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ALLIANCE OF PEST CONTROL DISTRICTS

22847 Road 140, Tulare, California

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE at 22847 Road 140, Tulare (APCD office):

Commissioners: John N. Fisher IV and John Corkins *(Kern County Citrus PCD – KCCPCD)*
Jim Zimmerman *(Southern Tulare County Citrus PCD – STCCPCD)*
Jay Gillette and James McKinney *(Central Valley PCD – CVPCD)*
Milo Gorden *(Tulare County PCD-TCPCD)*

Staff: Dr. Subhas Hajeri, Managing Director; Mia Neunzig, Administrative Manager; Dr. Saurabh Gautam, Field Manager/Entomologist; Dr. Dhiraj Gautam, Lab Manager/Safety Officer; Ron Carter, Field Supervisor; Hailey Jones, Administrative Assistant; and Jose Pena, Field Supervisor/QAL

Other: Jessica Leslie, APCD Grower Liaison (TCPCD & STCCPCD); and Christopher Greer, Assistant Tulare County Ag Commissioner/Sealer

ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM:

Commissioners: Jeff Slover (Alternate) *(Tulare County PCD-TCPCD)*

Other: Judy Zaninovich, APCD Grower Liaison (CVPCD & KCCPCD); Janet Hayhurst, Grower; Libby Ouellette, Fresno County Deputy Ag Commissioner/Sealer; Jennifer Willems, CDFA; Claudia Vasquez, Director of CPDPD, CDFA; Lisa Finke, Canine Detection Services; Keith Okasaki, CDFA; Dr. Melinda Klein, Chief Research Scientist, CRB; Dr. Sandipa Gautam, UC IPM; and Cerise Montanio, Kern County Agricultural Protection Deputy Director

Absent Commissioners: Steve Scarbrough *(Southern Tulare County Citrus PCD – STCCPCD)*

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fisher IV called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

All in attendance identified themselves.

OPEN SESSION:

Public Comments: None.

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting, December 17, 2025

It was moved by Commissioner Gillette, seconded by Commissioner Zimmerman, to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2025, as presented. The motion carried, on a roll call vote of six in favor and one abstention by Commissioner Corkins, who was absent from the meeting.

Departmental Operations:

Field and Lab activities: December 2025 and January 2026

Managing Director Dr. Subhas Hajeri presented data on off-season winter trapping, which commenced on January 6, 2026, and was scheduled to continue through the end of March 2026. As of February 10, a total of 2,545 traps had been serviced across three boundaries encompassing all districts. Field Supervisor Ron Carter

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explained that trap sites were selected based on risk factors, including proximity to packing houses, residential citrus, major highways and thoroughfares, and previous ACP detection sites. Traps remained in the field for three-weeks intervals.

Field Manager and Entomologist Dr. Saurabh Gautam reported on research conducted by APCD to evaluate the longevity of ACP DNA on traps under field conditions. ACP specimens were removed from traps and analyzed in the laboratory for CLas, with viable DNA successfully extracted for up to 6–8 weeks. Based on these findings, a three-week trap rotation schedule was implemented to increase trap density in the field. The study would be repeated during the summer months to assess the impact of weather conditions on results. Discussion followed.

Dr. Hajeri reported on non-citrus traps placed at multiple entry points to the San Joaquin Valley. Traps were placed at weigh-stations, truck stops, and along major transportation corridors. ACP continued to be found on traps coming from Southern California.

Between December 2025 and January 2026, a total of 5,338 traps were screened in the laboratory, with no ACP detected. Additionally, 930 samples were analyzed for several pathogens, including CLas (HLB), *Citrus yellow vein clearing virus* (CYVCV), and *Citrus tristeza virus* (CTV).

Dr. Hajeri provided a brief update on the use of commercially available ACP lures attached to traps. Preliminary observations indicated an increase in ACP detections on baited traps; however, additional testing and monitoring were needed to evaluate effectiveness. Discussion followed.

APCD Grower Liaison Updates

APCD Grower Liaison Jessica Leslie presented a graph summarizing total ACP detections in the southern San Joaquin Valley over time, noting that there had been no detections reported to date in 2026. She reviewed 2025 detections across Fresno, Tulare, and Kern Counties, including trap detections identified by both CDFA and APCD. Leslie noted that all trap detections prompt the same response from Grower Liaisons, regardless of whether they are classified as “official” or “unofficial”.

Leslie also presented a graph illustrating the percentage breakdown of detection types recorded since 2018, including residential, commercial, citrus processor, and “other” finds. An additional graph demonstrated a decline in ACP detections in Kern County following the implementation of coordinated treatments in commercial citrus.

Finally, Leslie reported on HLB detections in California, with a cumulative total of 10,461 positive trees identified statewide. She noted that this figure may underestimate the true number of infected trees, as current testing efforts were focused primarily on the outer edges of quarantine boundaries. Positive detections had been limited to Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura Counties.

Administrative Activities

APCD Performance to Budget for FY 2025-2026

Administrative Manager Mia Neunzig reviewed the report, noting that all expected district contributions had been received. To date, the account has earned approximately $48,000 in interest. Expenditures were roughly 50% of the budgeted amount, indicating that financial operations were on track.

Income and Expenses: December 2025 and January 2026

Neunzig reviewed the report.

Review and Ratify Warrant List: December 2025 and January 2026

Neunzig reviewed the report.

It was moved by Commissioner Corkins, seconded by Commissioner Gillette, to approve the Warrant Lists for December 2025 and January 2026, as presented. The motion carried on a roll call vote with all in attendance voting AYE.

Capital Expenditures: None.

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Reports:

Ag Commissioner Updates

Fresno County Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer Libby Ouellette reported that homeowners in the area where an ACP breeding colony had been detected on residential citrus in 2025- and who had previously declined treatment- had agreed to proceed with county administered treatments. No additional ACP detections in the area had been reported since October 2025. One of Fresno County's canine detection dogs was recovering from surgery, leaving only one operational dog temporarily.

Ouellette also reported that a CDFA employee identified an illegal budwood harvesting operation affecting Fresno and Tulare Counties, and investigative efforts were ongoing. Bulk citrus inspections in the area were continuing as scheduled.

Assistant Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer Christopher Greer expanded on Deputy Ouellette's report regarding the illegal budwood operation, commending the coordinated ongoing efforts between Tulare and Fresno Counties and CDFA.

Greer reported that Tulare County conducted approximately 2,900 bulk citrus load inspections during 2025, resulting in 73 Notices of Violation (NOVs). To date in 2026, roughly 435 inspections have been completed, with five NOVs issued. Most violations were attributed to repeat offenders, who were at risk of having their state compliance agreements revoked entirely. Abandoned and neglected orchard work being done by Tom Tucker was in full swing.

Kern County Agricultural Protection Deputy Director Cerise Montanio reported on the ACP year-round detection program, noting that 11 ACP detections occurred in 2025. Within the ACP Bulk Citrus program, all packing houses were audited and inspections were ongoing. There were no NOVs issued, and 22 new compliance agreements were established.

Since October 1, 2025, more than 2,300 phytosanitary certificates had been issued for export loads. The top export markets receiving fruit from Kern County included Korea, Japan, Australia, and Mexico.

CCM Report

None.

CDFA Updates

Jennifer Willems of CDFA reported that Fresno County experienced eight ACP detections across two detection sites, located on neighboring properties. Treatments had been completed at those sites.

Willems further reported that Kern County had one ACP detection in June 2025, followed by ten additional detections between September and November 2025. All associated treatments had been completed.

In Madera County, five separate ACP detections occurred across three sites, with treatments also completed.

Willems also reported that Ventura County had identified 126 HLB-positive trees, of which 123 have been removed to date.

UC IPM Report

UC IPM Advisor Dr. Sandipa Gautam reported that an Ethyl Formate field day was conducted at the UC ANR Parlier facility to facilitate engagement with Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) representatives. The purpose of the meeting was to demonstrate that Ethyl Formate fumigation is both effective and efficient, and that the industry is prepared to adopt this treatment option. While Ethyl Formate is currently registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with an established exposure limit of 100 parts per million (ppm), DPR had requested that the allowable limit be reduced to 3 ppm prior to approval for use in bulk citrus fumigation. Dr. Gautam noted that there is no data currently supporting the need to reduce the threshold to that level. The discussion resulted in DPR agreeing to develop a protocol, conduct additional studies, and further evaluate safe and effective ppm thresholds. Overall, the meeting was described as productive.

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Dr. Gautam also announced that an ACP/HLB workshop would be held on March 5, 2026, at the Lindcove facility. Dr. Subhas Hajeri would collaborate on the workshop, and APCD would sponsor lunch. The event would feature multiple speakers providing updates on a range of relevant topics.

A thrips field day and a mealy bug field day would occur sometime in April 2026. Registration emails would be sent soon.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Hajeri announced that APCD will host a booth at the upcoming CCM Spring Citrus Showcase in March.

Judy Zaninovich reminded attendees that the coordinated vector treatment program around the Lindcove field station would not take place this spring. An email notification would be distributed to growers in the area advising them of this change and recommending the inclusion of an aphid-effective material in their standard pre-bloom treatment applications. The fall vector treatment program would continue as scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fisher IV adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Signed by:
John Fisher
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John N. Fisher IV, Chairman

Mia Neunzig (Mar 24, 2026 10:06:40 PDT)

Mia Neunzig, Recording Secretary/Admin. Manager