tomorrow. Yesterday there were 124 participants and another 100 participants expected today. The evaluation has two

standards, a (pass 8:1 ratio/fail on Brim A) and a (pass Brim A/fail 8:1 ratio). Initial evaluation shows that Brim A is being more favorably received compared to the statistical 8:1 ratio. Once the evaluation is completed, statistical analysis will be done. Depending on the timing of the completed report, it may be able to share results prior to the March 1, 2009 roll out.

Dr. Rabe announced to the members that he made a move and is now with Paramount Citrus.

**ITEM 12: NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 12, 2009, 1:00 p.m., Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, 4437 S Laspina Street, Tulare, CA 93274.

**ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Amadou Ba, Supervisor
Standardization Program
Inspection and Compliance Branch

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