



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
SHIPPING POINT INSPECTION (SPI) ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
May 21, 2015 Meeting Minutes
1001 South Mount Vernon Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93307**

Members Present

Louis Pandol
Roman Olivas
Christine Ivory

Members Absent

Mark Reasons
Blaine Carian

CDFA Representatives

Rick Jensen
Steve Patton
Kevin Batchelor
Marcee Yount
Roxann Bramlage
Greg Dake
Danielle Chapman
Laurel Rudolph

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Mr. Louis Pandol, Chairman. Roll was called and a quorum was established. Mr. Steve Patton introduced the new committee members and self-introductions were made.

ITEM 2: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Mr. Roman Olivas moved to elect Mr. Louis Pandol as Chairman. Ms. Christine Ivory seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

MOTION: Mr. Roman Olivas moved to elect Mr. Blaine Carian as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Louis Pandol seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF June 11, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

The approval of the June 11, 2014 meeting minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

ITEM 4: COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND TERMS UPDATE

Ms. Laurel Rudolph discussed the committee vacancies and terms update. Currently, there are four voting member vacancies that consist of three members who are shippers of fruit and vegetables, and one public member who is a resident of this state and not a



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producer, shipper, or a processor. Additionally, there are nine alternate non-voting member vacancies.

ITEM 5: SHIPPING POINT INSPECTION PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Kevin Batchelor gave the commodity program update. He discussed some of the changes that Shipping Point Inspection (SPI) was going through, including the re-opening of the onion inspections that the Agri-Culture and Agri-Food of Canada had suspended.

SPI has been seeking an accreditation to become a certification body recognized by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The program wants to perform food safety audits that are Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized. As of December 19, 2014, SPI became a certification body under ISO 65 and are scheduled to have their first assessment to verify that they are keeping within the certification guidelines. The next few years will see some additional certifications to offer Primus GFSI, Global GAP, and ANSI audits.

SPI will also be preparing for Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). They will be developing some new options for certifications in preparation for what the FDA will be requesting. The program will also work with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on what will be acceptable as a FSMA compliant audit and what the industry will need in the next few years.

ITEM 6: COMMODITY PROGRAMS UPDATE

Mr. Greg Dake gave a commodities update. In the 2013/14 Fiscal Year (FY) there were 4,566 potato inspections. There is less and less potato acreage every year, especially of the russet variety in California, because of the year round supply from other states, mainly Idaho. California producers are also having a hard time getting the railroad to come to the packing houses to ship the produce, so the producers have to rely on trucks to ship.

Table grapes did well in the 2013/14 FY. There were 21,226 inspections done during the 2013/14 FY. New varieties are being planted every year and the acreage of the new varieties has increased as well.

New pistachios and almond trees are being planted every year and the prices for these commodities are good. Pistachios had 1,596 inspections during the 2013/14 FY. The California drought is one of the only issues for these two commodities.

Ms. Marcee Yount provided reports for the 2013/14 FY for fresh cherries, kiwifruit, cling peaches, processed pears, and processing olives.

Cherries had 1,127 inspections in the 2013/2014 FY. It is estimated that at the end of the 2013/14 FY, five and a half million packages will have been produced. A normal year will have seven to eight million packages.

Kiwifruit had 652 inspections during the 2013/14 FY, despite the crop being a little lighter than past years.

Cling peaches were down this year due to a normal fluctuation in the crop. 1.4 million tons were produced during the 2013/14 FY.

Processing Pears bloom and set were up in the 2013/14 FY; more than in previous years.

The California Olive Commission decided this year to make inspections of processing olives more automated. Inspection results are emailed to growers and processors. The Commission also changed the sizers this year. Instead of rope or cable sizers they switched over to a small scale cherry sizer. With the use of new sizer, inspectors were able to get more accurate figures. The Commission is also working with Jet Mold on creating models of olives for a known standard to calibrate the sizers.

ITEM 7: FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. Roxann Bramlage provided the food safety program update. She provided an update on the new olive oil sampling program. Eleven handlers were tested. The samples were sent to Australia for testing. The CDFA will also keep a library of the samples in case a need for retesting ever arises. The final data for the samples is not yet available, but no negative results have been reported. The final report of the samples will be available next season.

The Leafy Green Marketing Agreement is down in audits, only 501 were conducted in the 2013/14 FY. Some reasons for the drop in audits are the water issues and the merging of some handler companies.

The California Cantaloupe Advisory Board had 96 audits in the 2013/14 FY. They recently split the checklist that originally combined: packing house, cooler, and field and harvesting, and reorganized it in to two categories of field and harvesting, and cooler and packer audits.

Last season the California Avocado Association wanted higher level of audits than the GAP/GHP audits SPI provided, so they decided to cancel the agreement with SPI.

SPI also conducted a harmonized audit for Subway Restaurants regarding red bell peppers. However, Subway ultimately decided to open the audits to other third parties.

California tomato farmers decided to start using the USDA's tomato check list, and the CDFA will still continue to conduct the tomato audits.

ITEM 8: BUDGET APPROVAL

a. Fund Condition Statement

Mr. Steve Patton discussed the 2014/15 FY fund condition as of March 2015. The total revenue is over \$6.5 million and the total expenditures are over \$8.8 million. There is over \$2.4 million in the Ag Trust and over \$9 million in the Ag Fund Reserve.

b. FY 2015/16 Proposed Budget

Mr. Steve Patton discussed the 2015/16 FY budget. The total for Personal Services is over \$1.5 million. Utilities have gone down significantly due to CASS taking over that cost as part of their contract.

The Federal Government fees are high in the 2015/16 FY because of the USDA's new funding mechanism. Starting in October of 2015, new regulations will allow the USDA to set a fee schedule on an annual basis. This allows the USDA to raise the percentage of fees when a cooperative agreement is signed.

The Almond database estimated expenditure was increased in the 2015/16 FY. The Almond database will streamline and provide electronic reporting to the Almond Board. The database will be web based and any inspector's information and reports can be uploaded to the web. The handler can retrieve the results of the inspection from the website or have them emailed.

The total for the Operation Expenses and Equipment is over \$11 million, and the total departmental expenditures are over \$14 million. Total program cost are over \$14 million and the total program budget for the 2015/16 FY is \$14 million.

MOTION: Mr. Louis Pandol moved to approve the 2015/16 Fiscal Year Proposed Budget as submitted, and to approve the one-year fee reduction for the 2015/16 Fiscal Year. Ms. Christine Ivory seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

ITEM 9: OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Rick Jensen discussed the new Office of Farm to Fork. He provided background information on the creation and organization of the new office. He also discussed the new California Farmer Marketplace website and how it will work to help both farmers and schools to match their resources and needs.

ITEM 10: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ITEM 11: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be in the spring of 2016, in Monterey.

ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pandol, Chairman, adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:


Kevin Batchelor, Program Supervisor
Inspection and Compliance Branch
Inspection Services