



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)  
AVOCADO INSPECTION COMMITTEE (AIC)**

**Meeting Minutes  
December 21, 2011**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mike Browne, Handler – Chairman  
Reuben Hofshi, Handler  
Chris Varvel, Handler  
Ohannes Karaoghlanian, Grower  
Will Carleton, Alternate Grower  
Jim Donovan, Alternate Handler

**CDFA REPRESENTATIVES**

Steve Patton

**INTERESTED PARTIES**

Mary Lu Arpaia, University of California Davis  
James Sievert, University of California Davis

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Pete Changala, Grower – Vice Chair  
Gus Gunderson, Grower

**ITEM 1: ROLL CALL**

Mr. Mike Browne called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with a quorum present.

**ITEM 2: APPROVAL OCTOBER 19, 2011 MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Mr. Ohannes Karaoghlanian moved to approve the October 19, 2011 Meeting Minutes as submitted. Mr. Reuben Hofshi seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**ITEM 3: CALIFORNIA AVOCADO MATURITY STANDARD**

Mr. Steve Patton discussed the mechanism to establish a national Hass maturity standard. He stated that it must go through the federal marketing order in Florida. He provided the Committee with a handout of the current standards.

Discussion ensued about how to change the California standard and to let the Hass Avocado Board (HAB) or the California Avocado Commission (CAC) take lead on a national change.

Mr. Hofshi stated that at the recent HAB meeting, all were in agreement that a higher standard must be set so a repeat of last summer's price drop due to poor quality fruit does not occur.

Mr. Karaoghlanian questioned if paying for a third party to do inspections on all California and imported avocados would be acceptable. Mr. Patton explained that it is possible, but it would not hold the weight of enforcement that the State or Federal government is given due to the fact that third parties cannot propose adverse actions such as fines.

Mr. James Sievert, University of California Davis (UCD), stated that AIC needs to focus on California fruit and how can we be leaders in the industry by first increasing our own standard. Mr. Patton stated that in the regulations there is an exemption from the Office of Administrative Law for maturity standard changes which makes the process less cumbersome.

Ms. Mary Lu Arpaia, UCD, stated that using the release dates are not valid methods and suggested that industry should just look at a higher dry matter content such as 23 or higher to achieve industry goals. Mr. Patton reminded the Committee that the current California standard is a minimum and not an optimum. The Committee discussed that an optimum would be 26 or 27 and that 23 would be a minimum because the current standard of 20.8 is not acceptable to consumers.

Ms. Arpaia stated that California Citrus Mutual received a Specialty Crop Grant from CDFA and used the funding to conduct taste tests in Chicago which led to the change in their methodology for navel maturity and perhaps CAC could go through the same process.

Committee discussion ensued and while no motion was made, it was decided that Mr. Hofshi would provide the State and AIC members with the necessary research to validate a change to the higher standard of 23 and would work with Mr. Browne to ensure that the documents were presented to CDFA in an acceptable format.

#### **ITEM 4: NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business discussed.

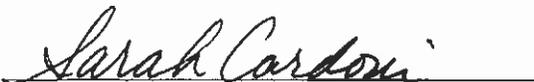
#### **ITEM 5: NEXT MEETING**

The next tentative scheduled meeting will be in March 2012.

#### **ITEM 6: ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Browne adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Sarah Cardoni, Branch Secretary  
Inspection and Compliance Branch