

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
Minutes

of the Meeting/Video Conferencing
of the Nursery Advisory Board (NAB)
Held on Thursday, December 5, 2024
1220 N Street, Room 133
Sacramento, CA 95814

NURSERY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Voting Members Present: David Cox, Michael Frantz, Jim Hessler, Dustin Hooper, Bruce Jensen, Jay Jensen, David Kirby

Voting Members Absent: Phillip Johnson, Josh Puckett, Daniel Waterhouse

Ex Officio Nonvoting Members Present: Kamal Bagri, Loren Oki, Wolfgang Schweigkofler, Marcie Skelton, Gerry Spinelli

Ex Officio Nonvoting Members Absent: Emily Robidart Rooney

OTHER ATTENDEES*

Christine Birdsong, Morgan Burke, Tanya Goodson, Joshua Kress, Brenda Lanini, Phuong Lao, Jasmine Minhas, Cristy Munos, Stacie Oswalt, Kelley Paugh, Michael Paule, Kristina Weber

*As self-reported in the Zoom application or sign-in sheet

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

David Cox, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and conducted roll call. A quorum was present for the Board.

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Cox welcomed everyone and reviewed the topics of discussion.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Cox directed the Board to review the draft minutes prepared by program staff for the November 28, 2023, and April 24, 2024 meetings. A copy of the draft minutes had been distributed to the Board members and posted on the Department's website prior to the meeting. Cox opened the floor for any changes or corrections. The Board reviewed the minutes, and no changes or corrections were made.

Board Motion #1

The Board approves the minutes from the November 28, 2023 meeting.

Motion: Bruce Jensen

Second: Michael Frantz

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: David Cox, Michael Frantz, Jim Hessler, Dustin Hooper, Bruce Jensen, Jay Jensen, David Kirby

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Phillip Johnson, Josh Puckett, Daniel Waterhouse

Board Motion #2

The Board approves the minutes from the April 24, 2024 meeting.

Motion: Jim Hessler

Second: Jay Jensen

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: David Cox, Michael Frantz, Jim Hessler, Dustin Hooper, Bruce Jensen, Jay Jensen, David Kirby

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Phillip Johnson, Josh Puckett, Daniel Waterhouse

PHYTOPHTHORA AUSTROCEDRI PEST INFORMATION AND BMP'S

Kelley Paugh discussed *Phytophthora austrocedri*, an oomycete tree pathogen that threatens California's nursery stock industry and natural ecosystems. In April 2024, USDA AHPS PPQ reported the first U.S. detection of *P. austrocedri* in two Oregon nurseries. Affected nurseries had shipped large volumes of plants, mostly to wholesale nurseries. *P. austrocedri* had not been detected in California and was listed as an A-rated pest.

P. austrocedri most often attacks roots and root collars, moving into the base of trunks, then causing girdling and dieback. In junipers, it can infect through branches. Distinctively, the phloem of infected plants will turn from white to cinnamon brown. The pathogen primarily infects conifers in the Cypress family, but other trees may also be at risk. *P. austrocedri* produces asexual and sexual spores that can be moved with soil, water, and infected plant material.

Kristina Weber discussed implementing best management practices (BMP) within a nursery to reduce the risk of spreading this pest throughout a nursery, and noted CDFA's BMP manual: <https://www.cdca.ca.gov/plant/pe/nsc/nursery/bmp.html>

GWSS NURSERY TRAPPING AND INSPECTION UPDATE

Stacie Oswalt, Senior Environmental Scientist with the Pierce's Disease Control Program (PDCP), provided a brief overview of the glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) nursery trapping and inspection program. Due to financial constraints within the PDCP, there were concerns in Spring 2024 whether counties would be able to maintain standard trapping and inspection levels at receiving nurseries located in GWSS non-infested areas. In FY 24/25, a one-time allocation of \$850,000 by the

Pierce's Disease/Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Board allowed counties to continue these critical trapping and inspection programs at near-normal levels. The PDCP planned to work closely with the California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association (CACASA) GWSS Advisory Group regarding any future budget impacts.

PEST EXCLUSION BRANCH UPDATE

Joshua Kress, Pest Exclusion Branch Chief, provided an update on quarantine activities.

Invasive fruit fly (IFF) quarantines:

- All IFF quarantines established in 2023 were declared eradicated in 2024.
- A Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) quarantine was established in the Fremont area of Alameda and Santa Clara counties on September 6, 2024. The quarantine encompassed 183 square miles, with over 61 adult flies found.
- An Oriental fruit fly (OFF) quarantine was established in the Garden Grove area of Orange County on October 31, 2024. The quarantine encompassed 88 square miles, with over 8 adult flies found.
- CDFA also had ongoing treatment projects related to OFF detections in Riverside County (Jurupa Valley and Riverside) and Orange County (Irvine).

Spongy moth (SM):

- Multiple adult SM were found in Calabasas (Los Angeles County) in 2024.
- Egg mass surveys in the area were negative.
- An eradication area had been declared, and CDFA was continuing to monitor the situation and take any necessary action.
- A Science Advisory Panel was held on November 21, 2024, to advise CDFA on its current SM action plan and on the response to this detection.

Multiple IFF quarantine regulations were updated in 2024 to align with current practices, science, and federal regulations and guidelines.

Georgia was added to California's spotted lanternfly (SLF) state exterior quarantine after detections of SLF were announced by the Georgia Department of Agriculture in November 2024. The exterior quarantine for SLF is set at the state level.

Oregon was added to California's Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) state exterior quarantine after detections there in 2022:

- The EAB infestation started west of Portland. The Oregon Department of Agriculture expanded its State interior quarantine in August 2024 due to additional detections in surrounding counties.
- CDFA trapped for EAB at various sites in 2024, including along the Oregon border. There had been no reported detections (although final survey results for 2024 were still pending).
- The exterior quarantine for EAB is also set at the state level.

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

CACASA Pest Prevention Committee – Kamal Bagri, San Joaquin County Agricultural Commissioner

Commissioner Bagri presented a brief overview of the Detector Dog Teams Program in California. Detector dogs and handlers are trained by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) at the National Detector Dog Training Center in Newman, Georgia. At the time, there were 14 county dog teams, with San Joaquin and Orange counties receiving new dog teams in 2024. From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, California Dog Teams alerted on 53,866 parcels containing agricultural products and intercepted 863 confirmed agricultural pests.

Commissioner Bagri presented a brief update on the California Pest Prevention Program Analysis (C3PA) study. C3PA was a collaboration between CACASA and CDFA, with research being conducted by the University of California, Davis, UC ANR, University of Florida, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly Pomona, Sacramento State University, and Cal Poly Humboldt. The goal of C3PA was to identify what strategies and tools are needed to support a modern pest prevention system and to evaluate the effectiveness of pest risk abatement for new pathways as well as current pest exclusion strategies.

Commissioner Bagri also noted two pests of concern for county agricultural commissioners:

- Spotted Lanternfly: This pest is of significant concern for the grape industry. There had been several detections of dead SLF on incoming shipments into California. CDFA and counties conducted a survey in the summer of 2024 to identify high risk sites.
- Red Leaf Blotch of Almond: This is a fungal disease first detected in May 2024 in Madera, Merced, San Joaquin & Stanislaus counties. The causal agent was Q-rated.

CACASA Nursery, Seed, and Apiary Committee – Marcie Skelton, Glenn County Agricultural Commissioner

Commissioner Skelton noted that the PDCP was working with the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and county agricultural commissioners to request a Special Local Needs label for Carbaryl 4L. Approved treatment protocols were being developed.

The San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner's office had recently sent an outreach letter to local growers affected by the huanglongbing (HLB) quarantine, outlining the options for citrus nursery stock.

Commissioner Skelton also provided an update on the Unclaimed Gas Tax (UGT) funding allocations. A biennial report from Caltrans was scheduled to be released in

September. After release of the report, the CACASA UGT committee will reassess and develop a spending plan based on the available funding.

NURSERY SERVICES PROGRAM UPDATE

Weber gave a brief update on Program activities. CDFA had translated the Nursery License Application and Fee Exempt Nursery License to Spanish.

BOARD MEMBER VACANCIES

Cox and Weber discussed the two current voting member vacancies. CDFA had posted a vacancy notice, with applications due on November 25, 2024. Additionally, there were three terms expiring on January 31, 2025. CDFA had also posted a vacancy notice for these positions, with applications due on December 16, 2024. The Board needed to hold a Nominating Committee meeting and a regular Board meeting by the end of December to fill these five vacancies.

Cox added David Kirby as a member of the Nominating Committee.

REVIEW OF NURSERY BUDGET AND FUND CONDITION

Jasmine Minhas presented the Nursery Services Program's proposed spending plan and fund condition statement for FY 2025-26 (attached). Projected increases in expenditures included environmental scientist and administrative staff salary increases. Potential increases in revenue included an increase to the Grapevine Registration and Certification Program fees. Staff also noted that the Nursery License fee structure was last updated in 2009, and that license fees could be raised to a maximum of \$180 under current law.

The Board discussed concerns with California Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) Section 242 and the Program's proposed spending plan. The Board voiced concerns regarding FAC § 242 and the ongoing nature of this issue, the importance that CDFA complies with FAC § 242, and the Board's obligation to not make any motions that conflict with FAC § 242.

The Board also expressed concern with the Program's projected negative reserve balance by the end of FY 2025/26. The Board requested the program to investigate and present a proposed increase to licensing fees for discussion at the next Board meeting.

Board Motion #3

The Board recommends a proposed spending plan for FY 2025/26 of \$3,528,821, and notes the Board's ongoing concerns of indirect charges exceeding the limit set by Food and Agricultural Code Section 242.

Motion: Michael Frantz
Second: Jay Jensen

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: David Cox, Michael Frantz, Jim Hessler, Dustin Hooper, Bruce Jensen, Jay Jensen, David Kirby

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Phillip Johnson, Josh Puckett, Daniel Waterhouse

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next regular Board meeting was planned for Spring 2025, to be held in person and via video conferencing. Possible agenda items included HLB/ACP updates, and presentation and discussion of a proposal to increase licensing fees.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Michael Paule, AGPA
Nursery Services Program
California Department of Food & Agriculture