

California Department of Food and Agriculture

California Broomrape Board

Meeting minutes

Woodland, California, August 1, 2024

Committee Members Present:

Toshi Aoki

Derek Azevedo

Daniel Bays*

Rick Blankenship

*Participated via Zoom

Frank Coelho Jr.*

Ron Dalforno

David Kiehn

Michael Newton

Scott Schmidt

Scott Spitzer*

Tony Turkovich

David Viguie

Committee Members absent:

none

CDFA staff:

Nick Condos

Michelle Dennis

Lexi Wilson

Guests:

Neil McRoberts*

Brad Hanson*

*Ex Officio members

Zach Bagley*

Mike Montna*

Gene Miyao

Humberto Izquierdo*

Opening Comments

Ron Dalforno called the Broomrape Board (Board) meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll was called and there was a quorum for the meeting.

Bagley-Keene Act

The meeting was held in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Act.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May 21, 2024 and June 25, 2024 meeting were reviewed.

Motion: Michael Newton recommended approving the minutes of the May 21, 2024 meeting. David Kiehn seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Motion: Tony Turkovich recommended approving the minutes of the June 25, 2024 meeting with a correction in the final paragraph noting that the next meeting should

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correctly state 'August 1, 2024' to replace date of 'from June 25, 2024'. David Kiehn seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Strategic Planning Options

There are two contracts within the Department that contain strategic planning and meeting facilitation activities within their respective Scope of Work, and both contractors submitted proposals to provide strategic planning services to the Board. The board reviewed proposals from California State University Sacramento (CSUS) and Nuffer, Smith, Tucker (NST). The CSUS proposal was for \$65,000. The NST proposal was for \$25,000 (plus hard costs). The NST proposal was more detailed in its time-line and methods.

Motion: David Kiehn recommended funding the strategic planning proposal from Nuffer, Smith, Tucker not to exceed \$35,000. Tony Turkovich seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

A strategic planning sub-committee was formed of Toshi Aoki, Ron Dalforno, Rick Blankenship, Mike Newton, Humberto Izquierdo, Brad Hanson, Mike Montna, and Zach Bagely.

Online Survey

The final draft of the online survey was reviewed. Much discussion followed and it was decided that the working group would reconvene to incorporate the proposed amendments to question 1, 5, and 6; revise question 2; and, eliminate question seven. Once the working group was in agreement, the survey would be created by CDFA and sent to affiliated organizations to distribute via email with a target date of August 15, 2024.

Website

On July 22, 2024 the Broomrape Program website became operational on CDFA's website. The website includes links to 1) a listserv where interested entities can subscribe to email updates about Broomrape related issues and 2) a webpage with information about the annual assessment rate.

FY 2025/26 Budget

A projected budget, including potential line-item amounts for the 2025/26 fiscal year was discussed. The purpose of setting the proposed budget was to facilitate the following discussion regarding the annual assessment rate. Near term program goals were discussed in the context of budget priorities. Line-item amounts were set at \$900,000 for research; \$300,000 for personnel/benefits, \$120,000 to reimburse the Ag Fund for current year expenses; and, \$220,000 for department indirect, pro rata, and reserve funds.

Motion: Ron Dalforno recommended setting the 2025/26 program budget at \$1,540,000. David Viguie seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

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Annual Assessment Rate

The board was provided an update on the draft regulation which would set the initial assessment rate and include an administrative procedure to change the rate. The estimated timeline for the rule making process was reviewed. The need to set the assessment rate to ensure adequate revenue to meet the proposed 2025/26 fiscal year budget was emphasized. The board decided to use a conservative estimate of 11,000,000 tons of harvested processing tomatoes in the 2025 crop year as the basis for the revenue calculation. The estimated harvest tonnage was derived from final tonnage report data provided by the Processing Tomato Advisory Board from the 2021, 2022, and 2023 crop years [Processing Tomato Advisory Board \(ptab.org\)](https://ptab.org). Therefore, in order to generate at least \$1,540,000 in revenue the annual assessment rate was recommended at \$0.14 per ton in 2025.

Motion: David Viguie recommended setting the annual assessment rate for processing tomatoes at \$0.14 per ton for all districts. Micheal Newton seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

CDFA/CTRI MOU

The draft MOU between CDFA and the California Tomato Research Institute was discussed. As originally envisioned, the CTRI would have no costs associated with the activities outlined in the MOU. Upon further review of the proposed activities the CTRI concluded that there would be approximately \$18,000 in hard costs per year. The Program would have to enter into a contract or grant depending upon the scope of work to reimburse these costs. The concept of obtaining an outside entity to manage the Board-funded research projects and sub-award with researchers directly was discussed. The timeline of at least 6 months and potential personnel cost savings for the program were discussed.

Motion: David Kiehn recommended entering into a contract and/or grant with an entity to oversee researchers and a contract for board approved research projects. David Viguie seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for September 25, 2024
Ron DalPorno adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.