



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

May 8, 2013

Meeting Minutes

2800 Gateway Oaks Drive, Sacramento, CA 95833

MEMBERS PRESENT

Garff Hathcock, Chairman
Melody Meyer, Vice-Chair
Steve Demuri
Blake Alexandre
Sandra Schmaier
David Will
Mary Anne Hanthorn
Sean Swezey
Pat Kennelly
Mindee Jeffery
Thomas Chapman
Ione Conlan
Jenny Lester Moffitt
Lauree Bradley
Steven Sherman

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Foster
John Ashby
Thomas Azwell
Stacy Carlsen
Karen Klonsky
Michelle Dennis

CDFA

Rick Jensen
David Carlson
Scott Renteria
Sarah Cardoni

INTERESTED PARTIES

Ray Green, Go Green Consulting

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

The Committee was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Mr. Garff Hathcock, Chairperson. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self introductions were made.

ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 24, 2013 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Blake Alexandre moved to approve the January 24, 2013 Meeting Minutes as submitted. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Mr. Patrick Kennelly provided a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) update. He reported that 2,115 registrants are currently registered with CDPH. Since the last reporting period, CDPH has received 4 complaints. The natures of the complaints are mostly unregistered, uncertified operations.

ITEM 4: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM REPORTS

I. Vacancy and Terms

Ms. Sarah Cardoni provided a vacancy report. Vacancies include: six producer alternates; one wholesale distributor alternate; one processor alternate; one

environmental representative alternate; one technical representative alternate; and one consumer representative alternate. Members whose terms will be expiring October 31, 2013, and are eligible for reappointment are: Mr. Garff Hathcock; Ms. Melody Meyer; Mr. David Will; Mr. John Foster; Mr. John Ashby; Ms. Lauree Bradley; Ms. Mary Anne Hanthorn; Ms. Michelle Dennis; Mr. Steven Sherman; and Ms. Mindee Jeffery.

II. Revenue from Registration

Mr. David Carlson provided an overview of the State Organic Program (SOP) revenue from registration by month and year. The projection is that the program will collect roughly \$1.2 million dollars in revenue from registration by the end of the fiscal year (FY).

III. New Registrations

Mr. Carlson provided an overview of new registrant demographics. From July 2012 through the present time, there have been 261 new registrants. The vast majority of the new registrants are producers, followed by handlers, dairy and livestock, retail operations, and commission merchants, respectively. Projected number of registrants for FY 2012/13 is 436 registrants.

IV. Complaints

Mr. Carlson provided an overview of the SOP Complaint Report. From December 1, 2012, through March 1, 2013, the SOP received a total of 16 complaints. There are currently 13 active complaint reports. Currently there are no complaints being investigated by the SOP. Six complaints have been referred to the National Organic Program (NOP); two were assigned to County Agricultural Commissioners (CAC); three were assigned to accredited certifying agents (ACA); and two have been referred to the CDPH. Referred complaints remain open with the SOP until the referring agency contacts the SOP with closure to the complaint.

V. Appeals

Mr. Carlson provided the SOP Appeals Status Report. These records are from 2007, when the appeals regulations were promulgated until the present. As of December 1, 2012, the SOP has received 28 appeals. Of the 28 appeals received, 21 have been resolved. Six of the seven active appeals have been active for over 120 days. Four of the active appeals are currently being reviewed by CDFA's Hearing Officer and the other three were referred to the Department of Justice.

The Committee asked if final decisions on resolved appeals would be made available to the public. Mr. Jensen stated that the SOP is required by the NOP to provide that information and all final appeals decisions will be made available on the CDFA website.

VI. Residue Analysis

Mr. Scott Renteria provided the SOP Residue Analysis Report. Since the last reporting period, there have been a total of 6 samples pulled by SOP and county staff. There were prohibited substances detected on one of the samples, which is currently being investigated to determine the source of contamination.

VII. State Organic Program FY 2013/14 Budget

Mr. Carlson provided an overview of the SOP FY 2013/14 Proposed Budget and requested that the Committee approve the proposed budget of \$1,465,828 dollars. He stated that there is an increase in the payment to counties for residue sampling and that there should be an increase in the CDFA LAB line item in order to cover the costs of processing the increased samples.

MOTION: Mr. Swezey moved to increase the CDFA LAB line item budget up to \$120,000 in order to correspond to the increased county efforts for residue sampling, and to increase the targeted amount of samples from 100 to 200 for FY 2013/14. Ms. Conlan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Alexandre moved to recommend the CDFA Secretary approve the SOP FY 2013/14 Proposed Budget, as amended. Ms. Meyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Database Implementation

Mr. Renteria discussed the progress of the SOP's transition to the online database accounting system. He stated that the online system went live March 1, 2013. As of March 17, all counties have received training. There was anticipation that the first three months were going to be cumbersome with maintaining data in the old system while populating the new online system as registrations and renewals are completed. Registrants who are renewing are being asked to enter in their information in the online database so that the data in the new database is accurate and reportable in this new system.

Mr. Swezey inquired on the length of time needed before reports could be produced in the new online system. Mr. Renteria stated that it would take one calendar year before reports could be produced for the reason that it will take one year for all renewing registrants to update their information in the system. The committee discussed what data will be available to the public and how those reports or data should be formatted. The committee agreed that defining the reportable data should be discussed at the next meeting.

ITEM 5: NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD UPDATE

Ms. Meyer gave a brief National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) update. She stated that at the April NOSB meeting in Portland, Oregon, there was a lot of discussion concerning the NOSB's decision to sunset tetracycline, which is an antibiotic used to

fight fire blight in apples and pears throughout the country. She stated that this will affect the organic apple and pear industry. Expected proposed rules include sunset materials that are listed on the NOSB website.

ITEM 6: NEW ITEMS

Mr. Hathcock provided an update on the two standing subcommittees. The Penalty Matrix Subcommittee met once via teleconference. He stated that this subcommittee will wait until the NOP releases their guidelines until moving forward with their work on a penalty matrix for the SOP. The Residue Analysis Subcommittee has not met yet.

Mr. Hathcock shared his knowledge of the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) issue organic citrus farmers are facing. The ACP is a pest that spreads Huanglongbing (HLB), a devastating bacterial disease of citrus trees. Currently there is no organic treatment for HLB, which puts organic citrus farmers at risk of losing their organic certification.

Ms. Conlan inquired about the Cost Share Program. Mr. Carlson stated that the program is waiting for approval of the Farm Bill to see whether or not that will be offered for this fiscal year.

Ms. Meyer discussed efforts that are being made toward attaining a federal research and promotions program for education and research purposes geared towards organic commodities. Federal research and promotion programs are industry-funded generic research and marketing programs designed to increase domestic and international demand for the industry's agricultural commodities, thereby increasing the potential long-term economic growth of all sectors of that industry. She stated that she would keep the Committee informed as the project moves forward.

ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 8: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held in September 18, 2013, in Sacramento. Agenda items will include a database update to include database queries, an organic federal research and promotions program update, and an update from the standing subcommittees.

ITEM 9: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. by Mr. Hathcock, Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted by:



Steve Patton, Branch Chief
Inspection and Compliance
Inspection Services