



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
CALIFORNIA ORGANIC PRODUCTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (COPAC)**

May 6, 2015

Meeting Minutes

2800 Gateway Oaks, Sacramento, CA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Garff Hathcock
Melody Meyer
Steven Sherman
Sandra Schmaier
Bridget Montesanti
Sean Swezey
Patrick Kennelly
Thomas Chapman
Blake Alexandre
Steve DeMuri
Thomas Azwell
David Will
Mindee Jeffery
Stacy Carlsen

MEMBERS ABSENT

Patrick Baur
Ione Conlan
Karen Klonsky

INTERESTED PARTIES

Jenny Lester Moffitt- CDFA
Jane Sooby- CCOF
John Ashby- Natural Products
Chad Sokol- COSTCO

CDFA

Steve Patton
Danny Lee
David Carlson
Paul Collins
Scott Renteria
Laurel Rudolph

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL

The Committee was called to order at 10:05 am by Mr. Steven Sherman, Chairperson. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self introductions were made.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 3: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Steve Sherman moved to approve the January 22, 2015, Meeting Minutes with the discussed changes. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous with no abstentions.

ITEM 4: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Mr. Patrick Kennelly provided a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) update. He reported that 2,500 registrants are currently registered with CDPH. There were eight complaints in the first half of 2015; three of those complaints have been completed.

The question was asked of what happens to the inventory or products that are issued a non compliance. Mr. Kennelly responded that if a product is greatly misleading then it

will get removed from the shelves, but no press would be called and no announcement would be made to the public. Recalls will only happen if there is a serious risk to public safety.

Mr. Kennelly also discussed the upcoming website that will allow the public to make complaints online along with the hotline.

ITEM 5: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM REPORTS

I. Vacancy and Terms

Ms. Laurel Rudolph provided the vacancy report. Vacancies include: three producers; six producer alternates; one wholesale alternate; one processor; two processor alternates; one retail representative; one environmental representative; one environmental representative alternate; two technical representative; two technical representative alternates; one consumer representative; two consumer representative alternates.

Members whose terms will be expiring October 31, 2015, and are not eligible for reappointment are: Mr. Blake Alexandre; Ms. Ione Conlan; Mr. Steve DeMuri; Mr. Thomas Azwell; Mr. Sean Swezey; Ms. Karen Klonsky; and Ms. Sandra Schmaier.

The Committee discussed the term limits of incoming members and staggering those terms. The committee asked to be informed of current applicants for the upcoming vacant positions and requested a list of all applicants be made available for review.

II. Revenue from Registration

Mr. Scott Renteria provided an overview of the State Organic Program (SOP) revenue from registrations. As of March 31, 2015 the total projected revenue for the 2014/15 Fiscal Year (FY), is over \$1.3 million.

III. New Registrations

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of new registrant demographics. The total number of new registrations for 2014 was 499. The vast majority of the new registrants are producers, followed by handlers, processors, and then retailers. As of March 31, 2015 the SOP has a total of 3,690 registrants.

The committee asked that in the next new registrations report there be a breakdown of new registrations by commodity as well.

IV. Complaints

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of the complaint activity for the months of July 2014 to April 20, 2015. At that time, the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) had 5 complaints that had been open for over 120 days, 2 that had been open for 90-120 days, 5 that had been open 60-90 days, 4 that had been open for 30-60 days, 6 that have been open for less than 30 days, and 55 complaints closed. Of the complaints that came into the CDFA: 27 of those were assigned to a County Agricultural Commissioner;

19 were assigned to the SOP; 15 were referred to the California Department of Public Health; 13 were referred to Accredited Certifying Agents; 2 were referred to the Organic Input Material Program; and 1 was referred to the National Organic Program.

V. Appeals

Mr. Danny Lee provided the SOP Appeals Status Report. As of April 1, 2015, the SOP has logged one appeal that was granted to the appellant.

VI. Residue Analysis

Mr. Renteria provided the Residue Analysis report for the 2014/15 FY. Mr. Renteria explained that the report was not much different than the report given at the January 2015 meeting. He reported that 40 to 50 percent of the SOP's sampling and inspections are done in the months of May and June.

CDFA received 240 samples from the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) in addition to CDFA's own samples. Samples from the DPR are treated and followed up with like any other complaint that comes into CDFA.

VII. State Organic Program Fund Condition

Mr. Lee provided the SOP Fund Condition. As of March 31, 2015 the beginning balance for the 2014/15 FY was over \$2.9 Million. Total revenue was over \$1 million and total expenditures were \$ 934,027. The total resources as of March 31, 2015 are over \$3 million.

VIII. Fiscal Year 2015/ 2016 Budget

Mr. Lee provided the 2015/16 FY budget. The projected expenditures for Personal Services for the 2014/15 FY are \$595,172 and the proposed expenditures for Personal Services for the 2015/16 FY are \$650,232. The projected expenditures for the 2014/15 FY for Operating Expenses & Equipment are \$614,310 and the proposed expenditures for the 2015/16 FY are \$785,405. The total program costs for the 2014/15 FY projected expenditures are \$1,589,678 and \$1,777,100 for the 2015/16 FY proposed expenditures. The total program budget for the 2015/16 FY is \$ 1,692,567, with the total revenue being \$1,375,000.

The Committee discussed increasing surveillance by adding 100 more samples and adding \$60,000 to the surveillance budget.

MOTION: Mr. Sean Swezey moved to add 100 more samples and \$60,000 to the SOP surveillance budget, bringing the total testing samples to 400. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

The final vote to pass the budget was tabled to discuss Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) testing.

IX. Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) Testing

Mr. Lee introduced the GMO testing pilot program. The SOP will be budgeting \$16,500 for the pilot program. The funds will be used for sampling, analysis, and shipping of samples. Sixty samples will be taken from producers; ten of those samples will be quantitative and fifty will be qualitative. These samples will be sent to a private lab to be tested and the results will be shared and followed up by CDFA.

Questions about the GMO pilot program were: What commodities were being considered for testing? Are the products being tested were only being grown in California or out of State? And what happens to the data from the testing? Mr. Lee explained that the products tested would only be ones grown in California. The products at risk of GMOs include feed, corn, wheat, and alfalfa. Mr. Lee said that once they analyze the samples, they will share the results with the committee.

After a discussion with the Committee about the type of samples being tested and the program budget, it was requested that all of the 60 samples will be quantitative, meaning that the tests will not only show if the sample has a presence of GMO's but also percentages. They also requested to increase the original budget amount of \$16,500 to \$30,000, so that there would be enough to allow all samples to be quantitatively tested.

MOTION: Ms. Melody Meyer moved to increase the original funding of \$16,500 to \$30,000 to allow all GMO samples to be quantitative tested. Mr. Thomas Azwell seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

The budget discussion was revisited and the committee agreed to add the two additional changes to the budget.

MOTION: Ms. Melody Meyer moved to add the agreed upon changes to the 2015/16 FY budget. The additional \$60,000 to the Chemistry Lab line item for additional samples, and the addition of a line item of \$30,000 for the GMO pilot program. Mr. Steve DeMuri seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Ms. Melody Meyer asked if any members wanted to put together a subcommittee to further talk about the GMO pilot program. The Committee agreed and four members volunteered for the committee. Those members are: Melody Meyer; Thomas Azwell; David Will; and Bridget Montesanti. They plan to meet at the beginning of June.

X. State Organic Program Educational Fact Sheet

Mr. Lee discussed the SOP Educational Fact Sheet. This marketing sheet highlights California's State Organic Program, the only state with its own organic program. The Fact Sheet is located on the CDFA website.

ITEM 6: REVIEW OF COMMITTEE RULES AND PROCEDURES

I. 1.5 Election of Officers; changing term limits

Mr. Lee discussed the changing of the term limits for the committee members. Current members have a three year term limit. After some discussion regarding extending the terms, it was decided to wait until the new members were appointed to take any action.

II. 2.1 Regular Meetings: Reducing number of meetings

Mr. Lee discussed the regular meetings. He recommended to the committee that the number of meetings be reduced from three meetings a year to two. After some discussion the Committee decided to continue to meet three times a year.

MOTION: Mr. Steven Sherman moved to change the Committee Procedure 2.1, to read that there will be three meetings a year instead of the four that is currently outlined in the committee procedures. Mr. Blake Alexandre seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

III. 2.5 Quorum Numbers: Reducing quorum numbers

Mr. Lee discussed the reduction of the Quorum numbers. After some discussion the Committee decided to change the quorum from two thirds of the committee members to a majority, meaning a quorum would consist of 50% of the seated members.

MOTION: Mr. Thomas Chapman moved to change the Committee Procedure 2.5 to read that a quorum would consist of 50% of the seated members. Garff Hathcock seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

ITEM 7: ORGANIC RESEARCH AND PROMOTION ORDER UPDATE

Ms. Meyer discussed the Organic Research and Promotion Order. The new Farm Bill contains a provision for the Organic Check-off program. The Check-off program would generate funds for the organic industry to implement, develop, and manage programs needed to grow market share, in areas such as: promotion; education; research; and the transition of farmers to grow organic production. The application for this program is on its way to be submitted to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for review. Once the application goes through the USDA and the public comment period, it will go to referendum. Once in referendum, every organic certified entity can vote on it.

ITEM 8: NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARD BOARD (NOSB) UPDATE

Mr. Thomas Chapman gave an update on the NOSB meeting. He reviewed what substances were added or removed from the USDA's National List.

ITEM 9: NEW ITEMS

Mr. Steve Patton recommended to the Committee that they revise Section 6.2 of the current committee procedures regarding the review of applications for member seats. The change would allow the committee members to review the applications independently and make recommendations on an individual basis, instead of giving authority to review applications and make recommendations from the Committee as a whole.

MOTION: Mr. Steve Sherman moved to change Section 6.2 in the Committee procedures to read that the committee members may review current member applications and may make recommendations on an individual basis. Mr. Blake Alexandre seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

ITEM 10: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held September 23, 2015 in Sacramento, CA.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Steve Sherman moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:46; Mr. Garff Hathcock seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted by:



Danny Lee, Supervising Special Investigator
State Organic Program