CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
AVOCADO INSPECTION COMMITTEE (AIC)
September 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT	**CDFA REPRESENTATIVES**
Bryce Bannatyne – Chair	Steve Patton
Marc Fallini	Stacey Hughes
John Schaap – Vice Chair	Sam Santander
Salvador Dominguez	
Keith Blanchard	
Stewart Lockwood	
Wayne Brydon	

MEMBERS ABSENT	**INTERESTED PARTIES**
None	Monica Arnett, CA Avocado Commission
	April Aymami CA Avocado Commission
	Ed Williams, Ventura County
	Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia, UC Riverside

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS

The Committee was called to order at 11:15 a.m. by Bryce Bannatyne, Chair. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and introductions were made.

ITEM 2: ELECTIONS

Steve Patton opened the floor to nominations for Chair.

MOTION: John Schaap moved to nominate Bryce Bannatyne for Chair. Stewart Lockwood seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Patton opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION: Bryce Bannatyne nominated John Schaap for Vice Chair. Salvador Dominguez seconded the Motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 4: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MARCH 27, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Lockwood requested a correction to page three, paragraph one of the March 27, 2019 meeting minutes. The word "ethic" should read "ethnic."

MOTION: Stewart Lockwood moved to approve the March 27 Meeting Minutes with amendment. Salvador Dominguez seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 5: COMMITTEE VACANCY AND TERMS REPORT

Stacey Hughes presented the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report. The Committee currently has one Grower Alternate Member Vacancy. Reappointment of eligible members will take place in May of 2020.

ITEM 6: APPROVAL OF THE AVOCADO INSPECTION PROGRAM BUDGET

Bannatyne opened the discussion of the Avocado Inspection Program Budget with questions on the rent for the California Avocado Commission/Avocado Inspection office located in Santa Paula. A brief discussion between Bannatyne and Patton followed in which Patton explained the reasons for rent costs and that the Committee does not pay for their current meeting space.

Monica Arnett, Vice President of Finance and Administration for the California Avocado Commission (CAC), presented the Avocado Inspection Program Budget for the 2019/20 Fiscal Year (FY) to the Committee. Arnett also reminded the Committee that many administrative functions of the Avocado Inspection Program, including budgeting and finance, are conducted by CAC staff.

Arnett gave the Committee an overview of the 2019/20 FY budget. Arnett informed the Committee that projected revenues for the 2018/19 FY budget are going to be higher than originally anticipated due to a larger crop volume. The original projected revenue for the 2018/19 FY budget was based on 200,000,000 pounds which is now expected to be closer to 210,000,000 pounds. The projected revenue for the 2019/20 FY budget is based on a crop size of 365,000,000 pounds.

Arnett went on to discuss the current assessment rate which was increased in FY 2018/19 to .25 cents per hundred pounds. After some discussion, the Committee felt it was appropriate to maintain the current assessment rate for the 2019/20 FY budget.

There was also some discussion regarding the need for multiple Program offices. Sam Santander explained that the Program currently has three field offices. One located in Riverside County, one in San Diego County, and one in Ventura County. Each office is equipped to perform dry matter maturity testing. Santander went on to state that the current office locations are essential in mitigating problems created by traffic and that consolidating offices would lead to increases in travel expenses to the Program as well as members of the avocado industry. Santander also explained that although much of the Program's activities are conducted at packing houses, all maturity tests are performed at the field offices.

Bannatyne asked for a motion to approve the budget.

MOTION: John Schaap moved to approve the 2019/20 FY Avocado Inspection Program budget. Stewart Lockwood seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 7: PROGRAM UPDATES

Santander provided the Avocado Inspection Program update. Santander mentioned to the Committee that the staff of the Avocado Inspection Program has not had any injuries since 2008, which Santander felt was worthy of mention.

Santander explained in the past year, 207,318,927 total pounds of avocados were certified, 5,562 size count tests were conducted, 155 Notices of Noncompliance were issued, 198,250 pounds were repacked for not meeting size requirements, 195 official tests and 10 Notices of Noncompliance were issued for immature fruit, and 6,200 pounds of fruit were disposed of for failing to meet the minimum dry matter percentage. A total of 2,057 informational maturity tests were also performed.

Patton spoke briefly about the Produce Safety Program and updated the Committee on the progress of its implementation. Patton explained that CDFA has begun inspections and is basing the prioritization of inspections on feedback from a survey conducted by CDFA. Patton further stated that CDFA is hoping to hire more inspectors for the Produce Safety Program in the near future to ensure that CDFA conduct the appropriate number of inspections annually.

ITEM 8: GEM VARIETY RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATE

Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia provided an update on the Gem Variety Research Project. Dr. Arpaia gave the Committee a brief background of the variety since its initial development in 1986. Dr. Arpaia said that only in recent years has there been an increase in interest in the Gem variety.

Dr. Arpaia stated that the Research Project objectives include collecting samples over a minimum of two years in sizes 40 and 48 from multiple sites to look at year to year variation. Dr. Arpaia further provided information to the Committee on the sampling sites that have been used, the ages and locations of the trees being used for sampling, as well as the methods used for analysis. According to Dr. Arpaia, the size 40 and 48 fruits have produced similar data in the past year though there is variance across the sampling sites. This led to a discussion regarding the possible factors contributing to the variance in data by location, including discussion of tree age, local climate, and soil health.

A period of discussion ensued regarding future data gathering and testing for the Gem Variety Research Project. During the discussion, the topic of adding another size to the data collected on the Gem variety was mentioned. In this discussion, Dr. Arpaia noted that adding another size to the data collection efforts would lead to an increase in costs but would also provide for more data and a better understanding of the Gem variety's maturity. Patton reminded the Committee that a motion would be required to add a size

to data collection. Arnett followed Patton and explained that CAC would need to know of a decision soon so that CAC can revise the Avocado Inspection Program's budget as necessary. Hughes asked Dr. Arpaia what increase in the budget would adequately cover the added costs of adding a size to the Research Project. Dr. Arpaia stated that a $10,000 increase will be adequate. After further discussion, the Committee elected to add size 28 fruit to the data.

MOTION: John Schaap moved to approve the addition of size 28 fruit to the data collection efforts of the Gem Variety Research Project and to amend the 2019/20 FY budget not to exceed a maximum of $50,000 for the Gem Variety Research Project. Salvador Dominguez seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 9: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on March 17, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. in Irvine, at the California Avocado Commission office.

ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m. by Chair Bannatyne.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Sam Santander, Program Supervisor
Avocado Inspection Program
Inspection and Compliance Branch