



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

**May 3, 2017**

**Meeting Minutes**

**2800 Gateway Oaks, Sacramento, CA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mindee Jeffery- Chair  
Melody Meyer- Vice Chair  
Vernon Peterson  
David Will  
Karen Archipley  
Randy Skidgel  
Steve Beck  
Anne Marie Hourigan  
Christina Augustine  
Heather Podoll  
Jake Lewin  
Patrick Kennelly  
Stacy Carlsen  
Benjamin Diesl  
Kaley Grimland  
Phillip LaRocca  
Jennifer Shawgo  
Jeremy Johnson  
Chad Sokol

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Garff Hathcock  
Katherine Borchard  
Jaclyn Bowen  
Sean Graham

**INTERESTED PARTIES**

Jane Sooby- CCOF  
Jane Reick- Department of Public  
Health

**CDFA**

Steve Patton  
Rick Jensen  
Carla Sanchez  
Danny Lee  
Scott Renteria  
Laurel Rudolph  
Mayze Fowler-  
Riggs

**ITEM 1: ROLL CALL**

The Committee was called to order at 10:04 am by Ms. Mindee Jeffery, Chairperson. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self introductions were made.

Ms. Mindee Jeffery also welcomed the new members to the meeting, and thanked them for their willingness to volunteer their time and expertise.

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Jeffery asked for a motion to approve the January 26, 2017, Meeting Minutes as submitted.

Mr. David Will mentioned that he was on record as attending the January meeting when he did not attend.

Ms. Jeffery then asked for a motion to approve the January 26, 2017 meeting minutes as amended.

**MOTION:** Ms. Melody Meyer moved to approve the January 26, 2017, Meeting Minutes as amended. Mr. Steve Beck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

### **ITEM 3: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

Mr. Danny Lee presented the staff organization chart to the committee to offer understanding of how the State Organic Program (SOP) is organized and how it fits into CDFA's organization.

### **ITEM 4: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM REPORTS**

#### i. Vacancy and Terms

Ms. Laurel Rudolph provided the Vacancy Report. Vacancies include: one technical representative; three producer alternates; one processor alternates; one environmental representative alternate; two technical representative alternates; and one consumer representative alternate.

#### ii. Revenue from Registration

Mr. Patrick Kennelly provided a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) update. He reported that by the end of 2016, there were 2,889 registrants, registered with CDPH. There were 28 complaints in 2016; 17 were substantiated complaints, and 11 were found to be unsubstantiated, and one is open, pending review. So far, in 2017, there have been 7 complaints, 2 were substantiated complaints, 3 were found to be unsubstantiated, and 2 are open, pending review.

Mr. Kennelly also announced his retirement. He has been on the committee since 2004, and expressed that it has been a rewarding experience and how much he has learned in the 13 years he has participated on the committee. He also introduced Ms. Jane Reick, who will take his seat as the CDPH representative.

Mr. Scott Renteria provided an overview of the SOP revenue from registrations. As of March 2017, the revenue for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/17 is \$1,140,556.

#### iii. New Registrations

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of new registrant demographics. The total number of new registrations for 2016 was 504. The vast majority of the new registrants are producers, followed by handlers, processors, and then retailers. The SOP has a total of 4,397 total registrants.

#### iv. Complaints

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of the complaint activity for the 2016 Calendar year. During that time, the SOP had 24 complaints that had been open for over 120 days, 13

that had been open for 90-120 days, 5 that had been open 60-90 days, 1 that had been open for 30-60 days, 4 that have been open for less than 30 days, and 54 closed complaints.

Of the complaints that CDFA received: 34 of those were assigned to a County Agricultural Commissioner; 27 were assigned to the SOP; 23 were referred to the CDPH; 12 were referred to Accredited Certifying Agents; 2 were referred to the National Organic Program (NOP), and 0 was referred to the Organic Input Material Program.

Mr. Renteria also presented an inspection and sampling summary. There were a total of 816 total inspections so far in the FY 2016/17, with a majority of them conducted at Certified Farmers' Markets.

v. Appeals

Mr. Lee provided the SOP Appeals Status Report. As of March, 2017, the SOP has logged 5 appeals; 2 of the appeals are currently in process, and 3 were denied.

vi. Residue Analysis

Mr. Renteria provided the Residue Analysis report for the FY 2016/17. As of March 2017, there were a total of 141 samples collected; 104 of those samples are from routine surveillance done by contacted counties and CDFA. Of the 104 routine samples, 7 samples detected residues within tolerance levels, and 6 were above tolerance levels. There were 37 investigative samples collected as of March 2017, 5 samples detected residue within tolerance levels, and 8 samples detected residue above tolerance level.

vii. Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) Testing

Mr. Danny Lee discussed the GMO Testing pilot program. As of September 2016, the SOP has collected 20 samples to be tested for GMO's. Those samples include: alfalfa; blended cattle feed; chicken feed; and a variety of vegetable seeds. Because there currently is no threshold for GMO's each sample taken was blind, and no operations were identified when testing. The project was a fact finding mission to gather information to see how prevalent GMOs were in organic products. Moving forward, the SOP would like to continue testing samples, but no longer test them blind. There was much discussion regarding the merits of conducting the GMO study "not blind" and what the repercussions, if any, might be if the information of a positive outcome became public. The committee also discussed possible penalties if an organic producer tested positive for GMOs.

Ms. Jeffery asked for a motion to recommend that the SOP now test for GMOs as a transparent testing and that producers know when there is a violation.

**MOTION:** Mr. Jake Lewin moved that the committee thank CDFA for its hard work and responsiveness to industry, and to reaffirm SOP's commitment to identifying and reducing any genetically modified contamination in the organic system. He also moved that the Committee encourage ongoing rigorous investigation to identify source of 100%

positive results and take appropriate enforcement action. COPAC supports CDFA's intention to move forward with transparent identifiable testing. Ms. Karen Archipley seconded the motion. The motion passed, with a No vote from David Will, and no abstentions.

viii. Communications Contract

Mr. Rick Jensen presented the Communications contract. He started off by giving a brief history of the Organic Stakeholders Work group and their work to prioritize and implement various projects to help promote California organic products. Mr. Jensen mentioned that CDFA has planned to hire a consultant who will help with the communications phase of the work group priorities. Within the scope of work Mr. Jensen has written, the consultant's work will include: a strategic message development, which includes how best to promote and educate the public on who the SOP is and what they do; graphic design assistance, including webpage design; identifying outreach and communication channels, including social media outlets and blog posts. The committee has set aside over \$125,000, to be spent over 24 months to implement these priorities.

**ITEM 5: CDFA BUDGET PROCESS**

Mr. Nathan Johnson from CDFA's Budget Office gave a presentation on the State budget process, and the steps a program needs to take to receive more spending authority. He explained that in order to increase a programs spending authority, the program will first need to submit, to the CDFA Secretary, a Budget Change Concept (BCC) letter. The letter describes the program, what increase it is requesting, and what the reason for the increase is. Once the BCC letter is approved, the program will then submit a Budget Change Proposal (BCP). Like the BCC letter, the BCP will include information about the program, information such as: background of the program, the function of the program, current staffing, program revenues, and what the program is trying to accomplish with the increased funds. Once the Secretary has approved the BCP, it will then be sent over to the California Department of Finance for approval, then to the Legislature to be introduced as part of the Governor's budget bill, then available for approval by the Governor.

After some questions to Mr. Johnson, and discussion, the committee decided to recommend to the Secretary that the SOP submits a BCP for the FY 2018/19  
Ms. Jeffery asked for a motion to approve submitting a BCP for the FY 2018/19.

**MOTION:** Ms. Melody Meyer moved to recommend that the SOP submits a BCP for the FY 2018/19 to accommodate the recommendations of the Organic Stakeholder Work group. Ms. Anne Marie Hourigan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

## **ITEM 6: BUDGET REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

### i. SOP Fund Condition

Mr. Lee discussed the fund condition. As of March 31, 2017, the beginning balance was \$3,236,046 and total revenue was \$1,130,042. Total expenditures were \$1,113,247 and the ending balance was \$3,252,841.

### ii. FY 2017/18 Budget

Mr. Lee discussed the proposed SOP budget for the FY 2017/2018. The total proposed SOP budget is \$1,520,052, and the proposed revenue is \$1,220,844. After some discussion regarding a deficit in the costs and budget, the committee asked the SOP to make adjustments to the budget not exceeding \$2 million.

Ms. Jeffery asked for a motion to approve the FY 2017/18 budget with adjustments.

**MOTION:** Mr. David Will moved to approve the FY 2017/18 budget with adjustments, not exceeding \$2 million. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

## **ITEM 7: DATA MIGRATION**

Mr. Danny Lee gave an update on the data migration. He mentioned that the SOP is currently working on a system to share commodity information with the NOP. As it looks right now, the time to come up with a system to enable data sharing between the SOP and the NOP is estimated to be in 2018.

## **ITEM 8: TECHINCAL SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE**

### i. Commodity Categories

Mr. Jensen presented the commodity group changes to the registration process. With the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 1826, the total reported commodities were changed to only six commodity groups. With input from the Subcommittee, it was decided to expand the commodity groups from 6 to 30 different commodities. These expanded commodity groups, according to the National Agricultural Statistical Survey (NASS) and the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), are statistically significant in California. The new data collected is 64% more of the total data that was collected with the passing of AB 1826.

### ii. Database Changes

Mr. Renteria presented a mock-up of what the registration process will look like with the added thirty commodities. Prior to January 2017, the SOP collected acreage per information for all commodity groups, for each site in production. With the passing of AB 1826 the SOP no longer collects that information and subsequently reduced the data

screens in the database from as much as 100 to a total of 5 screens. With the added 30 commodities the SOP is able to gather additional needed information without adding to the amount of screens a registrant will see during the registration process. Along with the additional commodities being reported, the SOP will also collect acreage being produced along with acreage grown per production site, per county. With the additional information being collected, the SOP will now have additional information available to help with enforcement.

After much discussion regarding the added thirty commodity groups, and the changes in acreage collection, it was decided to reduce the number of commodities to twenty-nine, after omitting one of the poultry categories due to redundancy.

Ms. Jeffery asked for a motion to approve the change to twenty-nine commodity groups, and the acreage collection.

**MOTION:** Mr. Vernon Peterson moved to approve the twenty-nine commodity groups and acreage collected information to the registration database. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

#### **ITEM 10: RESOLUTION FOR PAT KENNELLY**

Mr. Lee presented Mr. Kennelly with a Resolution, thanking him for his years of service and commitment to COPAC.

#### **ITEM 11: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS**

The next meeting will be held September 6, 2017 in San Diego, CA. Some of the Agenda items will include: an update on the data migration status, an update from the Technical Subcommittee, and an overview of the Berkeley Food Institute's analysis of organic programs throughout the United States.

#### **ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Jeffery adjourned the meeting at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



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Danny Lee, Supervising Special Investigator  
State Organic Program