



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
CALIFORNIA CITRUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CCAC)**

**November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes
Hybrid Teleconference**

4437 South Laspina Street, Tulare, CA 93274

MEMBERS PRESENT

John S. Gless
Gustavo Carranza
Tom Mayhew
Lisa Tate
Sonya Carrillo
David Haas Jr.
Maribel Nenna – Vice Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

George McEwen
Brad Bishel – Chair

INTERESTED PARTIES

Amanda Zito – Fresno Co.
Eddy Greynolds – Kern Co.
Tesfaye Jimma – Tulare Co.
Sofia Hernandez – Fresno Co.
Christopher Greer – Tulare Co.
John Beall – Ventura Co.
Mario Gutierrez – Kings Co.
Monica Winters – San Diego Co.
Misael Martinez – Riverside Co.
Sarah Mellor – San Bernardino Co.
Gary Keough – National Agricultural
Statistics Service (NASS)
Sam Botkin – CA Citrus Growers Assoc.
Casey Creamer – CA Citrus Mutual (CCM)
Micheal Bliss – CCM
Jacob Villagomez – CCM

CDFA

Stacey Hughes
Sarah Cardoni
Marcee Yount
Anna Carrasquillo
Andrea Todd
Kevin Jenkins
Kacie Fritz
Beth Jensen

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Stacey Hughes.

ITEM 2: INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Sarah Cardoni, a quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

ITEM 3: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Hughes opened the floor to nominations for Chair.

MOTION: John S. Gless nominated Brad Bishel for the office of Chair. Maribel Nenna seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Hughes opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION: Lisa Tate nominated Maribel Nenna for the office of Vice Chair. John S. Gless seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 4: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 5: REVIEW OF MARCH 2, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Vice Chair Maribel Nenna requested a motion to approve the March 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes as submitted.

MOTION: Tom Mayhew moved to approve the March 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes as submitted. David Haas Jr. seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 6: COMMITTEE VACANCY AND TERMS REPORT

Cardoni provided the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report. Currently, there are three producer member vacancies: one representing Navel or Valencias; one representing mandarins; and one representing lemons. Terms will expire September 30, 2024, and members eligible for reappointment are John S. Gless and Lisa Tate. Members who are not eligible for reappointment are George McEwen, Brad Bishel, and Tom Mayhew.

ITEM 7: FUND CONDITION UPDATE

Hughes presented the Fund Condition Update. As of June 30, 2023, the Beginning Fund Balance was \$1,911,923. Projected Revenue for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/24 is \$742,953 for a total of \$2,654,876 in available resources. Projected Expenditures for FY 2023/24 are \$999,071, with a Cash Adjustment of \$40,571 and a Gas Tax credit of \$14,169, for a projected Ending Balance of \$1,629,403.

Hughes added that the projected revenue includes the navel and mandarin assessment increase that took effect October 1, 2023. Additionally, county cooperative agreements will be adjusted next year to reflect each county's historically executed agreement amount.

ITEM 8: AG STATISTICS

i. Marketing Services Division

Kacie Fritz, Assistant Director of the CDFA Marketing Services Division (MSD), presented an overview of administrative costs for the California Agricultural Statistics Branch. CDFA has a longstanding memorandum of understanding with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to carry out statistical research and data collection services. Citrus crop surveys are paid for by industry assessments that are collected through the Citrus Program and directed to the MSD. All administrative functions aside from assessment collection are carried out by the MSD; thus, administrative costs fall under the MSD budget.

For the proposed FY 2023/24 NASS Budget, Total Salaries and Benefits were \$44,725 and account for two CDFA staff who dedicate twenty percent (20%) of their time conducting citrus crop surveys. The Operating Expenses and Equipment was \$13,540 and covers general expenses to conduct surveys such as postage, printing, and supplies. Pro Rata is what the Department of Finance allocates for the costs of

providing central administrative services to all state departments, which is further allocated to each state department's funding sources based on the percentage of total expenditures in each fund. The \$14,372 Pro Rata proposed was calculated solely on the twenty percent (20%) Personal Services for two staff. Senate Bill 64 required state departments to pay into the California Public Employees' Retirement System for five years and was projected at \$575. Administrative Overhead is for CDFA's indirect costs and was proposed at \$12,834, bringing the total proposed for the FY 2023/24 NASS Budget to \$86,046.

The committee requested the California Agricultural Statistics Branch costs breakdown be provided annually and in a format that includes the previous fiscal year.

- ii. National Agricultural Statistics Service
 - a. Clementine Field Evaluation Results

Gary Keough, NASS Pacific Region Director, presented a summary of the Clementine Objective Measurement (OM) Feasibility Study results. In July 2023, 938 clementines were measured and ranged from 0.32 inches to 2.39 inches. The county average diameter was 1.08 inches. In comparison, the county average diameters for Tangos and Murcotts at the same time of year are typically between 1.25 inches to 1.60 inches. Therefore, the small clementine fruit size is a concern. Another concern is the timing and workload as Navel and mandarin data collection would overlap.

USDA NASS Sample Design staff provided sample sizes for target Coefficient of Variation (CV) of 15%, 10%, and 6.5%, and respective cost estimates for each. For a target CV of 15%, the sample size needed is 125 fruits and is projected to cost \$60,000 in 2024 and \$45,000 in 2025. For a CV of 10%, the sample size needed is 200 fruits and is projected to cost \$90,000 in 2024 and \$65,000 in 2025. For a CV of 6.5%, the sample size needed is 280 fruits and is projected to cost \$120,000 in 2024 and \$90,000 in 2025. 2024 cost estimates are higher than 2025 cost estimates because all sampled orchards need to be located and the sample trees identified and require more staff hours.

Discussion ensued regarding whether a Clementine OM Survey is feasible due to the short window to collect samples and the small fruit size in that timeframe. Vice Chair Nenna tabled the agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

- b. Valencia OM Survey/CV Data

Keough presented a summary of the Valencia OM Survey and CV data. For the 2017/18 crop year, 575 samples were selected which had CVs that ranged between 9.3% to 11.1%. Since the 2018/19 crop year, 375 samples were selected in which CVs ranged between 9.4% to 10.2%. Different target CVs, sample sizes, and associated cost estimates were presented for the committee to determine the appropriate target CV and survey cost.

Vice Chair Nenna tabled the agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

- iii. California Citrus Advisory Committee
 - a. Lemon Marketing Update

Vice Chair Nenna tabled the agenda item for discussion at a future meeting.

ITEM 9: COUNTY ORANGE MATURITY PROGRESS REPORTS

County agricultural staff provided their Orange Maturity Progress Reports.

Eddy Greynolds provided the update for Kern County. All six packinghouses in Kern County are operating and reported issues for color. On October 14th, two lots with 73 bins failed for color. After being reconditioned the following day, all but eight bins passed. There was another rejection on October 17th for color. It was transported to a packinghouse for reconditioning and all but three bins passed. On October 25th four loads with 192 bins were transported under a disposal order to Fresno County for reconditioning. On November 1st, two lots with 80 bins were rejected for color. After reconditioning, all but 20 bins passed. November 8th, 15 bins were rejected for color and all bins failed again the following day after being reconditioned in the field. Of the five incidences for color, 11 disposal orders were issued. There were no rejections for the California Standard Scale with scores of 90.6% on October 14th, 92.7% on November 10th, and 92.4% on November 13th.

Tesfaye Jimma provided the update for Tulare County and reported that harvesting began on October 23rd with 27 packinghouses operating in Tulare County. From October 30th through November 14th, 716 orange maturity tests were conducted. On November 15th, there was one rejection on Fukumotos from Tulare County for the California Standard Scale with scores of 87.2% on the first official test and 88.18% on the second official test. A total of five failed cursory tests passed on the first official tests. On November 15th, one load with 48 bins of Fukumotos failed its first official test with a score of 89.0% and the second official test is scheduled for November 19th.

Sofia Hernandez provided the update for Fresno County and reported 12 packinghouses are operating in Fresno County. One Notice of Noncompliance was issued on October 19th for failing maturity after reconditioning. On November 15th, there was one rejection for the California Standard Scale and the second official test is being scheduled. Nine official tests have been conducted to date and color has been an issue with rejections for Orange Color A. Lastly, 30 recent tests had scores of less than 94.0%.

John Beall provided the update for Ventura County. Inspections began on October 23rd with two packinghouses in operation. All fruit received is from Kern County. There have been no issues with maturity with scores ranging from 117.2% to 149.0%. There have been no rejections.

Misael Martinez provided the update for Riverside County and reported a slow start to the season. No local fruit is being packed and no tests have been conducted. Riverside County and San Bernadino County is under an Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine that may affect fruit transported in and out the county. All fruit transported through quarantined areas must remain covered and are not allowed to stop anywhere within the quarantine.

Monica Winters provided the update for San Diego County. San Diego has not received any loads of fruit yet.

Mario Gutierrez provided the update for Kings County. There is one packinghouse in operation. On November 1st, navel oranges were tested and had a score of 100.4%. Since then, three additional tests were conducted with an average score of 113.9%. There have been no rejections and no issues with color or defects.

There was discussion regarding declaring maturity and stopping mandatory citrus maturity testing. A consensus was reached that another meeting in three weeks is needed for additional orange maturity progress county reports to declare maturity.

Sonya Carrillo asked about the importance of the color standard and expressed concerns over its subjectivity. Hughes responded that the regulation for Orange Color A was adopted by industry to protect the marketplace, consumer, and grower. CDFA Standardization Program inspection staff host annual county trainings to ensure uniform enforcement and inspection procedures.

Casey Creamer shared that this topic has been brought up frequently and after many discussions there is agreement amongst industry members that the color standard is needed. Creamer asked if industry training can be provided to educate industry and achieve consistent understanding of the standard.

ITEM 10: PROGRAM UPDATES

Hughes reported that several citrus industry members are currently experimenting with a nonstandard closed corrugated orange container that is being packed with a body fill method using standard counts and diameters. Nine experimental permits have been issued. A petition from industry to CDFA is needed to standardize the container.

ITEM 11: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, December 5, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and will be held via Zoom. Agenda items will include county orange maturity progress reports, the Valencia OM Survey and CV data, and the Clementine OM Survey.

ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m. by Vice Chair Nenna.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacey Hughes, Agriculture Program Supervisor II
Inspection and Compliance Branch
Inspection Services