



**Fertilizer Research and Education Program (FREP)
Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TASC)
California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETING**

**July 22, 2021
9:00 AM**

MINUTES

ATTENDING

TASC Members

Dr. Jerome Pier, Chair
Daniel Rodrigues
David McEuen
DD Levine
Dr. Ben Faber
Dr. Jan Hopmans
Dr. Lisa Hunt
Dr. Sebastian Saa
Dr. Tom Bottoms

CDFA Staff

Dr. Amadou Ba
Dr. Emad Jahanzad
Dr. Martin Burger
Jennifer Harmon
Mark Cady
Natalie Jacuzzi
Nicole Nunes

ABSENT

Dr. Suduan Gao
Steve Petrie

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Jerome Pier, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02 am. Introductions were made and a quorum was established.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 03/18/2021 TASC MEETING MINUTES

Dr. Pier requested the Subcommittee review the minutes from the March 18, 2021, meeting.

MOTION: Dr. Jan Hopmans moved to approve the March 18, 2021 minutes as written; Dr. Sebastian Saa seconded. The motion passed by present subcommittee members with a vote of 9 - 0.

DEPARTMENT, DIVISION, AND BRANCH UPDATES

Dr. Amadou Ba began Department, Division and Branch updates by explaining that the Department of Cannabis Control was established on July 12, 2021; this is a standalone cannabis department which is a larger effort to improve access to licensure, simplify regulatory oversight and support California businesses. Dr. Ba informed the TASC that

Undersecretary Jenny Lester-Moffitt was nominated by President Biden as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. Her hearing for confirmation by the US Senate is today. Secretary Ross stated that “While we will miss her very much, it is a great moment of pride to see her experience and leadership skills go national!”

Dr. Ba stated that Board and TASC meetings may be hybrid Zoom and in-person; our department and division will be working on logistics. Dr. Ba asked for input on how to conduct future FREP TASC meetings. A hybrid model of future meetings was discussed with the subcommittee; in-person if possible and video conferencing for those who cannot attend in-person. Many members were in favor of continuing to have the option to use video conferencing for meetings in lieu of traveling for an in-person meeting. Dr. Ba informed TASC that Microsoft Teams is being implemented as a video conferencing and messaging tool within CDFA, with the continued use of Zoom for virtual meetings.

Dr. Ba informed the group that the Inspection Services Division will be moving to another office, located at 2399 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200, Sacramento. The move is tentatively scheduled to occur by the end of this year.

CDFA Executive Office encouraged FREP to seek additional funding for grower education, outreach, and training.

Mark Cady began program updates discussing the proposal of a joint project between FREP and the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR), which addresses the adoption of Best Management Practices for Irrigation and Nitrogen Management in the field. At the previous Fertilizer Inspection Advisory Board (FIAB) meeting, the FIAB approved the hiring of six new UCANR staff members for the San Joaquin Valley and Central Coast. This project will be funded through FREP’s reserve funds, and FREP staff also applied for external funding. FREP submitted a proposal for a Specialty Crop Block Grant and a Conservation Innovation Grant.

TASC VACANCIES AND APPLICANTS

On December 31, 2021 the tenure of current members, Dr. Tom Bottoms, DD Levine, and Dr. Suduan Goa will expire. TASC discussed the six applications that were received to fill the upcoming vacancies. TASC also discussed adding a twelfth member position to the subcommittee. TASC agreed to recommend to the secretary the appointment of Dr. Tom Bottoms, Dr. Jairo Diaz, Edgar Flores, and Dr. Rob Mikkelsen as the twelfth member of the subcommittee.

MOTION: Dr. Ben Faber moved to increase the TASC member positions to 12; Daniel Rodrigues seconded. The motion passed by present subcommittee members with a vote of 9 - 0.

MOTION: Daniel Rodrigues moved to recommend the appointment of the four TASC members; Dr. Ben Faber seconded. The motion passed by present subcommittee members with a vote of 9 - 0.

EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Dr. Emad Jahanzad discussed removing the current external peer review process, which is used for assisting TASC with reviewing full concept proposals, beginning next grant cycle. Out of the 71 reviewers that were contacted, only 16 responded. Dr. Jahanzad stated that this process is neither efficient nor necessary for selection of full proposals to move forward to funding and is not an effective use of FREP staff time. The current TASC includes subject matter experts from various fields relevant to the grant program who are fully capable of providing thorough review of the proposals based on their expertise and knowledge. It was decided that for future grant applications, each proposal will be assigned a primary and secondary reviewer based on the TASC member expertise. The primary and secondary reviewers will provide their thorough reviews to other subcommittee members prior to the funding selection meeting. If none of the TASC members are comfortable serving as the primary reviewer for a particular proposal, then an external reviewer will be contacted. This process will increase the efficiency of the review process for FREP staff and TASC members.

DISCUSSION AND FUNDING RECOMMENDATION OF 2021 REGULAR FULL PROPOSALS

Dr. Pier led discussion in reviewing and voting on the 2021 full proposals; nine full proposals were submitted from the 11 selected concept proposals to move forward in the review process. After discussing each full proposal, the following six were recommended to be funded:

- Nitrogen fertilizer and irrigation best management practices for the low desert sudangrass production systems
Bachie, O., Montazar, A., Latack, B.
- Nutrient Management and Irrigation Efficiency Outreach and Education for Latino and Southeast Asian Farmers
Carrasco, C., Stein, T.
- Quantify and model overlooked pathways of nitrogen loss from organic inputs across contrasting soil types
Bowles, T., Arora, B., et al
- Nutrient Guidelines for Vegetable Crop Transplant Nurseries
Oki, L., Pitton, B., Merhaut, D.
- Evaluating the effects of liquid ammonia products from organic sources on crop growth, soil organic matter stability and N mineralization
Zhu-Barker, X., Horwath, W.

- Distributed Water and Fertilizer Delivery for Minimizing Nitrogen Losses by Leaching and Volatilization
Ghezzehei, T.A.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

No future agenda items were discussed.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be tentatively scheduled for October 2021, following the FREP/Western Plant Health Nutrient Management Conference in San Luis Obispo, California.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Dr. Tom Bottoms moved to adjourn the meeting; Daniel Rodrigues seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed by Mark Cady

Mark Cady
Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)
Fertilizer Research and Education Program

08/03/2021

Date