

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

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 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; Hailey Jones, Administrative Assistant; and Jose Pena, Field Operations Assistant

Other: Judy Zaninovich, Kern ACP/HLB Grower Liaison; and Chris Greer, Assistant Commissioner, Tulare County Ag.

ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM:

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

Other: Jennifer Willem, CDFA; Cerise Montanio, Deputy Director, Agricultural Protection, Kern County Ag; Jessica Leslie, Southern Tulare County Grower Liaison; Libby Ouellette, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer Fresno County; Curtis Pate, Imperial County PCD; and Lisa Finke, Canine Detection Services

Absent Commissioners: None.

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, August 21, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Corkins, seconded by Commissioner Scarbrough, to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 21, 2024, as presented. The motion carried on a roll call vote, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Reports:

Ag Commissioner Updates

Tulare County Agricultural Assistant Commissioner Chris Greer announced that pesticide permit renewals would begin on November 4th. He informed those present about an update regarding school notification requirements related to pesticide spraying within a quarter-mile radius of school grounds. Greer explained that

if only a portion of an orchard falls within this quarter-mile radius, that portion must be registered as a "separate site," distinct from the entire block. The revision, which includes private and independent schools that were not part of the original school notification, is set to take effect on or before December 31, 2026.

Fresno County Ag Deputy Commissioner Libby Ouellette appeared via Zoom and gave an update on the bulk citrus program. She noted only two trucks have been found without tarps. Training took place for staff who will be conducting the bulk citrus transporter inspections. Ouellette reported that canine HLB detection dogs found two packages containing HLB-infected plant material. Ouellette stated that to date, ACP detection levels have been low in Fresno County.

Kern County Agricultural Deputy Director Cerise Montanio reported via Zoom that within Kern County there had been four new detections of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) in the first two weeks of October. All detections occurred in residential areas. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) was currently engaging in treatments and would begin delimitation efforts over the next four weeks. After this period, the county will take over monthly servicing for these locations for the following 11 months.

Currently, the total ACP detection count in Kern for 2024 stands at six, and there have been no detections of Huanglongbing (HLB). Additionally, Montanio mentioned that the county had started conducting inspections for exports, primarily of lemons to Australia and New Zealand. Phosphine treatments are being implemented for oranges that are being exported. The county is also carrying out bulk citrus inspections at packing facilities, grower locations, and among transporters.

Montanio reported that the CDFA ACP detection contract was currently in the process of being renewed. However, the CDFA has reduced the ACP detection contract by 15% compared to last year's agreement. Despite this reduction, Montanio assured the board that they are still committed to providing the same level of dedication as in previous years.

Dr. Subhas Hajeri inquired whether the focus is solely on residential properties or if commercial citrus is included. Montanio clarified that Kern County focuses only on residential trapping.

CPDPC Grower Liaison Updates

Kern County grower liaison Judy Zaninovich began by highlighting the six detections of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) in Kern County. Four of these detections were discovered in residential traps in the past week. So far this year, the total number of finds in the southern San Joaquin Valley amounts to 11 ACP, with four of these located near commercial citrus orchards.

Tulare County grower liaison Jessica Leslie stated that the four ACP detections in Tulare County were all found at two packing facilities: one in Lindsay and the other in Lemon Cove. Both facilities had commercial citrus within 800 meters, all growers cooperated in treating. The Lemon Cove packing house that had three of the four finds had two separate 25+ "commercial yards" within 400 meters. APCD handled and facilitated the treatment of these properties with Leslie's help. CDFA treated nearby residences.

Greer reported the efforts put forth by the Tulare County Ag Commissioner's office. He stated that the citrus shipment at the Lindsay packing house originated from Ventura. The packing house was not in compliance with standards and regulations. All the fruit had to be disposed of. Greer then explained that the Lemon Cove packing house was using an alternative mitigation method that was ultimately not effective. Both packing houses have continued to work with the Ag Commissioners office.

Zaninovich continued going into detail of ACP detections in Kern County. There was one commercial detection near Mettler, all growers treated. She then moved on to discuss HLB stats throughout the state.

Commissioner John Corkins raised the question, what percentage of fruit is coming into the valley from southern California? Greer answered by saying there were quite a few large local growers that shipped fruit from HLB areas. Greer stated this was allowable if the growers complied with two mitigation methods.

Discussion ensued regarding ACP and the threat it poses. Hajeri showed pictures taken in Ventura County at a conventionally maintained citrus block that neighbored an organic block. The photos displayed ACP nymph infestation. Conversation continued on the topic.

CDFA Updates

Jennifer Willem of CDFA reported that a total of 82 HLB-positive trees have been detected in Ventura. All trees had been removed, apart from one tree that was still pending removal.

UC IPM Report

None.

CCM Updates

None.

Departmental Operations

Field Activities

Field supervisor Ron Carter gave an update on trapping activities for the Fall of 2024. Hajeri stated the traps have a two-week field interval, and traps are screened within a week of coming in from the field. Carter then went on to discuss the continuation of trapping during the off-season, in the winter and summer months. Trapping locations would be concentrated on highways, packing houses, and juice plants. Zaninovich mentioned the Tejon outlets as a potential trap site, and the board agreed.

Dr. Saurabh Gautam gave an update on multi-pest inspection activities. The inspection team had been working with Lisa Finke and was visiting citrus blocks with the canine detection team.

Lab Activities

Dr. Dhiraj Gautam gave an update on lab and trap screening activities. None of the ACP samples collected in Ventura County tested positive for C-las.

Dr. Hajeri discussed samples submitted from a Sanger grower for testing. All symptomatic tree samples tested positive for CTV. They were planted on sour orange rootstock.

Administrative Activities

Income and Expense Report: August and September 2024

Administrative Manager Neunzig reviewed the report. She explained new line items and outreach efforts. Discussion ensued about potential outreach avenues.

Review and Ratify Warrant List: August and September 2024

Neunzig reviewed the report.

It was moved by Commissioner Gorden, seconded by Commissioner Steen, to approve the August and September 2024 warrant list, as presented. The motion carried on a roll call vote, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Review Performance to Budget

Neunzig reviewed the report.

Review and Approve Expansion of Health Insurance Coverage

Neunzig presented a memo requesting the expansion of agency-provided health insurance to cover employee families.

It was moved by Commissioner Steen, seconded by Commissioner Scarbrough to approve the expansion of health insurance coverage. The motion carried on a roll call vote, with all in attendance voting AYE.

Capital Expenditures

Roof Repair

Dr. Dhiraj Gautam reviewed additional quotes and plans for roof repair.

It was moved by Commissioner Zimmerman, seconded by Commissioner Gillette, to move forward with APCD's recommendation for roof repairs. The motion carried on a role call vote, with all in attendance voting AYE.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lisa Finke of Canine Detection Services announced that Timber, one of the dogs that had been working with APCD, passed away the previous week. She then announced that USDA had provided funds in the current grant she holds to train two new dogs. They were in the process of training a chocolate labrador and black labrador.

Dr. Hajeri announced the vacancies opened on the CDPDC board. It was determined that Commissioner Jay Gillette and Commissioner Jeff Steen would be nominated for those seats.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fisher IV adjourned the meeting at 2:36 p.m.



John N. Fisher IV, Chairman



Mia Neunzig, Recording Secretary/Admin.
Manager