ALLIANCE OF PEST CONTROL DISTRICTS
22847 Road 140, Tulare, California

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024

MINUTES

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

Commissioners: John N. Fisher IV and John Corkins *(Kern County Citrus PCD – KCCPCD)*
Jim Zimmerman and Steve Scarbrough *(Southern Tulare County Citrus PCD-STCCPCD)*
James McKinney and Jay Gillette *(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; Dr. Dhiraj Gautam, Lab Manager; Ron Carter, Field Supervisor; and Hailey Jones, Administrative Assistant

Other: Tom Tucker, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer Tulare County; Judy Zaninovich, Kern ACP/HLB Grower Liaison; Jessica Leslie, Tulare County Grower Liaison; Dr. Sandipa Gautam, Cooperative Extension Area Citrus IPM Advisor; Lisa Finke, Canine Detection Services CEO; and Sam Lok, Pinnacle Technology Owner

ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM:
Commissioners: None.

Other: Chris Romero, Kern County Department of Agriculture and Measurement Standards

Absent Commissioners: Jeff Steen (*Tulare County PCD – TCPCD)*

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, October 30, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Corkins, seconded by Commissioner Gillette, to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 30, 2024, as presented. The motion carried, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Review and Approve Budget Revision for FY 2024-2025; Resolution 2024-05

Administrative Manager Mia Neunzig reviewed the proposed budget revisions.

It was moved by Commissioner Scarbrough, seconded by Commissioner McKinney, to approve Resolution 2024-05 as presented. The motion carried on a roll call vote, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Reports:

Ag Commissioner Updates

Tulare County Ag Commissioner/Sealer Tom Tucker reported that there were low numbers of compliance agreement violations regarding bulk citrus inspections. Tucker reported a significant improvement in violation rates in this matter. In total, during the 2024 year, out of 3,000 inspections, there was only a 2.1% violation rate. Tucker then stated that more efforts were being put into record trace back, with special attention paid to fruit coming from south of the Grapevine. Tucker moved on to report that the Ag Commissioner's office was working with county counsel to be able to pursue owners of abandoned citrus and encourage them to bulldoze. Tucker then announced that the Glassy Wing Sharpshooter (GWSS) season had been completed. Trapping continued inside nurseries.

Managing Director, Dr. Subhas Hajeri asked if area-wide trapping locations for the GWSS program had been reduced to locations in the immediate vicinity of grapes.

Kern County Grower Liaison Judy Zaninovich confirmed that the budget for the GWSS program has remained consistent for many years. However, she explained that the USDA has needed to allocate a larger portion of that budget for overhead costs, as well as the rising expenses of labor and materials. This shift has led to budget constraints on the trapping program and area-wide treatments.

Zaninovich noted that traps are only set in citrus groves if they are located within a quarter mile of grapevines. There have been discussions about reducing the trapping season to run from May to October, but this change has not yet been implemented.

Tucker finished his report by announcing that everyone who was involved with the previous Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) find at the Lindsay packing house had received a Notice of Violation (NOV), and all the fruit has been destroyed.

Chris Romero from the Kern County Department of Agriculture and Measurement Standards reported via Zoom that there were ten ACP detections in Kern County for the year 2024. The state is conducting delimitation trapping, which will be handed over to the county in January. Parasitic wasps, *Tamarixia radiata*, have been released near the detection locations. Fortunately, Huanglongbing (HLB) has not been detected in Kern County. Year-round trapping efforts will continue.

Romero also shared that inspections for the work plan related to citrus exports have begun, targeting Australia, New Zealand, Chile, China, Vietnam, and Korea.

The bulk citrus contract period began in October 2024 and will continue through September 2025. So far, one grower compliance agreement, six transport agreements, and four farm labor contractor agreements have been issued. Romero indicated that inspections are being conducted for growers, transporters, and farm labor contractors. In total, 50 transporter inspections were carried out over a two-month period, resulting in only two Notices of Violation (NOV) issued due to paperwork errors.

CPDPC Grower Liaison Updates

Tulare County Grower Liaison Jessica Leslie reported that there had been a total of five ACP detections in 2024. Four out of five detections were at the same facility in the Lindcove/Woodlake area. Leslie then announced that the APCD and Tulare County Ag department worked together to treat two separate locations that had 25+ trees. There were two rounds of parasitic wasps released in the area, one before residential treatments took place and once again afterward.

Kern County Grower Liaison Judy Zaninovich reported that year to date, there have been ten ACP detections in Kern. The most recent detection was at a residence in Oildale, with as many as 40+ live adult ACPs. The tree had been moved from an HLB Quarantine area in Los Angeles. All ACP and plant samples were tested for CLas by the CDFA and produced negative results. The tree had since been treated and destroyed. All residences near the detection had also been treated.

Zaninovich went on to mention that CDFA staff located another young citrus tree in west Bakersfield with a brown tag attached, which signifies that the tree came from an HLB quarantine area. There were no ACPs found on the tree, but it does show that people are illegally bringing trees into the area.

Zaninovich reviewed graphs depicting ACP detection levels over the years. She announced that no HLB has been found in the San Joaquin Valley. The total number of HLB-positive trees found in California reached 9,309 as of December 16, 2024. The total number of CLas-positive ACP samples was 868.

Zaninovich stated that she would be working closely with Dr. Sandipa Gautam to create standard operating procedures for organic packing houses.

CDFA Updates

None.

UC IPM Report

Cooperative Extension Area Citrus IPM Advisor Dr. Sandipa Gautam introduced herself. She gave background on different research trials focused on citrus pests such as mealy bugs, red scales, thrips, aphids, and mites. Gautam reviewed the outreach workshops that took place in 2024.

Gautam spoke of the rising concern about the mealy bug. She stated that she would be holding a field day in May to spread awareness and educate others about the proper treatment of mealy bugs.

Chairman John Fisher asked what was being done to give growers new tools or options to treat mealy bugs.

Gautam answered by stating that research is being done to understand what products work best for mealy bugs. She stated that using products that are safer on the mealy bugs natural enemies (lacewings, parasitic wasps, etc.) would show results. She suggested choosing a product that would work against thrips and mealy bugs and making a targeted application around petal fall time, followed by a second application aimed at scales and mealy bugs during the early summer months.

CCM Updates

Commissioner Milo Gorden gave an update for CCM. Gorden stated that a shipment of sweet oranges, coming from China, was on its way to the United States. CCM would continue to monitor that activity. There had also been applications for import from Botswana and Hawaii.

Departmental Operations

Field Activities

Dr. Subhas Hajeri reviewed trapping activity for the 2024 spring and fall seasons. Efficiency increased, which was credited to the implementation of iPads in the fall season and the addition of another trapper.

Hajeri and field supervisor Ron Carter discussed winter trapping. Carter stated that trap sites were focused on common bulk citrus transportation highways, packing houses, and juice plants. Trap sites were also added near the Tejon Pass outlet mall.

Field Manager Dr. Saurabh Gautam reviewed multi-pest inspection activities. During the fall 2024 season, 64 blocks were visited, 6,888 trees were inspected, 45 plant samples were taken, and 9 insect samples were collected. All samples were tested negative in the lab for CLas. Multi-pest inspectors worked alongside Lisa Finke and her team of canine detection dogs.

Lab Activities

Hajeri reviewed the field day that APCD staff attended in Ventura. He reviewed the trap screening process and stated that APCD was sharing data with CDFA and USDA.

Lab Manager, Dr. Dhiraj Gautam reviewed whitefly and GWSS data collected from trap screening.

Gautam reviewed a study comparing traps containing three grams of glue versus six grams of glue.

Hajeri reviewed a study comparing traps placed on a tree versus on a bamboo stick.

Gautam discussed the identification methods of multiple citrus pests that are known to spread disease.

Hajeri went on to discuss samples that were submitted or collected by APCD from the Reedley area, Tulare area, and near LREC. The varieties affected were lemons on Carrizo and mandarins on C-35. Samples were

submitted to an outside lab, EvolveGenomix, where it was determined to be caused by several different types of fungi. The main symptom that was observed was bud union necrosis.

Hajeri moved on to discuss outreach efforts. He announced that APCD would be participating in the 2025 CCM Citrus Spring Showcase.

He then stated that APCD was updating maps to correspond with maps shared by the Tulare County Ag Commissioners office.

Hajeri gave an update on the CPDPC meeting that took place in Santa Clarita, California.

Administrative Activities

Income and Expense Report: August and September 2024

Administrative Manager Mia Neunzig reviewed the report.

Review and Ratify Warrant List: August and September 2024

Neunzig reviewed the report.

It was moved by Commissioner Gorden, seconded by Commissioner Gillette, to approve the warrant list for August and September 2024, as presented. The motion carried, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Review Performance to Budget

Neunzig reviewed the report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hajeri announced that CCM would be offering a webinar later this week for anyone interested in attending to learn more about the Marketing Assistance Specialty Crop Program.

Hajeri then announced that APCD was working on an MOU with CDFA and USDA to share information on the Citrus Yellow Vein Clearing Virus (CYVCV)..

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fisher IV adjourned the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

John N. Fisher IV, Chairman

Mia Neunzig, Recording Secretary/Admin. Manager