



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
AVOCADO INSPECTION COMMITTEE (AIC)
March 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Teleconference**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Salvador Dominguez – Chair
Keith Blanchard – Vice Chair
Wayne Brydon
Marc Fallini
Aaruni Thakur
Stewart Lockwood

INTERESTED PARTIES

April Aymami, CA
Avocado Commission

CDFA REPRESENTATIVES

Stacey Hughes
Sam Santander
Sarah Cardoni
Marcee Yount
Karrie Batchelor

MEMBERS ABSENT

Bryce Bannatyne
John Schaap

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Salvador Dominguez, Chair.

ITEM 2: INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Sarah Cardoni, a quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 4: REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Chair Dominguez asked for a motion to approve the September 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented.

MOTION: Aaruni Thakur moved to approve the September 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Stewart Lockwood seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 5: COMMITTEE VACANCY AND TERMS REPORT

Cardoni provided the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report. There will be one handler member vacancy upcoming May 31, 2023. Cardoni also provided the names of members who will be eligible for reappointment as of May 31, 2023.

ITEM 6: REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED CDFA FISCAL YEAR 2023/24 BUDGET

Sam Santander presented the Proposed CDFA Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/24 Budget. The proposed budget included \$199,395 for personal services; \$71,045 for operating expenses and equipment; a gas tax credit of \$4,980; and a pro rata cash adjustment of \$18,743, for a total budget of \$284,203.

Chair Dominguez asked for a motion to approve the CDFA Proposed Budget for the FY 2023/24 as presented.

MOTION: Aaruni Thakur moved to approve the Proposed CDFA FY 2023/24 Budget as presented. Keith Blanchard seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 7: PROGRAM UPDATES

Santander provided Program Updates. From November 2021 to October 2022, the Avocado Inspection Program certified 275,872,028 pounds of fruit; conducted 7,219 size and weight tests, with 72 violations and 89,800 pounds of fruit rejected for repacking; conducted 253 maturity tests, with 14 violations and 9,575 pounds of fruit disposed of; and conducted 907 informational tests.

Keith Blanchard inquired about the petition process to introduce the Gem Variety as an official variety and amend California Code of Regulations Section 1408.9. Avocados, Marking Requirements. Stacey Hughes clarified the petition and regulatory process and will provide the AIC a template with suggested language for the petition.

ITEM 8: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on September 12, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

ITEM 9: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 p.m. by Chair Dominguez.

Respectfully submitted by:

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