



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
CERTIFIED FARMERS' MARKET ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CFMAC)**

June 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Teleconference

2399 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95833

REMOTE MEMBERS

PRESENT

Portia Bramble – Chair
Cheyenne Erickson – Vice
Chair
Chris Flores
Cynthia Ojeda
April T. Lancaster
Phillip Rhodes
Cara Mae Woledge
Nick Schuller
Ed Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kurt Floren

INTERESTED PARTIES

Nina Zlatkov – Los Angeles Co.
Ameer Atrash – Ventura Co.
Jack de Wit
Rudy A. Valencia
Travis Howard
Doug Hayden – California
Farmers' Market Association
Cody Thompson – San Joaquin
Co.
Daniella Reagan – Napa Co.
Elena Chavez – Sonoma Co.
Joseph Gerald – Solano Co.
Matt Slattengren
Randii MacNear
Travis Howard – San Francisco
Co.
Jim Murez – Venice Farmers'
Market
Victor Rabinovich – San Francisco
Co.

CDFA

Jennifer Leidolf
Kristi Garcia
Jasmine Toledo
Danny Lee
Marcee Yount
Leslie Fernandez
Daniel Godinez
Amar Hariharan
Fredrick Gomez
Henry Ira
Rene Mendoza
Srikanth Chovva

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER-INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Portia Bramble. Roll was called, a quorum was established, and self-introductions were made.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Doug Hayden requested an update on committee vacancies, particularly producer positions. A committee Vacancy and Terms Report will be included in the next meeting's agenda.

A member of the public, who did not share their name, asked for more details on plans for organic products and vendors, specifically for the mobile markets.

ITEM 3: REVIEW OF MARCH 3, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Chair Bramble requested a motion to approve the March 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes as submitted.

MOTION: Nick Schuller moved to approve the March 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes as submitted. Vice Chair Cheyenne Erickson seconded the motion. A vote by roll call was taken. The motion passed unanimously, with Chris Flores abstaining.

ITEM 4: COMMITTEE PROCEDURES/ROLE

Jennifer Leidolf began the discussion on the Committee's procedures and their role, as outlined by the Food and Agriculture Code. Leidolf emphasized the advisory role of the committee and the importance of understanding the procedures for conducting meetings. Clarification was provided on what constitutes a quorum, including participation of members via teleconference, along with the impact that absences have on forming a quorum.

The difficulty in recruiting producer members was discussed, with some committee members suggesting a review of the procedures to potentially make it easier for producers to participate. Committee members discussed outreach to attract more producer members, which could include sharing a recruitment blurb or handouts to help current committee members recruit producers, and a Vacancy Press Release to share the current vacant positions with the public.

The existing subcommittees were also identified, which include the Database, Regulation, and Legislative Subcommittees. It was noted that subcommittee meetings could be scheduled based on the topics discussed, but new members could not be added to subcommittees at this meeting due to an oversight regarding agenda topics.

ITEM 5: MADDY INSTITUTE INTERN

Jennifer Leidolf introduced Jesus Zamudio, a summer intern from the Maddy Institute. Zamudio will be focusing on outreach, education, and promotion of the Certified Farmers' Market Program. Furthermore, Zamudio will be creating a survey to gather input from committee members and stakeholders to develop a framework for promotional items such as social media posts and blog entries.

Member of the public, Jim Murez, asked whether the committee is allowed to engage in marketing, referencing past statements that fees collected from farmers should not be used for marketing purposes. Leidolf clarified that Zamudio will primarily be working on outreach and not a specific marketing campaign and emphasized that there will be no additional funds allocated for marketing, and Zamudio's work is not being funded by the Direct Marketing program's revenue.

ITEM 6: DATABASE UPDATE

Leidolf provided an update on the database and began with a refresher on the history of the database, stating development began a decade ago, with significant efforts in the last five to six years. Leidolf stated that the first deliverable was released in March of 2023, replacing the legacy system for applying and issuing certificates. Four additional functions were planned, with a total budget of \$100,000 allocated for their completion. These functions include the following: upgrading how certificates are generated and certificate format, which has been completed; standardizing commodity units of

measure to ensure accuracy, which is ready for production and is expected to be completed in June; correcting the commodity dropdown list, and updating the export data function, both of which are pending.

Member of the public Jim Murez, asked questions about the database, including the number of lines per page on certificates, the assignment of units of measure to commodities, the improvement of the commodity drop-down interface, and the formats for exporting data. Leidolf and staff from CDFA's Information Technology Services Division (IT) provided responses, noting improvements in the number of lines per page and the assignment of units of measure. IT also discussed the technical aspects of exporting data in various formats, including Excel, Comma-Separated Values (CSV), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), and Portable Document Format (PDF).

The committee discussed the importance of public outreach to inform stakeholders about the database and its functionalities. Suggestions included improving messaging on the CDFA Direct Marketing website and providing clear instructions for counties not participating in the database system.

Portia Bramble, April Lancaster, and Nick Schuller volunteered to join the database subcommittee, and will elect a new chairperson at their next meeting.

ITEM 7: PUBLIC OUTREACH REGARDING FEES

Chair Portia Bramble began the discussion on notices to the public on fee increases and emphasized the need for public outreach regarding any proposed legislation to adjust fees. Leidolf stated that intern Jesus Zamudio would be working on a strategic plan that includes messaging about the value of the current two-dollar fee. Committee member Nick Schuller expressed frustration about the lack of progress and clarity on how the current two-dollar fee is used and emphasized the need for a clear vision and communication strategy before supporting the legislative change. Committee member Cynthia Ojeda suggested re-visiting the proposed legislation to ensure new committee members are informed and comfortable with it.

ITEM 8: MOBILE CERTIFIED FARMERS' MARKETS

Leidolf provided an update on the regulation process, mentioning that the registration fee routing was in progress and that regulations were being developed. Committee member Ojeda expressed concerns about the lack of oversight and the potential for mobile markets to operate without the same regulations as certified farmers' markets. Committee member Lancaster and member of the public Doug Hayden shared perspectives on the potential benefits of mobile markets, particularly in addressing food deserts. Committee member Cheyenne Erickson mentioned that Fresh Approach and the Ecology Center were involved in writing the legislation and suggested inviting staff from both organizations to speak at the next meeting.

ITEM 9: NEXT MEETING/AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 15, 2025, and will be held via Zoom.

Agenda items will include subcommittee memberships, public outreach regarding fees, an update on the database, a discussion on the lack of clear regulations for farmers selling juice directly to consumers at certified farmers' markets, discuss the requirement for farmers to obtain a temporary food facility (TFF) permit to sell value-added products, which has been a barrier for some farmers, a discussion on wholesale growers and the impact on state programs like WIC, suggesting that the issue of authorized representatives and the definition of a producer be addressed, and a discussion on the mobile certified farmers' markets.

ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m. by Chair Bramble.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Leidolf, Program Supervisor
Direct Marketing Program