



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
CALIFORNIA CITRUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CCAC)**

**March 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes
Hybrid Teleconference**

1031 South Mount Vernon Avenue Bakersfield, CA 93307

MEMBERS PRESENT

John S. Gless
David Haas Jr.
George McEwen
Randy Stucky
Brad Bishel – Chair
Sonya Carrillo

**REMOTE MEMBERS
PRESENT**

Lisa Tate
Gustavo Carranza
Tom Mayhew

MEMBERS ABSENT

Maribel Nenna – Vice
Chair

INTERESTED PARTIES

Gary Keough – National Agriculture
Statistics Service (NASS)
Curt Stock – NASS
John Stevens – NASS
Amanda Zito – Fresno Co.
Eddy Greynolds – Kern Co.
Tesfaye Jimma – Tulare Co.
Sofia Hernandez – Fresno Co.
Misael Martinez – Riverside Co.
Monica Winters – San Diego Co.
John Beall – Ventura Co.
Khoa Lam – Los Angeles Co.
Sam Botkin – CA Citrus Growers
Association
Casey Creamer – CA Citrus Mutual
(CCM)
Michael Bliss – CCM
Glenn Fankhauser – Kern Co. Ag
Commissioner

CDFA

Marcee Yount
Sarah Cardoni
Stacey Hughes
Kevin Jenkins
Anna Carrasquillo

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chair Brad Bishel.

ITEM 2: INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Sarah Cardoni, a quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

**ITEM 4: REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 16, 2023 & DECEMBER 5, 2023 MEETING
MINUTES**

Chair Bishel requested a motion to approve the November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes as submitted.

MOTION: John S. Gless moved to approve the November 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes as submitted. Davis Haas Jr. seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

Chair Bishel requested a motion to approve the December 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes as submitted.

MOTION: Chair Brad Bishel moved to approve the December 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes as submitted. John S. Gless seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 5: COMMITTEE VACANCY AND TERMS REPORT

Cardoni provided the Committee Vacancy and Terms Report. Currently, there are two producer member vacancies: one representing mandarins and one representing lemons. Members whose terms will expire on September 30, 2024, and are eligible for reappointment are John S. Gless and Lisa Tate. Members whose terms will expire on September 30, 2025, and are not eligible for reappointment are George McEwen, Brad Bishel, and Tom Mayhew.

ITEM 6: COUNTY ACTIVITY AND EXPENSE SUMMARY FY 23/24

Stacey Hughes presented the County Activity and Expense Summary for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/24 crop year. There were 3,947 lots and 4,308,122 containers inspected, with 3,765 maturity tests conducted by the five contracted counties: Fresno, Kern, Riverside, Tulare, and Ventura. Sixty-eight percent of the County Agreements funding has been expended, with \$291,848 of \$430,026 invoiced through December 31, 2023. Kern County performed 149 courtesy color checks in October and November.

ITEM 7: BUDGET REVIEW

i. FY 24/25 Proposed NASS Budget

Gary Keough, NASS Pacific Region Director, presented the FY 2024/25 NASS Budget. The proposed NASS Budget included \$48,263 for salary and benefits; \$35,110 for operating expenses; \$147,438 for the Navel Objective Measurement (OM) survey; \$87,000 for the Valencia OM survey; \$76,563 for the Cara Cara OM survey; \$90,000 for the Mandarin OM survey; \$60,000 for the Clementine OM survey; with a gas tax credit of \$4,230 for \$540,144 total expenditures. Keough stated that NASS will not be publishing a production forecast for Clementines until the fourth year of data collection, due to needing three years of data to project forecasts. NASS will publish a summary of Clementines collected that will include the average number of fruits collected and average size.

ii. FY 24/25 Projected Revenue/Proposed Assessment Rates

Hughes presented the FY 2024/25 Projected Revenue and Assessment Rates. Current assessment rates are: 3 mills for Valencias; 7 mills for Navels; 4 mills for mandarins; and 1 mill for lemons. Proposed increased assessment rates are 8 mills for Navels and 6 mills for mandarins. An estimated \$78,000 would be generated by the proposed increase for mandarins and an estimated \$61,000 would be generated by the proposed increase for Navels. With the proposed increased assessment rates, the projected revenue for FY 2024/25 is \$824,890.

Hughes stated that the proposed increased assessment rates would help offset the new Clementine OM Survey and increase the projected assessment revenue to meet projected expenditures, while maintaining a healthy reserve. Hughes stated that historically the target for the program's reserve has been \$1.7 million, with \$1.2 million earmarked for use in the event of a freeze, and \$500,000 for operating expenses.

iii. FY 24/25 Proposed Citrus Program Budget

Hughes presented the FY 2024/25 Program Citrus Program Budget. The projected beginning fund balance is \$1,611,122. With the increased assessment rates, proposed revenue by commodity is: \$543,249 for Navel and Valencias; \$45,367 for lemons; and \$236,274 for mandarins. When adding \$59,821 in Ag Fund interest and \$1,383 in late fees, the total proposed revenue is \$886,095, bringing the total available cash for FY 2024/25 to \$2,497,217.

Proposed expenditures are \$829,144 and include \$540,144 for NASS and CDFA Marketing Services and \$289,000 for County Agreements. Hughes noted a 33% reduction in County Agreements compared to FY 2023/24 which was necessary to align awarded funding amounts with actual costs. With a projected gas tax credit of \$10,060 and a cash adjustment for statewide costs of \$37,731, the total ending balance is \$1,640,402.

MOTION: Lisa Tate moved to approve the FY 2024/25 Proposed Citrus Program Budget as presented and increase the assessment rates for Navels to 8 mills and mandarins to 6 mills. George McEwen seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

ITEM 8: PROGRAM UPDATES

Hughes reported that an experimental container is currently being used by industry and that a few handlers are on their first renewal. Hughes stated that if this experimental container proves to be useful to the industry, they should consider starting the process to standardize it this fall.

ITEM 9: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held Thursday, November 7, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and will be a hybrid online and in-person meeting held in Kern County.

An industry training on the orange color standard and inspection process is tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to be held in Kern County.

ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. by Chair Bishel.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacey Hughes, Agriculture Program Supervisor II
Inspection and Compliance Branch

Inspection Services