

## **California Department of Food and Agriculture**

### **California Broomrape Board**

DRAFT Meeting minutes

Sacramento, California, December 3, 2024

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Derek Azevedo

Ron Dalforno

Scott Schmidt\*

Daniel Bays

Gene Miyao\*

Scott Spitzer\*

Rick Blankenship

Michael Newton

David Viguie

#### **Committee Members Absent:**

Toshi Aoki

Frank Coelho Jr.

David Kiehn

Tony Turkovich

#### **CDFA Staff:**

Nick Condos

Michelle Dennis

Victoria Hornbaker

Sara Khalid-Davis\*

#### **Guests:**

Melissa Cregan\*

Humberto Izquierdo\*

Dr. Neil McRoberts\*

\*Participated Via Zoom

#### **Opening Comments**

Ron Dalforno called the Broomrape Board (Board) meeting to order at 1:36 p.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 September 25, 2024, and October 30, 2024, were reviewed.

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### **California Broomrape Board**

Motion: David Vigue moved to approve the minutes from September 25, 2024, and October 30, 2024. The motion was seconded by Rick Blankenship and was passed unanimously.

#### **Strategic Priority 1- Detection**

##### **A) Online Survey Data**

Results of the online survey was presented by Dr. Neil McRoberts. He stated that out of 85 responses, 27 of those were people who had seen Broomrape in the last 15 years. The remaining 58 had never seen Broomrape. In both of those groups, the majority reported themselves as growers, the next largest group were processors, and the remainder were categorized as "other" due to also holding a Pest Control Advisor (PCA) license.

The group that had answered as never observing Broomrape did not provide any further information. Amongst the group of 27, most stated that they had observed Broomrape between one and four counties. 20 out of 27 stated they had seen it on one county. Six had seen it in two counties, zero had seen it in three counties, and one person stated they had observed it in four counties. Yolo County was mentioned 23 times, Solano was mentioned six times, San Benito, San Joaquin, and Sutter were all mentioned twice, and Colusa was mentioned once. Dr. McRoberts further stated that the more responses that are added to the survey, the variability of the estimates will increase indefinitely, generating more uncertainty.

##### **B) Pest Rating Process and Definitions**

Nick Condos presented on the Pest Rating Proposal process. The current rating for Broomrape is based on potential distribution. There is potential distribution from every place that processing tomatoes are grown. The pest gets scored numerically through a series of questions and is then given a rating. Based on these criteria, Broomrape would still be considered an A rated pest, which is the highest rating. As an A rated pest, the State would take the lead and have coordinated actions throughout the State. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is proposing to create a single set of Compliance Agreement Exhibits across the State to take consistent action.

#### **Strategic Priority 2-Engagement, Education, and Collaboration**

##### **A) Outreach Planning**

Mike Newton met with Nuffer, Smith, Tucker (NST), a public relations group, on developing a messaging and outreach strategy for the Board. The messaging would include immediate calls to action for growers and processors. NST would also provide collateral material, including a fact and question and answer documents. It was suggested to also include the assessment fee in the outreach materials.

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Motion: Michael Newton moved to accept NST's proposal to develop outreach material for no more than \$7,700, and work with the Board's Outreach Subcommittee to finalize material. The motion was seconded by Gene Miyao and passed unanimously.

#### **Strategic Priority 3-Enact Protocols**

##### **A) Voluntary Compliance Agreement Exhibits**

Nick Condos presented Compliance Agreement documents. Compliance agreements were drafted for growers that have an infestation, transporters that are transporting tomatoes from an infested field, processors that are accepting and processing tomatoes from the accepted field, and non-infested growers transporting to a non-infested field.

For growers with an infested field, a hold notice will be issued. This allows CDFA and the County Agricultural Commissioner to put articles on hold, which encourages the infested grower to enter into a Compliance Agreement. Once the document is filled out by the grower, regulatory officials countersign, and then the grower would be able to continue doing their business under the provisions of the Compliance Agreement. Typically, one agreement is issued for a grower or one per entity.

The provisions state that growers cannot do business with people who are also not under a Compliance Agreement, and there must be a Board approved Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, which will also serve as a grant opportunity. The IPM program will also be a part of the approval process for a grant.

All persons authorized to enter the area under hold must also implement Board guidelines for sanitation and footwear. These guidelines will be separate from the exhibits, so they can be amended if needed. The Compliance Agreement would also include the field where the tomatoes are grown, regardless of if the grower switches to another crop after harvesting their tomatoes. Growers must also notify within 48 hours before planting or harvesting.

Transporters cannot transport from a grower that is not under a Compliance Agreement. Dedicated trailers must also be used for infested premises. Trailers and trucks from infested premises shall be cleaned according to the Board's recommendations.

For a Grower in a non-infested processing tomato field, staff should be educated, and any suspected plants must be reported within 48 hours.

For a Transporter from a non-infested processing tomato field, they must be under a compliance agreement, have clean trailers, and, once they are developed, adhere to Board guidelines.

Motion: David Viguie moved to approve distributing the draft Compliance Agreements and Exhibits for review and comment by Industry members. The motion was seconded by Rick Blankenship and passed unanimously.

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#### **Strategic Priority 4-Research**

##### **A) IPM Program, Solarization, Trailer Cleaning Protocols for Risk Levels, Seed Viability/Risk in Water**

It was agreed upon that David Viguie would be the lead for determining criteria for setting designated zones, as well as the cleaning protocols for the different zones. For seed viability and the IPM Program, these will be handled offline, and recommendations will be brought back to the Board. The IPM Program would also include organics.

#### **Strategic Priority 5-Advocate**

##### **A) Grant Program**

CDFA would develop guidelines for a grant program to incentivize growers to come forward and identify Broomrape infestations. There will be a Board approved IPM program to be able to apply for the grant.

#### **Public Comment**

No comments.

#### **Next Meeting and Agenda Items**

The next meeting will be held either March 20, 2025, at 1:30 pm. Agenda items will include Compliance Agreement comments, outreach discussions, recommendations for designated zones and key protocols, and funding recommendations.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:11 pm.