



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)  
STANDARDIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Coalinga, CA  
Meeting Minutes  
March 30, 2010**

**Members Present**

Dennis Johnston  
John Eliot, Jr.  
Louis Pandol  
Kerry Whitson  
Mark Perez  
Marco DiMare  
Frank R. Nunes  
Ruben Arroyo

**CDFA Representatives**

Steve Patton  
Andrew Valero  
Rick Jensen  
Maria Hicks  
Mario Cortez  
Susan Shelton

**Interested Parties**

Dale Janzen, CTFA  
Alpha Kamara, Kern County  
Les Wright, Fresno County  
Carol Hafner, Fresno County  
Robbie Coelho, Kings County

**Members Absent**

Eric Lauritzen

**ITEM 1: ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. Roll was called, self introductions were made, and a quorum was established. Mr. John Eliot arrived at 10:15 a.m.

**ITEM 2: COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND TERMS**

Ms. Maria Hicks reported that there are currently six member vacancies including: two fresh fruit vacancies, three fresh vegetable vacancies, and one other commodity vacancy.

**ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 22, 2009 MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Mr. Mark Perez moved to approve the October 22, 2009 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Marco DiMare seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**ITEM 4: AUDIT UPDATE**

Mr. Steve Patton stated that last year the Standardization (STDZ) advisory committee voted to spend \$3,000 auditing firms that pay assessments to ensure the correct amounts are being paid. The audits are being completed by the Marketing branch, CDFA who is contracted by the Inspection and Compliance (I&C) branch. Five audits have now been completed; results for four audits have been received. Mr. Patton stated that the last audit completed was a lettuce producer and processor. They had

underpaid \$4,700 on head lettuce for a two year period, but they had overpaid on several bulk products. The total amount owed for fiscal year (FY) 2007/2008 and FY 2008/2009 to I&C is approximately \$3,000 plus penalties.

#### **ITEM 5: REGULATION UPDATES**

Mr. Patton stated that there has been a regulation change regarding sales by road side vendors. The regulations used to state if a vendor had over 200 pounds of one commodity, they would need proof of ownership; vendors must now show proof of ownership if they have over 25 pounds of one commodity. The new regulation also has given agricultural commissioners the authority to confiscate the product if the vendor can not show proof of ownership.

Mr. Patton stated that the certified farmers' market regulations are moving forward. The regulations would require each certified producer to give a receipt or a memorandum if they sell over 25 pounds of a product.

Mr. Patton stated that the Organic Program has promulgated regulations that will be reviewed by the California Organic Products advisory committee at their April 2010 meeting. The regulations specify the authority for spot inspections and how they will be carried out.

#### **ITEM 6: COUNTY CONTRACT APPROVAL**

Mr. Patton stated that there are now twelve county contracts instead of six, and the amount of money necessary to do the STDZ work has continued to increase. Mr. Patton stated that in the past, the counties would come to the STDZ meeting and propose the amount of money required to do the work. As a result of fewer revenues, the county contract has been capped. Mr. Patton stated that after the mid-year projections were reviewed in January, it was determined that the county contract can be maintained at the same amount as last year, \$795,000.

Mr. Ruben Arroyo stated that the hours of enforcement may have decreased due to cost of living adjustments and asked how many hours of enforcement decreased in the contracts. Mr. Patton stated that the decrease in hours of enforcement was reduced by approximately three percent.

#### **ITEM 7: BUDGET APPROVAL**

Ms. Susan Shelton provided the committee with a brief overview of the proposed budget for FY 2010/2011 including the proposed costs for personnel services, operating expenses, and overhead costs. Ms. Shelton stated that the projected costs for FY 2009/2010 and the proposed revenues and expenses for FY 2010/11 are aligned closely.

Mr. Patton iterated that the \$3,000 for the audits is included in the overhead charges. Ms. Shelton stated that under personnel services for FY 2010/2011, salaries have increased. There are no new hires being discussed at this time; staff is being allocated as they are actually used. These figures are for staff working full time, not including furloughs. Mr. Rick Jensen stated that the \$70,000 increase in the proposed FY 2010/2011 budget is offset in the direct charges within the Division.

**MOTION:** Mr. Arroyo moved to approve the proposed budget for FY 2010/2011. Mr. Kerry Whitson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **ITEM 8: COUNTY CONTRACT REVIEW**

Mr. Patton stated that since costs are increasing; the idea of reviewing the county contracts arose to ensure that spending is occurring in the correct places. A small working group reviewed the county contracts and inspection locations.

Mr. Kerry Whitson stated he is comfortable with current county contracts. Mr. John Eliot stated that a written explanation would be valuable. Discussion ensued regarding the county contract review. Mr. Patton stated that at the next budget meeting individual county proposals will be provided.

#### **ITEM 9: TOMATO FIELD PACK INFORMATION**

Mr. DiMare stated that there is an industry concern that field packing is becoming an educational process as to how to work within the lines of the law, in lieu of an enforcement mechanism. Discussion ensued regarding concerns that citations were being overlooked in order to bring people into compliance and food safety issues relating to tomato field packing.

Mr. Patton stated that another issue is food safety metrics and trying to incorporate food safety into STDZ. A request has been sent to our legal office asking their expertise in this matter.

Mr. Rick Jensen stated that there is language in the California Code of Regulations regarding enhanced traceability capability. Mr. Jensen stated that in the Sacramento Bee there was an article discussing creating a central distribution point for small farmers to bring and consolidate their product. This would be a mechanism to allow small farmers to bring in small lots of product and distribute it to be sold to facilities, including schools and hospitals. Mr. Jensen stated this could potentially have an impact on trace back capability.

Mr. Kerry Whitson stated that he is concerned that when consolidation occurs for small farmers, citrus that should be going for juice is being repacked in someone else's small facility. Mr. Whitson stated that rejects and culls are being used and that the fruit may end up in a consolidated small farmers' market.

Mr. Dennis Johnston stated he feels the single biggest risk is when people buy used cartons with another company's name on it and repack fruit into that used container. The issue of used containers should be revisited at some point. Mr. Mark Perez commented that there is usually a date stamp on the carton of tomatoes and that is for trace back capability. Mr. Patton stated that a grower and lot id number are required on tomatoes; discussion ensued regarding food safety issues.

#### **ITEM 10: CITRUS ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATION**

Mr. Patton stated that the California Citrus Advisory Committee proposed to change the way assessments are collected. Assessments are currently collected per container. The concern was that people were taking total weight and dividing it by forty pounds.

Mr. Jensen provided the committee with a brief presentation on the online monthly remittance forms stating that this process simplifies the calculations for the amount due. Mr. Jensen highlighted that the online form must still be printed out and mailed to CDFA. A mailer will be sent out to ensure awareness of the new system that will include: STDZ, Citrus, and Citrus Pest and Disease Program. It will only be necessary to submit one check; CDFA will distribute the funds appropriately.

#### **ITEM 11: OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business to discuss.

#### **ITEM 12: NEXT MEETING**

The next STDZ advisory committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 26, 2010 at Harris Ranch Inn in Coalinga, California.

#### **ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m. by Mr. Johnston, Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Steve Patton, Compliance Chief  
Standardization Program  
Inspection Services