



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

January 26, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Asilomar Conference Grounds, Monterey, CA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Melody Meyer
Vernon Peterson
Sean Graham
Christina Augustine
Heather Podoll
Chad Sokol
Stacy Carlsen
Garff Hathcock
Karen Archipley
Randy Skidgel
Steve Beck
Mindee Jeffery
Jaclyn Bowen
Benjamin Diesl

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jennifer Shawgo
Patrick Kennelly
Kaley Grimland

INTERESTED PARTIES

Kim Diets - Smuckers Natural Foods-
OTA
Kelley Damewood – CCOF
Ryan Fillmore- Fillmore Farms

CDFA

Natalie Krout-
Greenberg
Carla Sanchez
Marcee Yount
Danny Lee
Scott Renteria
Laurel Rudolph
Mayze Fowler-
Riggs
Jenny Lester-
Moffitt

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL

The Committee was called to order at 1:00 pm by Ms. Melody Meyer, Chair. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self introductions were made.

ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Meyer asked for a motion to approve the September 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes as submitted.

MOTION: Ms. Jaclyn Bowen moved to approve the September 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes as submitted. Mr. Sean Graham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with Ms. Karen Archipley and Ms. Jaclyn Bowen abstaining.

ITEM 3: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM (SOP) UPDATE

Mr. Danny Lee gave the Program update. Mr. Lee briefly discussed the enforcement actions for the 2015/16 fiscal Year (FY) and for the first six months of the 2016/17 FY. During the 2015/16 FY the Program received 66 complaints and conducted an investigation for each complaint. Of those complaints: 10 were referred to an Accredited Certified Agency (ACA), 18 were referred to the Department of Public Health (DPH), and 2 were referred to the National Organic Program (NOP).

The SOP has received 29 complaints in the 2016/17 FY thus far, and has conducted an investigation for each complaint. Of those complaints: 4 were referred to an ACA, and 12 were referred to the DPH.

Mr. Scott Renteria discussed the SOP inspections and sampling summary. He mentioned that during the 2015/16 FY there were a total of 1247 inspections performed, with a majority of these inspections conducted at Certified Farmer's Markets. Mr. Renteria stated that there were 231 samples collected during that 2015/16 FY. Of those samples 216 of them were from the SOP's surveillance program, 15 of the collected samples were investigative samples.

Mr. Renteria also briefly mentioned the 2015/16 FY appeals summary. He pointed out that during the 2015/16 FY there were three appeals, with one being sustained.

ITEM 4: AB 1826 UPDATE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

i. Registration changes

Mr. Renteria discussed the registration changes mandated by the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 1826. This bill changed the organic registration process and the fee schedule.

AB 1826 changed the way the SOP can collect registration information. Retailers are no longer required to register with the SOP. Individual commodities that were previously required have been reduced to six commodity groups. These groups are citrus, fruits excluding citrus, vegetables, nuts, livestock or dairy, and other. Registrants are no longer required to provide gross sales per commodity, and are now only required to provide total gross sales. Certifiers may now submit an application for organic registration on behalf of the applicant. Registration applications are now sent directly to the SOP, instead of first being approved by the county, as was previously done.

AB 1826 also changed the fee schedule, the registration forms, and the online registration process. The new fee schedule impacted operations whose gross sales were between \$10,000 and \$250,000. The change removes the \$175-\$300 fee category and expanded the \$100 fee category, which created more of an impact to the average size operation. Because of the reduction in the commodities information gathered, the Program redesigned the registration paper and online forms. The paper registration form was reduced from nine pages to two, and the online forms were reduced to three screens.

ii. Regulations- establish technical advisory subcommittee.

Mr. Lee explained to the Committee that even though AB 1826 significantly reduced the data collected, the Program still needed a broader scope of information collected; specifically, for enforcement purposes. In order to make any changes to the information gathered during registration, the Program must make a regulatory change. Mr. Lee asked the Committee to establish a subcommittee to help advise the Program on how to expand the commodity groups.

Those who volunteered for the Technical Subcommittee were: Mr. Vernon Peterson, Ms. Mindee Jeffery, Ms. Karen Archipley, Mr. Sean Graham, Ms. Garff Hathcock, and Ms. Kelley Damewood of CCOF.

Ms. Natalie Krout-Greenberg asked the new subcommittee to start thinking of ways to enhance the commodity groups for collection and how the Program could best process that information.

iii. Organic Stakeholder Work Group Priority Recommendation

Mr. Lee discussed the Workgroup Subcommittee's prioritization list, which prioritized the recommendations made during the workgroup meetings last year. These priorities are: streamline the CDFA registration process, enhance data collection and maximize data collection; improving enforcement activities and enhance training; expand outreach and communication to stakeholders; empower and energize COPAC; integrate organic throughout CDFA and other agencies; and leverage California's SOP and California organic producers on a national scale.

Mr. Lee asked the committee for a motion to approve the prioritizations so that the Committee can start implementing them.

MOTION: Ms. Heather Podoll moved to approve the workgroup recommendation prioritization list made by the subcommittee. Mr. Garff Hathcock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

iv. Implementation timeline and cost estimates

Mr. Lee discussed the Organic Workgroup COPAC Subcommittee recommendations projected budget. Projects anticipated to be implemented in the 2017/18 Fiscal Year (FY) will total \$61,000, for the 2017/18 FY the total projected will be \$121,000. Some of these projects include: streamlining the registration process and maximizing data collection; improving enforcement activities and enhancing training; expanding outreach and communication to stakeholders; empowering and energizing COPAC; streamlining Cost Share; and leveraging the SOP, and California ACA's on a national scale.

v. Communications Contract

Mr. Lee also discussed the Program hiring a communications agency to help implement some of the recommendations made by the Organic Workgroup. Mr. Lee explained to the committee that in order to get into a communications contract, the Committee will have to approve a new line item in their 2017/18 FY budget.

MOTION: Ms. Christina Augustine moved to add a line item in the 2017/18 FY budget to approve a communications contract to outsource with a communications agency. Ms. Jacklyn Bowen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 5: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Jane Sooby from CCOF thanked the SOP for all of their hard work lately, and expressed her support in the implementation of the ACA's ability to register with the state on behalf of their clients. She expressed her appreciation on the ongoing communication between the ACA's, the SOP, and the Committee, and hoped to keep the communication open.

Mr. Ryan Fillmore of Fillmore Farms complimented the SOP for all of their hard work on updating the online registration and streamlining the paperwork. He also wanted to show his support in allowing the ACA's to register with the State on behalf of their clients. Mr. Fillmore also wanted to encourage the information sharing between the ACA's and the SOP, and the hope to streamline the process sometime soon.

Ms. Kelly Damewood of CCOF complimented the SOP on their hard work with the new transitions with the registration processes. She also sent out a welcome to the new members of COPAC. Ms. Damewood mentioned that she too was very supportive of the new process of having the ACA's register with the state on behalf of their clients. She also wanted to support ways to streamline the registration process, and to find a way expand the data that is collected.

There was a brief discussion regarding the timeline with the ACA's and the SOP to build a database with the abilities to share commodity information. Ms. Krout-Greenberg mentioned to the committee that the Program will need to work with the Department's IT Branch. There is also a possibility of contracting with a programming company to help implement the wide range of data sharing that would need to be done with all ACA's.

ITEM 6: ELECTIONS

Ms. Meyer asked the Committee for nominations for a new Chairperson.

Motion: Ms. Melody Meyer nominated Ms. Mindee Jeffery as the new Chairperson. Ms. Jaclyn Bowen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Ms. Meyer asked the Committee for nominations for a new Vice-Chairperson.

Motion: Mr. Garff Hathcock nominated Ms. Melody Meyer as Vice-Chairperson. Ms. Mindee Jeffery seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 7: NEXT MEETINGS, LOCATION AND AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be May 3, 2017 in Sacramento. The fall meeting will be September 6, 2017, in San Diego. There was some discussion about having a meeting in July, and it was decided to wait and discuss the necessity of that meeting in May.

Some of the agenda items for the May meeting will be: An update on the GMO testing; a discussion on the structure of the Department and the SOP; The State budget process; and a discussion on residue sampling.

ITEM 8: ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Meyer adjourned the meeting at 2:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Danny Lee", written over a horizontal line.

Danny Lee, Supervising Special Investigator
State Organic Program