

California Walnut Board

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GRADES & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 14, 2013

The California Walnut Board Grades & Standards Committee held a meeting on Thursday, February 14, 2013, at the Silverado Resort in Napa, CA. Committee Chairperson Bill Carriere called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Ms. Dana Steindorf called the roll and established a quorum. The following Committee members were present:

Bill Carriere, Chairperson
Chuck Crain
Sam Keiper (non-voting)
Frank Guerra
Gus Mariani
Pete Turner

Also present were Spencer Walse of USDA; Jeremiah Szabo, Thomas Jones and Jon Kimble of DFA; Dr. Linda Harris of UC Davis; Andrea Ricci of USDA/AMS; Mr. Duane Lindsay, CWC Technical Consultant; and CWB staff members Carl Eidsath, Abhi Kulkarni, Dana Steindorf and Heather Donoho.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the Grades & Standards meeting held on December 18, 2012. Mr. Crain made a motion to approve the minutes as mailed. Mr. Guerra seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the Review UNECE Inshell Explanatory Brochure. Mr. Eidsath distributed a copy of the draft brochure and a copy of the layout that was approved for draft status of the walnut inshell specifications. He indicated that he has received photos of defects from DFA; these photos will be used to represent to the working group in Geneva the defects in inshell walnuts. The draft is due to Tony Souza and Dorian LaFond at USDA on April 1, 2013; it will be presented to the working group at the UNECE in June. Mr. Turner asked how long it will take for approval from the UNECE working group; Mr. Lindsay stated that it could take as long as two to three years for final approval.

Chairperson Carriere would like the Committee to have time to review the draft brochure. Mr. Eidsath will review the photos with Mr. Duane Lindsay and send them to the Committee electronically; the Committee can meet via teleconference within a few weeks to give their comments and approval.

The next agenda item was review of two fumigation projects for the current budget year. Dr. Walse first presented some results from his on-going project to find a mixture of sulfuryl

fluoride and propylene oxide (SF/PPO) that provides the best lethal dose of 99% on all of the insect pests (less the dried fruit beetle). The upcoming year will study cooler temps, scaling and they will conduct confirmatory trials. Dr. Walse also discussed his high temperature CO₂ treatment for inshell, an organic option for treatment of codling moth for exports. Initial testing shows that the diapausing codling moth do not die right away; must be held approximately 21 days to see if they break diapause. The plan for the upcoming year is to map the effect of treatment on quality (high temperature is necessary) and to continue confirmatory trials.

Dr. Walse continued with discussion of his TASC phosphine project (agenda item F). For this project, they have gone through every life stage of all of the pests with Vaporphos and Ecofume. Ecofume is 2% CO₂, so it is more cost prohibitive. For the upcoming year, they plan to mix the product with physiological gases to study efficacy.

Mr. Crain made a motion to approve year three of Dr. Walse's SF/PPO project at \$42,542. Mr. Guerra seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

After further discussion of the organic disinfestation project, the Committee decided to wait for more feedback from organic handlers on the demand for this alternative.

Chairperson Carriere asked Mr. Jeremiah Szabo to discuss the next agenda item, review and discuss huller/dehydrator GMP inspections. Mr. Szabo distributed a summary review the activities of the past season for the walnut huller food safety program. He indicated that the program began in July with three preliminary meetings; the idea was to get some input as to how some of the standards that center around Good Manufacturing Practices and food safety principles would be received and how they relate to the industry. Based on that information, DFA did develop a walnut huller and dryer food safety and GMP manual. They had about 210 attendees at the three educational meetings they held throughout the state. Overall, DFA conducted 22 on-site assessments through their voluntary huller inspection service last year. Mr. Szabo stated that through these on-site inspections, they discovered some areas for improvement and made recommendations to the hullers.

The Committee discussed the next steps and then authorized CWB staff to continue working with DFA on the voluntary huller inspection program through the end of the year using remaining funds (already approved); the funds will be used to conduct more informational meetings prior to the start of the next crop year. The Committee also directed staff that the first 50 hullers who sign up for inspection will have their fees covered if funds remain. The Committee directed DFA to submit a proposal to extend their contract to continue the huller education/inspection project up to \$20,000 through the end of year.

Chairperson Carriere asked Mr. Eidsath to comment on the next agenda item, review and comment on results of 3rd year Salmonella and 2nd year E. coli 0157:H7 survey. Mr. Eidsath stated that there were 998 samples taken this year; we had one positive inoculation isolation of salmonella and no positives for 0157:H7. He will give a further update at the Board meeting the following day.

Mr. Eidsath continued with the next item, establish recommendation for frequency of Grades & Standards Committee meetings. He stated that the meetings are currently being scheduled to coincide with the Board's three annual meetings. He would like the Committee's input on their preferences for scheduling; also, due to the number of items that are on the agendas, it might be in the best interest of the Committee to have more time for their meetings rather than trying to squeeze a committee meeting into the schedule of the Fall, Winter or Spring meeting. The Committee agreed that having fewer meetings, but longer meetings would be better.

Chairperson Carriere moved to the next agenda item, establish recommendation for 2013/14 Grades & Standards budget. Mr. Eidsath distributed a list of projects that are proposed to continue into the 2013/14 year along with potential new projects. He is recommending that the Grades & Standards Committee approve a budget of \$750,000 for the 2013/14 marketing year, the same as the current year.

Mr. Turner made a motion to recommend a Grades & Standards budget of \$750,000 to the Budget & Personnel Committee for the 2013/14 marketing year. Mr. Crain seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Under other business, Dr. Linda Harris talked about the risk assessment model that the Committee funded and is under way right now; she is in need of some industry expert opinion. She would like to schedule a webinar to have industry members log in and look at the data and express opinions. Mr. Eidsath will distribute the information about the webinar to the industry once it has been scheduled.

The time and place of the next meeting will be at the discretion of the chair. There was no need for an Executive Session. Hearing no further business, Chairperson Carriere adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.