

California Department of Food and Agriculture

California Broomrape Board

Meeting Minutes

Modesto, California, May 21, 2024

Committee Members Present: Toshi Aoki, David Viguié, Ron DalPorno, Derek Azevedo, Scott Schmidt, Scott Spitzer, Daniel Bays, Rick Blankenship, Micheal Newton

Committee Members Absent: Frank Coelho Jr., David Kiehn, Tony Turkovich

CDFA staff: Victoria Hornbaker, Michelle Dennis, Nick Condos, Lexi Wilson

Guests: Neil McRoberts, Brad Hanson, Mike Montna, Zach Bagley, Daryl Bettencourt, Humberto Izquierdo,

Opening Comments

Nick Condos called the Broomrape Board (Board) meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Roll was called and there was a quorum for the meeting. Nick Condos welcomed everyone to the first Board meeting.

Bagley-Keene

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

Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes from previous meetings.

Board Officers – Nick introduced the item and requested that a board member be elected as Chair to run the rest of the meeting.

Motion: Michael Newton recommended the appointment of Ron DalPorno for the position of Chairman to the Board. The motion was seconded by Daniel Bays and passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Ron DalPorno lead the meeting from this point. Discussion continued on board officers.

Motion: Derek Azevedo recommended the appointment of Michael Newton for the position of Vice Chairman to the Board. The motion was seconded by Rick Blankenship and passed unanimously with no abstentions.

It was agreed that no other officers were necessary at this point. Discussion about sub-committees commenced.

Broomrape Program Options

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Nick provided a presentation on the Board's authority and area of responsibility including: conducting research; disseminating information and progress reports; surveying, detecting, analyzing and treating the cause of broomrape; funding activities including grants; establishing an annual assessment rate; establishing an annual budget; and, adopting regulations recommended by the Board.

The need for a comprehensive survey was discussed including the need to develop a risk-based survey model. Anonymous reporting was also discussed to determine the extent of the infested area. The challenges of self-reporting were discussed as there may be reluctance to report due to the regulatory impacts. A behavioral survey was discussed as a way to gain insight into the grower community regarding broomrape reporting. The Board requested that staff further investigate the development and dissemination of a behavioral survey to growers and handlers.

Discussion ensued about the need for additional research on broomrape and an overview of existing research efforts lead the California Tomato Research Institute (CTRI). The role of CTRI in relation to Board funded research was discussed.

Motion: Rick Blankenship recommended establishing a Research Subcommittee. The motion was seconded by David Viguie and passed unanimously. There were no abstentions.

David Viguie volunteered as Chair and he was unanimously supported. The Board requested that staff investigate a research coordinator contractor or how CTRI can fill that role.

Nomination of Ex Officio Board Members

Motion: Daniel Bays recommended appointing Brad Hansen (UC Davis Research) and Neil McRoberts (UC Davis Research) as Ex Officio members to the Board. The motion was seconded by Rick Blankenship and passed unanimously. There were no abstentions.

A discussion ensued regarding regulatory protocols and if and when to implement hold notices and restrictions on infested properties and the process and requirements associated with an interior quarantine. It was noted that the California Agriculture Commissioners and Sealers Association recommended Humberto Izquierdo of Yolo county as an Ex Officio member. The need for Commissioner perspectives from San Joaquin Valley was discussed.

Motion: Michael Newton recommended appointing Humberto Izquierdo (Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner) and Melissa Cregan (Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner) as Ex Officio members to the Board. The motion was seconded by David Viguie and passed unanimously

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The Board requested that staff inquire with Jimmy Hook, Kings County Agricultural Commissioner to determine his interest in being an Ex Officio member representing south San Joaquin Valley.

Strategic Planning

The concept of creating a Strategic Plan was discussed.

Motion: Ron Dalorno recommended initiating a strategic plan. The motion was seconded by Derek Azevedo and passed unanimously. There were no abstentions.

The Board requested that staff explore the options for procuring a contractor to facilitate and guide the process of creating a Strategic Plan.

Annual Assessment

A discussion about the annual budget and assessment commenced. Further discussion about an annual budget for 2025/26 was needed after a behavioral survey and strategic plan. The need to begin working on an annual assessment rule making was discussed.

Motion- Rick Blankenship recommended initiating the establishment of an assessment rate based on a flat-rate structure with the ability to adjust as needed. The motion was seconded by Daniel Bays and passed unanimously.

A discussion about creating a webpage for the Broomrape Program on CDFA's website was initiated in order to link to Best Management Practices and Safeguarding Protocols on the CTRI website. An Outreach and Education subcommittee was created and Michael Newton volunteered and was unanimously supported for Chair. The Board requested that staff investigate the creation of a Broomrape Program webpage on CDFA's website with a link to CTRI website.

Public Member and Ex Officio Member

A discussion ensued about the process for nominating a Public Member including statutory requirements. The Board decided to develop a list of candidates for the next meeting.

Next Meeting and Agenda Items

Agenda items were discussed and the date of the next meeting was set for June 25, 2024.

Ron Dalorno adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.