

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
Minutes
of the Meeting
of the Seed Advisory Board (SAB)
Held on Tuesday, May 24, 2022
3294 Meadowview Rd., Conference Room A
Sacramento, CA 95832

SEED ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Members Present: Mike Campbell, Greg Cassel, Emily Clay, Justin Davis, Scott Emanuelli*, Tom Hearne, Kraig Kuykendall, John McShane, Greg Orsetti, Robert Simas, Bill White

Members Absent: None

*unable to participate in a voting capacity

OTHER ATTENDEES*

Riad Baalbaki, Cheryl Blomquist, Jill Hagenston, Umesh Kodira, Brenda Lanini, Alex Lysak, Bill Matthews, Erica Moore, Robert Price, Allen Van Deynze

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

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Greg Cassel, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m. and conducted roll call. A quorum was present for the Board.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Cassel introduced new members Justin Davis and Tom Hearne, and provided an overview of the SAB for new members and new attendees.

UC DAVIS SEED INDUSTRY STUDY UPDATE

Bill Matthews provided an update on the Economic Analysis of the Seed Industry being conducted by the UC Davis. They have reviewed annual crop reports from the last 5 years reported by counties. Using the results of California seed production from 2019 (because 2020 results had been affected by COVID), Matthews explained the direct effects of seed production in California resulted in an output of \$395 million dollars, supporting 2,700 jobs with total income labor paid of \$139 million dollars, and adding \$221 million dollars to the California GDP. Based on the 2019 seed production results, the total effects seen were an output of \$772 million dollars, supporting 4,900 jobs with total income labor paid of \$276 million dollars, and adding \$451 million dollars to the California GDP. The Board discussed how the counties obtain this data, with members stating that many counties do not ask growers for this information. Matthews stated he would create a survey of seed producers and ask the California

Seed Association for assistance to get it out to seed producers to provide more accurate information.

REPORT FROM THE CDFA SEED LABORATORY

Riad Baalbaki and Robert Price gave an update on activities for the CDFA Seed Laboratory. Price gave an overview of the seed laboratory's activities, and Baalbaki reviewed compliance testing. The most common violations seen by the lab were labeling violations, including those violating the Plant Variety Protection (PVP) Act. They calculated that about 8% of regulatory samples require retesting, while 5% of service samples are retested. On average, Baalbaki said that a retest takes about 5 times the amount of time needed for a failed sample than it takes a sample that passes initial testing. The CDFA Seed Lab follows Federal Seed Act rules and AOSCA testing methods. The CDFA Seed Lab also works on developing new and more efficient testing methods for different species of seed, which then become rules that are adopted nationally. The lab also develops testing methods for crops grown only in California. With more and more species of seed being grown and regulated, newer and more specific testing methods are needed, which are being developed by the lab. The lab also tests new methods and finetunes testing methods for other regulatory labs, making sure that the methods being introduced are the quickest and most efficient for commercial seed sellers and for the entire seed industry.

The lab also does a large amount of in-house training, as well as conducting and participating in workshops for germination testing, lab training, etc. The lab is active in finding new methods to increase the efficiency of testing, and to find new ways to test seed that hasn't been previously seen in the CDFA seed lab.

Kraig Kuykendall moved for the board to approve and accept the report from the seed laboratory. Greg Orsetti seconded. There was no further board discussion or public comments.

Board Motion

The Board voted to approve and accept the report from the CDFA Seed Laboratory as presented.

Motion: Kraig Kuykendall

Second: Greg Orsetti

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: Mike Campbell, Greg Cassel, Emily Clay, Kraig Kuykendall, John McShane, Greg Orsetti, Justin Davis, Tom Hearne, Bob Simas, Bill White

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Scott Emanuelli*

* unable to participate in a voting capacity

REPORT FROM THE UC DAVIS SEED BIOTECHNOLOGY CENTER

Allen Van Deynze presented the Seed Biotechnology Center (SBC) report. The SBC was able to continue classes online during 2020. Due to being online and nationwide, more students were taking courses at the SBC. The SBC planned to keep the online program, as well as restart in-person classes. They started offering courses that take small amounts of time, 1-2 days of online coursework, and that gave them more opportunity to reach more students. They kept class sizes to roughly 20-21 students per class to keep the quality of teaching high for each student. An update on the Collaboration for Plant Pathogen Strain Identification (CPPSI) was also given, mentioning the creation and study of different comparative tests for seed pathogens for better pathogen identification. In addition to multiple research projects, the SBC received an \$800,000 grant to continue their research with studies in nitrogen use efficiency in Spinach. The SBC also had nine different publications in the 2021/22 season.

Kuykendall moved for the board to approve and accept the report from the SBC. Orsetti seconded. There was no further board discussion or public comments.

Board Motion

The Board voted to approve and accept the report from the UC Davis Seed Biotechnology Center as presented.

Motion: Kraig Kuykendall
Second: Greg Orsetti

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: Mike Campbell, Greg Cassel, Emily Clay, Kraig Kuykendall, John McShane, Greg Orsetti, Justin Davis, Tom Hearne, Bob Simas, Bill White

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Scott Emanuelli*

* unable to participate in a voting capacity

SEED SERVICES PROGRAM UPDATE

Brenda Lanini welcomed new staff member Jill Hagenston to her first in-person SAB meeting. For the 2021/22 fiscal year (FY), 560 firms were registered, along with 198 “doing business as” seed firms. Of these seed firms, 317 were in California, 230 were out of state, and 13 were international.

There were 54 counties participating in the Seed Subvention Program in 2021/22. County staff inspected 444 facilities, inspected 1,545 labels, inspected 238 seed lots that entered California and were placed on hold by a CDFA Border Protection Station inspector for release at destination, placed 18 stop-sale orders, used seven hours of time for a seed complaint, and notified 38 unregistered labelers of their noncompliance. Seed Services Program staff also conducted five trainings for county inspectors as part of the Seed Law Enhancement Program (SLEP), and planned to schedule additional trainings as requested by counties.

Lanini reported revenue received in FY 2021/22:

- Registration fees: \$22,760
- Late registration penalties: \$632
- Assessments: \$2,063,974
- Late assessment penalties: \$33,175
- Total revenue (including interest income): \$2,140,175

Lanini reported that the Seed Services Program was also working on multiple projects, including: Changes in Lot and Seed Treatment task force, collaboration and research on regulation of seed-borne diseases, working with online sellers, assessment auditing, and working with companies who sell native seeds.

Emily Clay moved for the board to approve and accept the report from the Seed Services Program. Orsetti seconded. There was no further board discussion or public comments.

Board Motion

The Board voted to approve and accept the report from the Seed Services Program.

Motion: Emily Clay

Second: Greg Orsetti

Details of Board Vote

In Favor: Mike Campbell, Greg Cassel, Emily Clay, Kraig Kuykendall, John McShane, Greg Orsetti, Justin Davis, Tom Hearne, Bob Simas, Bill White

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Scott Emanuelli*

* unable to participate in a voting capacity

DISCUSSION ON FUNDING OF THE BRADFORD ENDOWED CHAIR AT UC DAVIS

As requested by the Board, the Seed Services Program had received a determination from the CDFA Legal Office that the California Seed Law allows for CDFA to use seed registration and assessment revenue to fund research at UC Davis, and that this may

include funding of the Bradford Endowed Chair as long as all other rules for granting of such funds by CDFA and receiving of such funds by UC Davis were aligned. Cassel reported that the California Seed Association (CSA) Board of Directors had discussed this proposal at a recent meeting, but no recommendation was made. The Board discussed potential funding in an amount of \$200,000, that the funding not be offset by a reduction in funding to the SBC, and that this increase in expenditures may trigger a need to increase the assessment rate in the near future. The Board requested to discuss this item further at the next meeting.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The Board proposed the following agenda items for the next meeting:

- Approval of minutes from previous meetings
- Follow-up on finance and budget discussions
- CDFA Seed Lab report
- SBC report

The next meeting was tentatively set for Wednesday, November 9, 2022, as an in-person meeting with a call-in option.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Alexander Lysak, Environmental Scientist
Seed Services Program
California Department of Food & Agriculture