



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
AVOCADO INSPECTION COMMITTEE (AIC)
March 27, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Peter Changala, Grower – Chair
Marc Fallini, Handler
Will Carleton, Grower
Dana Thomas, Handler
Bryce Bannatyne, Grower Alternate

CDFA REPRESENTATIVES

Steve Patton
Marcee Yount
Stacey Hughes
Sam Santander

MEMBERS ABSENT

Stewart Lockwood, Grower

INTERESTED PARTIES

April Aymami, CA Avocado Commission
Monica Arnett, CA Avocado Commission
Tom Bellamore, CA Avocado Commission
Tim Spann, CA Avocado Commission
David Cruz, CA Avocado Commission
Ken Melban, CA Avocado Commission
Keith Blanchard, Index Fresh
Craig Lawson, San Diego County
Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS

The Committee was called to order at 11:03 a.m. by Mr. Peter Changala, Chair. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and introductions were made.

ITEM 2: COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND TERMS REPORT

Ms. Marcee Yount gave the vacancies report. The Committee currently has one Handler member, and one Handler Alternate vacancy. Mr. Changala and Mr. Will Carleton will term out as of May 30, 2018. There are no members eligible for reappointment until May of 2019.

Mr. Changala asked the CDFA representatives in attendance for clarification on AIC quorum requirements. It was determined that a quorum for the conduct of committee business is two-thirds of seated committee members.

A question was raised regarding whether alternate members may automatically fill vacant voting member positions. Mr. Steve Patton, Branch Chief of CDFA Inspection and Compliance Branch, explained that alternate members must submit a Prospective Membership Appointment Questionnaire and letter of recommendation in order to be considered for appointment as a full voting member.

Mr. Dana Thomas asked whether two individuals from the same company may both serve as AIC members. Mr. Patton explained that CDFA does not have a standing policy on this issue, but strives to make advisory committees as diverse and representative of industry as possible.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Yount informed those in attendance that additional revisions had been required for the Meeting Minutes initially included in the AIC meeting material packets. After some discussion, it was determined by the Committee to table approval of the September 19, 2017 Meeting Minutes until the next meeting.

Mr. Thomas requested an amendment on page three, paragraph two of the Meeting Minutes, to clarify the Avocado Inspection Program's (AIP) role in performing informational maturity testing on imported avocados. Mr. Thomas also requested that 'maturity standards' be revised to read 'release dates' on page three, paragraph three.

Ms. Stacey Hughes stated that the meeting minutes with requested amendments will be resubmitted to the Committee for review, in advance of the next AIC meeting.

ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED CDFA BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018/19

Mr. Sam Santander presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018/19 proposed budget. Total Personnel Services amount to \$151,753, Operating Expenses and Equipment total \$57,800, and projected total expenses for the FY 2018/19 are \$207,093.

Mr. Santander explained that variations in staff salary figures are due to personnel turnover and reclassifications over time.

Mr. Changala requested a motion to approve the FY 2018/19 Budget.

MOTION: Mr. Will Carleton moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2018/19 proposed budget. Mr. Bryce Bannatyne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Ms. Hughes explained to the Committee that the FY 2016/17 total expenses of \$144,859 described on the attachment will be revised to \$168,148, in order to rectify a previous billing misrouting.

ITEM 5: PROGRAM UPDATES

Mr. Santander provided the Avocado Inspection Program update. Mr. Santander informed those in attendance that AIP recently experienced issues related to testing scales which were broken and could no longer be calibrated. Due to the unavailability of replacement parts, the Program purchased two new scales. Mr. Santander explained that he is currently in the process of allocating funds for use towards testing and

computer equipment. Mr. Santander approximated the total expenditures associated with the new equipment to be \$6,000-\$7,000, which will be added to the 2018/2019 AIP proposed budget this Fall.

ITEM 6: GEM VARIETY MATURITY STANDARDS

Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia led a presentation pertaining to Gem variety maturity standards. Dr. Arpaia began by providing those in attendance with background on past maturity studies conducted on several varieties of avocados. Dr. Arpaia explained that through discussion with AIC, a minimum dry matter content of 22.8% was agreed upon in 2006.

Dr. Arpaia went on to explain that the percentage of dry matter in the Gem variety differs from other varieties of avocados. The dry matter content in Gem avocados accumulates over time, whereas the dry matter content in other avocado varieties, such as Hass, plateau over time. Dr. Arpaia estimated that Gem avocados reach maturity approximately three to four weeks later than Hass avocados.

Dr. Arpaia clarified that according to her research, Gem variety avocados are estimated to reach minimum maturity levels in mid-March or April. She does not feel that an additional research project on the subject is warranted at this time.

Ms. Hughes explained to those in attendance that CDFR is granted authority under California Food and Agricultural Code Section 44988 to amend avocado release dates via directive following an AIC recommendation, rather than through a regulatory change.

Mr. Thomas requested a motion to recommend that CDFR cooperate with Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia to gather additional data on Gem variety maturity, and use this data to potentially revise the release date for the Gem variety.

Dr. Arpaia suggested that data on Gem variety maturity be collected from December 2018 until May 2019, with this data being combined with Gem variety maturity studies from previous seasons.

Mr. Bryce Bannatyne noted that consumer feedback of Gem variety taste and appearance has been highly positive, in multiple testing areas across the United States. Mr. Thomas concurred that the Gem variety has great potential to satisfy consumer demand. Dr. Arpaia also noted that Gem variety trees are capable of greater production per acre than other avocado tree varieties, making them attractive to growers.

Mr. Patton informed the Committee that the AIP must work within current resources and budget while conducting any research on Gem variety avocados.

MOTION: Mr. Dana Thomas moved to recommend that data collected by the CDFR Avocado Inspection Program and Dr. Mary Lou Arpaia, is to be used to establish new release dates for 2020, and to provide provisional release dates in 2019 for the Gem variety avocado, to be presented at the Fall 2018 Avocado Inspection Committee for the purpose of informing the Committee on a possible Gem variety release date

recommendation. Mr. Bryce Bannatyne seconded the Motion. The Motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Patton presented Mr. Changala and Mr. Carleton, who will term out in May of 2018, each with a Resolution, thanking them for their many years of commitment and service to the AIC.

ITEM 8: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on September 5, 2018 at 11:00 a.m., in Santa Paula, CA.

ITEM 9: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m. by Mr. Changala.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sam Santander".

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