



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

January 22, 2015

Meeting Minutes

800 Asilomar Ave, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

MEMBERS PRESENT

Garff Hathcock
Melody Meyer
Steven Sherman
Sandra Schmaier
Bridget Montesanti
Jenny Lester Moffitt
Sean Swezey
Patrick Kennelly
Thomas Chapman
Blake Alexandre
Steve DeMuri
Thomas Azwell

MEMBERS ABSENT

Patrick Baur
Ione Conlan
David Will
Karen Klonsky
Stacy Carlsen
Mindee Jeffery

CDFA

Steve Patton
Danny Lee
David Carlson
Scott Renteria
Laurel Rudolph

INTERESTED PARTIES

Shayla Newfeld, Monterey County Ag
Commissioner
Nora Carlton, Monterey County Ag.
Commissioner
Betsy Rakola, U.S. Department of Ag.
Graham Hunting, Monterey County Ag.
Commissioner
Kim Dietz, Smuckers
Laura Batcha, Organic Trade Assoc.
Bill Wolf, Wolf DiMatteo and Associates
Alexis Randolph, Organic Alliance Inc.
Kelly Damewood, CA Certified Organic
Farmers
Jane Sooby, CA Certified Organic
Farmers

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL

The Committee was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Mr. Steven Sherman, Chairperson. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self introductions were made.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments

ITEM 3: REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Ms. Melody Meyer moved to approve the June 4, 2014, Meeting Minutes as submitted. Mr. Sean Swezey seconded the motion. The Yes votes were: Garff Hathcock, Melody Meyer, Steven Sherman, Sandra Schmaier, Bridget Montesanti, Jenny Lester Moffitt, Sean Swezey, Patrick Kennelly, Thomas Chapman, Blake Alexandre, Steve DeMuri, and Thomas Azwell. Nobody voted No, and no one abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Blake Alexandre moved to approve the September 24, 2014, Meeting Minutes as submitted. Ms. Melody Meyer seconded the motion. The yes votes were: Garff Hathcock, Melody Meyer, Steven Sherman, Sandra Schmaier, Bridget Montesanti, Jenny Lester Moffitt, Sean Swezey, Patrick Kennelly, Thomas Chapman, Blake Alexandre, Steve DeMuri, and Thomas Azwell. Nobody voted No, and no one abstained. The motion passed unanimously

ITEM 4: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Mr. Patrick Kennelly provided a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) update. He reported that 2,459 registrants are currently registered with CDPH. There were 37 additional operations who registered last year. The largest increases in registrants were in the category of the \$2.5 to \$10 million range. The total amount in sales revenue was over \$6.8 billion last year.

The CDPH is working to move all processors to use pounds instead of gallons when measuring units, to create uniformity. The transition will take a bit of time, and it is expected that soon every firm will be measuring in pounds instead of gallons.

A complaint that came to the CDPH from the Connecticut Department of Health last year is still being investigated. They sampled the products in question and found very low levels of pesticides, just above the 5% tolerance levels set by the Environmental Protection Agency. The majority of the raw materials being tested were coming in from out of the country.

ITEM 5: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM REPORTS

I. Vacancy and Terms

Ms. Laurel Rudolph provided the vacancy report. Vacancies include: three producers; six producer alternates; one wholesale alternate; one processor; two processor alternates; one retail representative; one environmental representative; one environmental representative alternate; two technical representative; two technical representative alternates; one consumer representative; two consumer representative alternates.

Members whose terms will be expiring October 31, 2015, and are not eligible for reappointment are: Mr. Blake Alexandre; Ms. Ione Conlan; Ms. Jenny Lester Moffitt; Mr. Steve DeMuri; Mr. Thomas Azwell; Mr. Sean Swezey; Ms. Karen Klonsky; and Ms. Sandra Schmaier.

II. Revenue from Registration

Mr. Scott Renteria provided an overview of the State Organic Program (SOP) revenue from registrations. For the 2013/14 Fiscal Year (FY), the revenue was over \$1.4 million. That is over the original projected amount of \$1.3 million.

The program is refunding more registration fees because of exemptions. The new database and the online payment system make it so these exemptions are now more accessible for those who qualify.

III. New Registrations

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of new registrant demographics. The total number of new registrations for the entire 2013/14 FY was 476. The vast majority of the new registrants are producers, followed by handlers, processors, and then retailers. The total number of registrants at the end of 2014 is 3,690. In the first half of the 2014/15 FY there were 207 new registrants.

Mr. Danny Lee gave an overview of the Cost Share program for the 2013/14 FY. Out of the 4,921 Certified Operations; 1,923 filed a Cost Share application and 1,844 received reimbursements, with a total of over \$1.4 million in funds going out. There were 64 applications that were denied due to not being certified, 11 incomplete applications, and 2 withdrew their applications.

IV. Complaints

Mr. Renteria provided an overview of the complaint activity for the months of July 2014 to December 2014. At that time, the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) had 9 complaints that had been open for over 120 days, 8 that had been open for over 90-120 days, 3 that had been open over 60-90 days, 4 that had been open for 30-60 days, and 24 complaints closed. Of the complaints that come into the CDFA: 19 of those were referred to a County Agricultural Commissioner; 11 were referred to the CDPH; 8 were referred to Accredited Certifying Agents; 5 were accepted by the CDFA; 1 was referred to the CDFA's Organic Input material program.

V. Appeals

Mr. Lee provided the State Organic Program (SOP) Appeals Status Report. As of December 31, 2014, the SOP has 1 active appeal, and has logged 2 appeals.

VI. Residue Analysis

Mr. Renteria provided the Residue Analysis report for the 2013/14 FY. Of the samples that were collected: 19 were collected from production locations; 13 from retail locations; 23 from Certified Farmers' Markets (CFM); 3 from chain markets; and 2 from packing sheds. Two of the samples that were found to be in violation were investigated. The CDFA conducted 1,016 inspections in the 2013/14 FY. Those inspections were conducted at CFM's, production houses, handling, and retail sites. Of those 1,016 inspections, 24 violations were documented. So far in the 2014/15 FY, there have been 506 inspections, with 11 non-compliances, mostly due to failing to have organic registration displayed properly at a CFM.

ITEM 6: REVIEW OF COMMITTEE RULES AND PROCEDURES

Mr. Lee recommended to the committee to re-evaluate the amount of meetings conducted throughout the year. He recommended that the committee have two

meetings a year instead of the current three. A discussion was also made about reducing meeting quorum numbers and changing term limits. The committee decided to put these items on the agenda for the May meeting.

ITEM 7: ORGANIC RESEARCH AND PROMOTION ORDER

Ms. Melody Meyer discussed the Organic Research and Promotion Order. The new Farm Bill contains a provision for the Organic Check-off program. The Check-off program would generate funds for the organic industry to implement, develop, and manage programs needed to grow market share, in areas such as: promotion; education; research; and the transition of farmers to grow organic production. Although the Check-off program is administered by the USDA, it is governed by participants within the industry.

ITEM 8: STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR THE PUBLIC

Mr. Lee introduced the discussion about educational materials for the public. Ms. Bridget Montesanti asked about availability of funds to get information out to the public regarding the SOP and the Cost Share program. Mr. Steve Patton told the committee that an educational brochure of information about the programs and enforcement the SOP handles can be put together for the public.

ITEM 9: NEW ITEMS

There were no new items.

ITEM 10: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held May 6, 2015 in Sacramento, CA. Some of the agenda items that will be discussed are: the Committees policies and procedures; outreach; and the Organic Research and Promotion Order Program.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m. by Mr. Steven Sherman, Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted by:



Danny Lee, Supervising Special Investigator
State Organic Program