



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
STANDARDIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STDZ)**

**March 15, 2011 Meeting Minutes
Coalinga, CA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dennis Johnston, Chair
John Eliot, Jr.
Mark Perez
Ruben Arroyo
Frank Nunes

INTERESTED PARTIES

Scotti Walker, Fresno County
Dennis Bray
Steve Schweizer

CDFA

Mario Cortez
Susan Shelton
Sarah Cardoni
Rick Jensen
Brian Cote
Steve Patton

MEMBERS ABSENT

Eric Lauritzen
Kerry Whitson
Louis Pandol
S. Garrett Patricio

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL

The Committee was called to order at 9:59 a.m. by Mr. Dennis Johnston, Chairperson. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and introductions were made.

ITEM 2: COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND TERMS

Ms. Sarah Cardoni provided the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report. Member vacancies include: one fresh fruit member; two fresh vegetable members; two other vegetable members; and one other commodities member. Members who will be up for reappointment on August 31, 2011, are: Mr. Dennis Johnston; Mr. Kerry Whitson; Mr. Mark Perez; Mr. Frank Nunes; Mr. John Eliot, Jr.; and Mr. Louis Pandol.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 26, 2010 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Eliot motioned and Mr. Perez seconded to approve the October 26, 2010 Meeting Minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4: AUDIT UPDATE

Mr. Steve Patton provided the Audit Update Report. He stated that the Market Enforcement Program has continued to conduct audits on behalf of the Standardization Program on handlers to ensure correct payment of assessments. There are currently two ongoing audits. Since the start of the audits, in addition to revenue found by a new staff accounting person in the Standardization Program, we have collected an additional \$150,000 in revenue. Funds to conduct another five audits are included in next year's budget.

Mr. Nunes asked how many total companies participate in the Standardization Program. Ms. Susan Shelton stated that there were approximately 700 companies currently.

ITEM 5: REGULATION UPDATE

Mr. Patton provided the Regulation Update Report. He stated that the citrus industry will propose a regulation to change the table on maturity standard to the California Standard, which is a maturity standard exclusively for navels. CDFA has not yet received this proposal.

Mr. Patton stated that another regulation package moving forward will repeal the starch-iodine standard for Granny Smith Apples. He stated that a taste test conducted by the California Apple Commission concluded that Granny Smith Apple producers are missing out on approximately half of their potential market due to changing consumer preferences. According to the results of the taste test, consumers like the tarter taste in Granny Smith Apples.

ITEM 6: COUNTY CONTRACT APPROVAL

Mr. Patton provided an overview of the county contracts. He stated that there were no increases in funding for the counties. But, because county expenses have increased, the number of contracted hours has decreased.

Mr. Eliot questioned why Ventura and Tulare counties were not included. Mr. Patton stated that Ventura and Tulare counties do not have contracts with the Standardization Program.

MOTION: Mr. Perez motioned and Mr. Eliot seconded to make a recommendation to the CDFA Secretary to accept the Standardization County Contracts, as proposed. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 7: BUDGET APPROVAL

Ms. Shelton provided an overview of the 2011/12 Proposed Standardization Budget and asked the Committee to make a recommendation to the Secretary to approve the request of \$1,936,958 in budget authority for the Standardization Program.

Ms. Shelton stated that the increase in proposed funds for the *INTERDEPT CONS/PROF/OAH HEARINGS* line item is for the new database. Mr. Johnston questioned if this increase in funds would occur only once. Mr. Patton stated that an estimated \$250,000 will be needed to start the new database project.

Mr. Johnston questioned if the reserve is vulnerable because of the budget crisis. Mr. Patton stated that because the Standardization Program is a special funded program, the Legislature cannot take its funds from the California Agricultural Fund. If money were borrowed, it must be paid back to the Department with interest.

MOTION: Mr. Perez motioned and Mr. Eliot seconded to make a recommendation to the Secretary to accept the 2011/12 Proposed Standardization Budget, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 8: DATABASE UPDATE

Mr. Rick Jensen provided the Database Update Report. He stated that the prospective database would have the capability to accept online payments. At this time, the state is not set up for wire transfers, but is set up for credit card payments, though it is a cost to the Program. Because of the added expense, the online payment mechanism that will be built in to the database could possibly be disabled until wire transfers or an alternative method that is more cost effective can be utilized.

ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Patton expressed his condolences for the passing of Standardization Advisory Committee member Mr. Marco DiMare. He stated that Mr. DiMare will certainly be missed.

Mr. Jensen stated that the CDFA Secretary Karen Ross requests outreach to underrepresented groups when making appointments to advisory committees. He asked the Committee to look within their industries and own organizations for potential outreach and education opportunities to broaden the diversity of the Committee. Additionally, the Standardization Program will work with different groups that are working specifically in various regions with minority farmers to improve upon that diversity.

Mr. Jensen brought to the Committee's attention the recent negative media attention Certified Farmers' Markets and Direct Marketing has received. He stated that CDFA initiated a series of listening sessions throughout California to listen to industry concerns. CDFA then put together a technical planning committee to review the current Certified Farmers' Market Program and the public comments made during the listening sessions in order to make recommendations to achieve a more efficient program and strengthen the integrity of the program.

ITEM 10: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at the end of September.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 a.m. by Mr. Johnston, Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted by:



Susan Shelton, Supervising Special Investigator
Inspection and Compliance Branch
Inspection Services