



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
AVOCADO INSPECTION COMMITTEE (AIC)
September 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes
Teleconference**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bryce Bannatyne – Vice Chair
Marc Fallini
John Schaap – Chair
Salvador Dominguez
Keith Blanchard
Stewart Lockwood
Wayne Brydon
Aaruni Thakur

CDFA REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Patton
Stacey Hughes
Sam Santander
Mitchell King
Marcee Yount

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

INTERESTED PARTIES

Monica Arnett, CA Avocado Commission
April Aymami CA Avocado Commission
Ed Williams, Ventura County
Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia, UC Riverside
Dave Holden, Holden Research and
Consulting

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER-INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Marcee Yount. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and introductions were made.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 3: COMMITTEE VACANCY AND TERMS REPORT

Mitchell King provided the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report.

ITEM 4: ELECTIONS

Yount opened the floor to nominations for Chair.

MOTION: Stewart Lockwood nominated John Schaap for Chair. Bryce Bannatyne seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Yount opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION: Stewart Lockwood nominated Bryce Bannatyne for Vice Chair. John Schaap seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5: REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES

i. September 17, 2019

MOTION: Stewart Lockwood moved to approve the September 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes as presented. John Schaap seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. May 19, 2020

MOTION: Salvador Dominguez moved to approve the May 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes as presented. Keith Blanchard seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 6: GEM VARIETY RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATE

Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia of the University of California Riverside presented the GEM Variety Research Project Update to the Committee. Dr. Arpaia asked the Committee if there were any questions about the work of the project as it enters its final year. Bryce Bannatyne asked Dr. Arpaia about the possibility of GEM variety avocados going to the market later than the current last inspection in May. Dr. Arpaia stated that this could be done, if the cooperators in the project were willing to allow fruit to remain on trees longer than they currently are. This led to further discussion between Dr. Arpaia and Bannatyne regarding the number of trees needed per ranch to get the proper data.

There was further discussion among the Committee members about dates for picking trees and Dr. Arpaia's project. Salvador Dominguez suggested conducting work with the GEM variety to identify its window of marketability. Keith Blanchard noted that it would be beneficial to get data on how long fruit can be left on trees and still be palatable. This led to further discussion about how such data could be acquired, as well as discussion about the possibility of conducting future taste tests.

ITEM 7: GEM VARIETY WIND SCARING

Dave Holden of Holden Research and Consulting provided information on GEM Variety Wind Scaring research. Holden stated that when the GEM variety of avocados was initially introduced into the Ventura County area, there were concerns about the origin of scaring on the fruit, and that originally, it was thought that the scaring was due to pests or the application of chemicals. This led Holden to conduct research to determine what the origin of the scaring was from.

Holden conducted tests in orchards to determine whether the scaring seen in the GEM variety was due to thrips scaring or wind scaring and found that while thrips scaring usually follows a pattern on the fruit from the stem downward, wind scaring does not appear to follow a pattern on the body of the avocado. Holden also found that wind scaring is more likely to occur on fruit located on the windward side of a tree than the

leeward side. Holden has proposed further research with the California Avocado Commission (CAC) to examine what difference wind screens make on the appearance of wind scaring on GEM variety avocados.

There was discussion regarding the timing of wind scaring as well as whether calcium would make a difference in wind scaring on avocados. Holden stated that wind scaring appears to happen early in the growth cycle and that calcium may not make a difference, though research into calcium has not been conducted. There was also discussion of the potential impact of dead wood and the potential of applying polymers to help prevent wind scaring.

ITEM 8: APPROVAL OF THE AVOCADO INSPECTION PROGRAM BUDGET

Monica Arnett, Vice President of Finance and Administration for CAC presented the Avocado Inspection Program Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020/21 to the Committee. The beginning reserves for FY 2020/21 are \$828,217; total projected revenue is \$814,540; total projected expenses are \$846,480; with projected ending reserves of \$796,276. There was discussion between Bannatyne, Stacey Hughes, and Steve Patton regarding the total projected expenses being higher than projected revenue. Arnett noted that any money not used in prior years does carry over to the next budget year.

April Aymami and Arnett informed the Committee that the funding for a third year of GEM variety research by Dr. Arpaia is included in the proposed budget, and that approval of the budget would allow for continuation of GEM variety research. There was brief discussion regarding research funding.

MOTION: John Schaap moved to approve the Avocado Inspection Program Budget as presented. Stewart Lockwood seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 9: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on March 9, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Patton stated that CDFA will provide its proposed budget at the next meeting. Bannatyne suggested discussion of the effect of temperature on the GEM variety.

ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m. by Chair Schaap.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam Santander", is written over a light blue rectangular background. The signature is cursive and stylized.

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