

**CALIFORNIA STATE APIARY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

California Department of Food and Agriculture
2800 Gateway Oaks Drive, Room 173 Sacramento, CA 95833
January 22, 2015

Opening

The meeting of the California State Apiary Board was called to order at 3:05 PM on January 22, 2015 in Sacramento, California by Committee Chair Roger Everett.

Board Members Present

Roger Everett, Chair, Tulare County, CA
Harold “Buzz” Landon, Butte County, CA
Bryan Ashurst, Imperial County, CA
Bob Brandi, Merced County, CA
Courtney Albrecht, Board Secretary, CDFA

Visitors in Attendance

Denise Alder, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, Reevaluation Program
Ann Prichard, Chief, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, Pesticide Registration Branch
George Farnsworth, Chief, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, Enforcement Branch

Board Members Not Present

David Bradshaw, Visalia CA

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act

Courtney Albrecht and the Board acknowledged compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, pursuant to Government Code Section 11120-11132. Ms. Albrecht provided Board members with the updated Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act documents, and indicated that an important update to the law was that for all votes taken by a Board, each Board member’s vote (aye or nay) need to be recorded.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Everett asked if there were any corrections or adjustments to the minutes from the November 19, 2014 Board meeting. Bryan Ashurst indicated that his name was spelled incorrectly. Ms. Albrecht stated she would correct the minutes. A vote was taken to approve the corrected minutes, with Board members voting as follows:

Roger Everett-aye	Bryan Ashurst-aye
Harold “Buzz” Landon-aye	Bob Brandi-aye

Apiary Board Committee Reports

None

California Department of Food and Agriculture Report

1. Border Protection Station Update

Ms. Albrecht reported that CDFA has ordered and installed a new water tank at the Yermo Border Protection Station and that there is now enough water to provide water service (not unlimited) at the station. Ms. Albrecht indicated that she would provide this updated information to Mr. Carlen Jupe with the California State Beekeepers Association (CSBA). Ms. Albrecht also reported that the number of bee shipments was not as high as expected for this time of year, but that the types of pests that have been detected in shipments remains similar to those in the past (Red Imported Fire Ant and Small Hive Beetle) and the rate of rejection remains the same.

Bob Brandi and Roger Everett indicated that the number of shipments would begin to increase in the coming days as bee colonies which had been overwintered in buildings in Idaho begin to arrive. Ms. Albrecht indicated she would report this information to the CDFA Pest Exclusion Program.

2. California Healthy Pollinator Working Group Update

Ms. Albrecht indicated that progress was being made on plans for the Healthy Pollinator Working Group, and that CDFA was forming a small ad hoc steering committee, which included Mr. George Farnsworth, and which would be used to help plan the working group meeting. The ad hoc steering committee would be asked to identify the key issues of concern to pollinator health, and develop a draft agenda for the working group, and identify additional invitees to the working group and potential guest speakers.

Ms. Albrecht stated that CDFA will invite recommendations from the Healthy Pollinator Working Group, which will hopefully meet in the spring 2015, on ways CDFA can help contribute toward efforts to promote the health of pollinators. Ms. Albrecht indicated that stakeholders concerns include the need for increased foraging opportunities for bees, and indicated that forming the Healthy Pollinators Working Group is a way for CDFA to provide opportunities for collaboration, networking, and information sharing among interested parties, and outreach to groups and individuals who may not be aware of the issues.

Discussion followed pertaining to the list of participants on the ad hoc steering committee and the working group invitational list, and an explanation that the Pollinator Working Group had met previously (twice in 2013) but that no further meetings had been scheduled until this latest effort. Ms. Albrecht explained that in April 2014, the monthly meeting of State Board of Agriculture (an advisory body to the Secretary) focused on pollinator health issues. Following this meeting, the State Board wrote a letter to the Secretary recommending that, among other actions, CDFA should re-engage with the Pollinator Working Group to identify ways that CDFA can contribute towards efforts to improve pollinator health. Ms Albrecht indicated that this could include acting as a

conduit of information between interested parties, providing opportunities for collaboration, etc.

California Department of Pesticide Regulation Report (CDPR)

1. U.S EPA Pollinator Labeling Initiative

Ms. Denise Alder first provided example labels to Board members to show labels that have been approved by CDPR.

Ms. Alder then provided the following background on the issue:

In August 2013, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) announced the need for updated pollinator label language for neonicotinoid registrants (imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, clothianidin, dinotefuran). This announcement was specifically for outdoor foliar use products, and was not limited to agricultural use (it encompassed homeowner and agricultural use), but it did not include soil applications. The U.S. EPA recognized the need to address soil applications, but this would occur as an outcome of the re-evaluation process. The announcement included all formulations of these products except granular; however, granular formulations now have some bee protection language on the labels.

Ms. Alder stated that there are Advisory Statements (bee box) and Mandatory Language Statements (Directions for Use, Do Not Apply, etc.), and that she could provide more information about these if desired.

Three different criteria were used to develop the different language on the labels:

- For bees used in pollination services
- For products used on food crops and ornamentals
- For non-agricultural (consumer use) products

Ms. Alder stated that with the exception of imidacloprid, the majority of neonicotinoid products are for agricultural use. Ms Alder indicated that there are quite a number of consumer use products which contain imidacloprid, and many in the granular form. There was concern from the Board regarding the use of granular products and their effects on bees. Bob Brandi indicated that he was aware of bee problems after granular imidacloprid was used as a systemic on eucalyptus trees in Southern California. Mr. Brandi also indicated that this type of product is used on plants in the valley, and that bees can tolerate it to an extent, but if they are exposed to a steady dose of it, it can be overwhelming for them.

Ms. Alder stated that U.S. EPA asked registrants to submit their updated labels by February 2014. CDPR sent a similar letter to registrants with California-registered products, asking them to submit their U.S. EPA-approved labels to CDPR within 30-60 days of receiving approval. To date, all but four registrants have complied with the updated label language and the products are in the market place. Ms. Alder supplied the Board with a list of products with the dates of CDPR acceptance, and stated that CDPR is

monitoring to ensure that both new products and all amendments use the most restrictive label language. Ms. Alder pointed out that the new label requirements do not replace existing pollinator protection language on labels. For certain products, the label already contains more restrictive language than the new requirements. Discussion followed regarding the label language contained on a clothianidin product, Belay Insecticide, EPA Reg. No. 59639-150-AA.

Ms. Ann Prichard indicated there was discussion within U.S. EPA about the new label requirements becoming standard for all products, not just neonicotinoids, but indicated U.S. EPA has not made a final decision. Mr. George Farnsworth indicated that U.S. EPA wants to wait and see how the new Managed Pollinator Protection Plans work out, and then revisit the labeling issue if necessary.

2. Managed Pollinator Protection Plans

Mr. Farnsworth provided the following background for this issue:

The Presidential Memorandum, Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators, created a Pollinator Task Force. As part of the Task Force, U.S. EPA was tasked with five items:

- a. Assess the effects of pesticides on pollinators;**
- b. Engage with the state pesticide regulatory entities and tribal authorities in the development of Managed Pollinator Protection Plans;**
- c. Encourage the incorporation of pollinator protection in habitat planting activities, and into green infrastructure and superfund projects;**
- d. Expedite review of registration applications for new products targeting pests harmful to pollinators; and,**
- e. Increase habitat planting around federal facilities.**

Mr. Farnsworth explained that the development of the pollinator protection plans had begun prior to the presidential memorandum by a committee within the regulatory organizations: Association of American Pesticide Control Officials (AAPCO) and the State FIRFA Issues and Research and Evaluation Group (SFIERG). California officials were specifically looked to for guidance on development of the pollinator protection plans. CDPR operates a statewide beekeeper advanced notification program so beekeepers can be informed about the pesticides applied in their area to protect bees from exposure.

Then, the U.S. EPA asked AAPCO and SFIERG to take the lead on developing a guidance document that could be used by other states when developing their own Managed Pollinator Protection Plans. Members of SFIERG worked with pesticide regulatory officials in other states and developed the Draft *Guidance for State Lead Agencies in the Development and Implementation of Managed Pollinator Protection Plans*, which was distributed to the Board.

Mr. Farnsworth explained that the guidance document identifies key elements of a Managed Pollinator Protection Plan. Key elements are categorized as Critical vs. Optional/Recommended as follows:

Critical Elements:

- The ability for public participation in the development of a state's pollinator protection plan;
- A method to identify location of bees;
- A method of notification to beekeepers of pesticide use;
- A component for minimizing risk for bees;
- Public outreach; and,
- Measure of Effectiveness (California's plan does not have this currently, other than the incident reporting system. It was agreed by Mr. Farnsworth and the Board that this is not a good measure of effectiveness due to the large number of incidences that go unreported.

Discussion followed, and Mr. Farnsworth stressed the importance of reporting bee incidences to the County Agricultural Commissioner. Mr. Brandi expressed concern over an incident last year he had reported to the Merced County Agricultural Commissioner's office, but had not yet been provided with a copy of the report. Mr. Farnsworth stated he would follow-up with the Merced County Agricultural Commissioner.

Mr. Farnsworth provided the Board with some fliers prepared by CDPR for growers, beekeepers, and pest control operators, which discuss the importance of good communication between growers, applicators, beekeepers, and the County Agricultural Commissioner's to protect bees, and the role of the pest control advisors in the protection of bees. Fliers will be distributed to all County Agricultural Commissioner's.

Mr. Farnsworth stated that the Managed Pollinator Protection plans pertain to hobbyist and commercial bee managers, and confirmed that the regulations requiring county notifications of pesticide use apply to hobbyists as well as commercial beekeepers. Discussion followed pertaining to the difficulties with notifying beekeepers of pesticide usages, especially when the usage is conducted in backyard settings that may affect hobbyist beekeepers.

The efficient and accurate system of mapping used by the Kern County Agricultural Commissioner's office was discussed, and Mr. Farnsworth stated that it would be ideal to have a system like this statewide, and that other states have a state-wide system of mapping pesticide applications. Ms. Albrecht stated that the Healthy Pollinators Working Group would be a great opportunity for a discussion on this topic, and pointed out the Project Apis m. had received funding through the Specialty Crop Block Grant for some type of mapping project.

Discussion followed. Bob Brandi pointed out difficulties associated with high volumes of notifications when numerous, simultaneous applications occur due to regional pest pressure, and then difficulties experienced by beekeepers who don't have an untreated

place to take their bees. Discussion followed pertaining to the benefits of good communication between growers and beekeepers, in addition to the county notification system, which can include personal conversations between growers and beekeepers about specific timing of applications (at night) or applications to only portions of fields which could help protect bees.

Mr. Farnsworth stated that the federal guidance for Managed Pollinator Protection Plan will allow for each state to develop a unique approach to pollinator protection, and beekeepers should review and comment on the final federal guidance document when it is developed.

Mr. Everett stated the importance of knowing the effects of pesticides on bees, and the results of any testing that was performed, so that beekeepers can make informed decisions about when and if to move bees from an area. Mr. Everett pointed out that statements on product labels may not be specific enough to enable beekeepers to prioritize which applications to be most concerned about. Mr. Brandi added that beekeepers also need information pertaining to potential brood damage which may occur months after the worker bees are exposed to a product, and pointed out that possible latent effects can make it difficult to identify which product(s) were involved in bee mortality.

3. Pollinator Best Management Practices No Further discussion occurred on this topic.

4. Neonicotinoid Reevaluation

Document distributed to Board:

California Department of Pesticide Regulation's Reevaluation of Neonicotinoids

Ms. Prichard explained that the reevaluation process occurs after a product is registered and CDPR learns that there may be a problem with it. Once this process begins, CDPR issues a public notice and is able to require data from the registrant and can cancel registrations if data are not provided.

Ms. Alder stated that CDPR initiated reevaluation of neonicotinoid products in early 2009 as a result of the adverse effects data submission in linden trees. The data submission indicated that imidacloprid, when applied to the soil of ornamental plants, resulted in residue levels of up to 18 months, which potentially posed a hazard to pollinators including honey bees. CDPR included other chemicals in the reevaluation (thiamethoxam, clothianidin, and diotefuran) because they are in the same chemical family and believed to have same toxicity.

CDPR required neonicotinoid registrants to conduct two types of studies:

- residue studies in certain orchard and row crops that are attractive to bees; and
- larval studies, to determine what level is toxic to larvae

The reevaluation was initially designed to sample one time from crops following applications of the various chemicals. However, due to differing application rates, application methods for different crops, and other variables, it was decided to conduct two year studies. Study results are in various stages of completion, with some interim reports received, and some interim and final reports due in 2016.

Ms. Prichard explained that the reevaluation process has been challenging for a number of reasons, including the fact that each of the registrants is submitting separate studies for their product, rather than CDPR evaluating a single active ingredient in the chemical family, and reiterated that the inconsistent applications initially led to inconclusive results. CDPR required registrants to submit protocols where the maximum application rate was applied to the specific orchard or row crop and follow the same plot for two years.

Ms. Alder explained the reevaluation data requirements, including the tests that the registrants were asked to submit, the reason for granting a waiver for thiamethoxam use in pome fruits (because use was low) and an explanation of the request for dinotefuran to bridge to existing data. Ms. Alder stated that rather than conducting a residue study in almonds, the registrants of imidacloprid and thiamethoxam removed its use from their labels.

Ms. Alder stated that CDPR is partnering with U.S. EPA and Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) Health Canada on the reevaluation process. Through this partnership, CDPR will have access to the data generated to address both U.S. EPA and PMRA Health Canada's respective reevaluation.

Ms. Alder and Ms. Prichard discussed the study findings to date pertaining to uptake of applied neonicotinoids and soil type, the honeybee larval toxicity studies, and the evaluation of data pertaining to treated seed. Discussion followed, including questions from the Board regarding the design of the larval toxicity studies, and an explanation of the challenges with the study protocol. Ms. Alder stated that significant uncertainty exists regarding the effects to the hive as a whole of exposure to sub-lethal levels of neonicotinoids, and that CDPR hopes that by working with their partner agencies they can obtain this information within the next one to two years.

Ms. Alder stated that more information can be obtained on the CDPR website or at the bi-monthly Pesticide Registration Evaluation Committee meeting.

Public Comments

None

Next Meeting

The Board agreed that the next meeting would tentatively be scheduled for November 2016 to coincide with the State Beekeepers Convention (to be held in Sacramento) unless otherwise needed sooner.

Meeting Adjourned-Approximately 4:30 PM

Courtney Albrecht, Secretary

Date