



**Fertilizer Research and Education Program  
Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TASC)**

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
2800 Gateway Oaks Drive, Room 101  
Sacramento, CA 95833

**February 23, 2015  
8:30 AM to 2:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**TASC Members**

Mr. Jack Wackerman, Chair  
Dr. Jerome Pier, Vice Chair  
Dr. Dennis Chessman  
Mr. Rex Dufour  
Dr. Eric Ellison  
Mr. Charles Hornung  
Dr. Marja Koivunen  
Dr. Marc Los Huertos  
Dr. Robert Mikkelsen

Mr. Steve Spangler  
Dr. Doug West

**CDFA Staff**

Dr. Amadou Ba  
Mr. Mark Cady  
Ms. Brooke Elliott  
Dr. Barzin Moradi  
Ms. Natalie Jacuzzi

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Jack Wackerman called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. and welcomed the subcommittee. Self-introductions were made and a quorum was established.

**DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, AND BRANCH UPDATES**

Dr. Amadou Ba provided the subcommittee with Division and Branch updates. The revisions to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act must be followed for all public meetings. Members' votes on actionable items will be recorded as "yes," "no," or "abstain." Also, a new section is to be listed in all meeting agendas as "Agenda Items for Future Meetings." Action cannot be taken on topics not listed in the agenda. However, topics may be recommended for discussion for the following meeting.

Dr. Ba reported Mr. Jim Houston was appointed as the department Undersecretary. Mr. Houston has been with CDFA since 2011 as a Deputy Secretary for Legislative Affairs. Ms. Jennifer Lester Moffitt was appointed as Deputy Secretary. Ms. Moffitt comes from Dixon Ridge Farms, where she served as managing director. Before accepting her current position, she was vice-chair of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. She was also a member of CDFA's California Organic Products Advisory Committee.

The Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP) has appointed a new Environmental Scientist, Ms. Natalie Jacuzzi. Ms. Jacuzzi received her graduate degree from CSU Monterey Bay in Watershed Science, specializing in water transport through the vadose zone; she was an agricultural consultant, covering irrigation and nutrient management and compliance with Central Coast Water Quality Control Board for growers. There are no longer any vacancies in the FREP.

The mill assessment for the Fertilizing Materials Inspection Program has been raised from 2 mills to the maximum rate of 3 mills. Through the mill increase, the FREP may receive more funds allocated for research.

The Nutrient Management Training Program for California Crop Advisers (CCAs) is progressing well, with 84 CCAs trained in Fresno this January, and 80 more CCAs expected to be trained in San Luis Obispo on February 24 – 25, 2015. There will be one more training session on March 10-11, 2015 in Sacramento.

### **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES**

Mr. Wackerman requested the subcommittee review the minutes of the October 30, 2014, meeting.

**MOTION:** Mr. Steve Spangler moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Dr. Rob Mikkelsen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **UPDATE OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

Dr. Barzin Moradi gave an update on the activities of the FREP's Strategic Planning Work Group (SPWG), which was created to evaluate FREP's engagement with the agricultural community and to help FREP proactively become a reliable source for plant nutrient information. Innovative strategies are needed to translate research findings into a nutrient management planning tool and decision-making platforms, which could support CCAs and growers in customizing their nutrient management to the locale.

Two meetings have been held. In the first meeting, the group reviewed current activities of FREP and discussed the possibilities of creating a comprehensive, easy-to-use nutrient planning tool. The main goal for the FREP was set as "becoming the primary resource for nutrient management" by bringing research results into practice. Outreach is an important factor to reach this goal.

For the second meeting, Dr. Michael Cahn was invited to talk about CropManage; a FREP-funded decision-making support tool for simultaneous management of irrigation

and fertilization in leafy greens and berries. Dr. Cahn presented the history and practical applications of CropManage, which currently has 550 users and 250 ranches in the database, as well as 6,700 visits since 2013. Future plans for CropManage include extending the applicability of the model to more crops, including alfalfa, almonds, and tomatoes.

Mr. Steve Spangler added that outreach is critical in making the FREP information useful for CCAs and growers. The goal is to make the FREP a familiar source of credible fertilization information; one of the steps for the SPWG is to create a marketing proposal.

Discussion ensued about the position of the FREP as a source of information and how to help growers practice best management of fertilizer.

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION OF 2015 CONCEPT PROPOSALS**

Mr. Wackerman led discussion in reviewing the 2015 concept proposals; 33 concept proposals were received. Project leaders for the following 7 concept proposals will be invited to submit full proposals:

- *Prediction of Summer Leaf Nitrogen Concentration from Early Season Samples to Better Manage Nitrogen Inputs at the Right Time in Walnuts, Prunes, Raisin Grapes, Nectarines, Apples, and Pears*  
Patrick Brown, Emilio Laca, and Sebastian Saa
- *Development of a Field-Based Approach to Predict Site-Specific Soil N Mineralization to Reassess Fertilizer N Recommendations*  
Daniel Geisseler and William R. Horwath
- *Improving Nitrate and Salinity Management Strategies for Almond and Walnut Grown Under Micro-Irrigation*  
Maziar M. Kandelous and Patrick H. Brown
- *Field-Scale Demonstration and Quantification of Benefits of BMPs for Irrigation and Nutrient Management in California's Central Coast Region*  
Forrest Melton
- *Spatial and Temporal N Management for Desert Vegetable Production Systems*  
Charles A. Sanchez, Pedro Andrade-Sanchez, and Jose Aguiar
- *Evaluation and Demonstration Nitrogen Mineralization and Management in Organic Vegetable Production in Leafy Green Vegetables on the Central Coast*  
Richard Smith and T.K. Hartz
- *Reevaluating the Nitrogen Fertilizer Rate on Sweetpotatoes*  
C. Scott Stoddard and Daniele Zaccaria

The subcommittee agreed the FREP staff will send a letter to each of the project leaders, informing them that their concept proposal was selected for advancement to the full proposal phase. The deadline for the full proposals is May 1, 2015.

### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

This year, there are two requests for proposals (RFPs), a regular RFP and a special RFP, which will require more meetings in order for the TASC to evaluate the proposals.

Mr. Parry Klassen's concept proposal, "Creation and Distribution of BMP Literature Emphasizing Nitrogen Crop Consumption Curves to Educate Growers on Proper Applications," covers subjects that FREP has published on its website. Mr. Klassen will be contacted by the FREP regarding the possibility of presenting to the SPWG the perspectives of the growers and the grower coalitions on agricultural issues relevant to the goals of the SPWG.

### **NEXT MEETING**

May 13, 2015 is the next Fertilizer Inspection Advisory Board (FIAB) meeting. The TASC needs to meet before the FIAB to discuss and recommend 2015 full proposals. The next TASC meeting is Tuesday, May 5, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. However, the date will be revised, because in order to meet the requirements of the Bagley-Keene Meeting Act, the decisions on research proposals made by the TASC must be included in the meeting packet for the FIAB meeting at least 10 days before the meeting.

### **ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** Dr. Mikkelsen moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Jerome Pier seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Wackerman adjourned the meeting at 12:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dr. Barzin Moradi  
Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)  
Fertilizer Research and Education Program

3/30/2015

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Date