



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Karen Ross, Secretary

May 18, 2015

TO: CALIFORNIA ORGANIC PRODUCTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (COPAC)  
INTERESTED PARTIES

A teleconference meeting of the California Organic Products Advisory Committee has been scheduled. Enclosed is the agenda.

Date: Friday, June 5, 2015  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: 2800 Gateway Oaks Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95833  
Room 267  
(916) 900-5030

Any member of the public may join the conference call by going to any of the following locations:

Melody Meyer, 4710 Rodeo Gulch Ln., Soquel  
Chino Valley Ranchers, 331 W. Citrus St., Colton  
Good Earth Natural Foods, 720 Center Blvd., Fairfax  
University of California Berkeley, 3 Giannini Hall, Berkeley  
Earthbound Farm Organic, 1721 San Juan Highway, San Juan Bautista  
Straus Family Creamery, 1105 Industrial Ave., Suite 200, Petaluma  
Non-GMO Project, 1155 State St., Suite 502, Bellingham, Washington  
Fruitalicious Farm, 47 Linden Rd., Watsonville

Notification of committee meetings and their agendas can be found via the Internet at the following website address: <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/is/meetings.html>

Please find the enclosed agenda. If you have any questions regarding this meeting, please contact me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

Danny Lee  
Supervising Special Investigator

Enclosure

cc: Gary Leslie



**California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)  
California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC) Meeting**

**Friday, June 5, 2015  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Teleconference**

**AGENDA**

1. Roll Call/Introductions
2. Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) Testing Pilot Program – Attachment A
3. New Business
4. Public Comment
5. Next Meeting
6. Adjournment

*All meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you need reasonable accommodation as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or if you have questions regarding the public meeting, please contact Susan Shelton at (916) 900-5030. Requests for reasonable accommodation should be made no later than three (3) days before the meeting.*

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/meetings.html>

## Description of Tasks

The collection of samples of raw agricultural organic products for the testing of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), also known as genetic engineering (GE), will be implemented as a one year pilot program; beginning fiscal year 2015/2016. During the pilot program, all samples for GMO testing will only be collected by CDFA staff. If the pilot program is implemented as a permanent program; the collection of GMO samples will then be expanded to county, agricultural staff. The collection of samples for GMO testing shall follow the protocols similar to those currently in place for pesticide residue testing.

CDFA may determine which samples shall be collected; including, but not limited to the type, amount, size, or volume. A duplication of each sample may be taken. Each sample collected shall include an identifying number, the date and time collected, the name of the individual collecting the sample, the address where collected, a detailed description of the product, its location on the premises, and any other identifying information determined to be necessary. Individual samples shall be enclosed in containers appropriate for the type of sample collected, utilizing methods that prevent direct contact with contaminants.

Samples may be collected randomly or as part of an investigation. Sample collections shall be conducted at, but not limited to, production and handler sites; certified farmers' markets; retail locations; and points of entry. Sampling will focus on organic commodities in California, and those brought in from out-of-state, that are most likely to contain GMOs\* such as canola, rice, alfalfa, wheat, corn, sugar beets, squash, cotton, soybeans, and cattle feed; which contains a number of these ingredients.

The CDFA Center for Analytical Chemistry (Chem Lab) doesn't currently have the capability to conduct GMO testing. It would take approximately 12-14 months to establish GMO testing capabilities and another 6-12 months to complete additional GMO testing requirements under the ISO 17025 accreditation. Since the Chem Lab is not established to conduct GMO testing at this time; GMO samples will be submitted to Genetic ID NA, Inc. labs in Iowa for testing. Genetic ID NA, Inc. is an accredited lab that conducts GMO testing on products with the USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Branch's approved, Non-GMO Project Verified label. Genetic ID NA, Inc. also conducts GMO analysis for USDA accredited organic certifiers.

The goal of this pilot program is to collect approximately 60 samples during the 2015/2016 fiscal year. Since qualitative analysis only shows whether GMOS are "Detected" or "Not detected," (down to a limit of 0.01%); all samples will be submitted for DNA, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) quantitative testing. This quantitative test will show the actual percentage of GMO in the sample.

\*Source: Non-GMO Project

Sample results will be shared with the appropriate entities. Samples with negative results, where no GMOs are detected, will be shared with the NOP, COPAC, and the operation where the sample was taken. If the presence of GMOs are detected; the SOP will report the findings to the NOP, certifier (if certified operation), and to the operation; and advise them that the SOP is initiating an investigation. The SOP will also notify the operation that they must cease the sale of any products that tested positive for GMOs; until the source of the GMO is determined.

The SOP will then follow USDA National Organic Program (NOP) protocols and initiate an investigation to determine how the presence occurred, and whether the presence of GMOs is intentional or inadvertent. Results will be shared with all applicable parties after the investigation is completed. A final report on all samples collected will be issued upon completion of the pilot project.