

## California Walnut Board

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## CALIFORNIA WALNUT COMMISSION

### INTRA INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, December 4, 2012

The California Walnut Commission Intra Industry Communications Committee met on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 at the CWB/CWC offices in Folsom, CA. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Chairperson David Keyawa. Ms. Steindorf called the roll and the following committee members were present:

David Keyawa, Chairperson  
Bert Crane  
Jonathan Graves  
Todd Ramos

Ms. Steindorf informed Chairperson Keyawa that a quorum was present. Committee members Mat Conant, Ray Perez and Nacho Martin were absent. Also in attendance were grower/members Lisa Warner and Kay Short and CWC staff members Dennis Balint, Jennifer Olmstead, Carl Eidsath, Julie Krueger, Jennifer Williams and Dana Steindorf.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the previous Intra Industry Communications Committee meeting on December 15, 2011. Mr. Ramos made a motion to approve those minutes as mailed, Mr. Graves seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Chairperson Keyawa asked Ms. Jennifer Olmstead to proceed with the next agenda item, Other Methods of Communication. Ms. Olmstead stated that she would start with the current methods of communications that the CWB/CWC has with the industry. Ms. Jennifer Williams is managing the publication of the newsletter for the marketing team. Ms. Williams commented that the marketing team has been working to make the newsletter as relevant as possible on issues that interest growers and handlers, including articles on pesticide management and food safety as well as marketing activities and upcoming meetings and events. The current newsletter issue being developed will group articles by topic – all the health information in one location, harvest updates in one location, etc.

Ms. Williams stated that the first issue of the e-newsletter was released a few weeks ago. This is a method of communication that will be used to update the industry more frequently than the print newsletter. Ms. Olmstead commented that the e-newsletter is formatted with teaser articles that direct the reader to our website. She indicated that a postcard was handed out at all the grower meetings last year for sign-up for the e-newsletter and there are postcards left over that will be handed out this year as well. Another idea for the newsletter is to feature the committees of the Board and Commission; an interview will be conducted with the committee chair which will be included in an article about the committee's activities.

Ms. Olmstead stated that the website is a great source of information for our industry members. In September, the website was redesigned; the content is still basically the same, it has just been organized to be more user-friendly. The Committee discussed the Industry Resources section of the website; suggestions included adding a tab for "links", separate tabs for growers and handlers, adding more information for the Board and Commission regarding assessments (where the dollars go) and adding a link for recommending the e-newsletter to friends.

Chairperson Keyawa then moved to the next agenda item, future referendums. Mr. Balint commented that in 2013, we have Board and Commission elections and in 2014, we have the mandatory continuation referendum for the California Walnut Board. Chances are, we are not going to have the Commission referendum to raise the assessment cap until late 2014 or early 2015. Mr. Balint discussed the grower list collection that will begin in just a few days; the lists are collected from the handlers for use in election, newsletter, referendum and other mailings. The growers list is maintained by our third-party CPA firm, Gilbert Associates. This year, we have permission from both CDFR and USDA/AMS to ask for phone numbers and email addresses for the growers (in addition to the usual address and inshell pounds delivered) in order to conduct special surveys.

Ms. Olmstead moved to the next item, Grower Survey. She indicated that we want to get a sense of how much growers know about the activities that we do and where there are deficiencies in knowledge. The grower phone numbers and/or email addresses that are collected from handlers will be used to do a quantitative survey. Mr. Balint asked the Committee to consider using up to \$30,000 from the CWC miscellaneous opportunities fund to conduct the grower survey.

Mr. Crane made a motion to approve the use of up to \$30,000 from the miscellaneous opportunities fund to conduct a grower survey to determine ways to improve communication. Mr. Graves seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Olmstead then moved on to the 2013 Grower Meeting Presentation Objectives. She stated that 2012 focused heavily on food safety and direct sales; this year the goal is to take a more positive tone with the presentation. She showed the Committee several rough draft slides showing activities and achievements of the Board and Commission over the past several decades, including health and production research. The Committee agreed that the slides need more impact with graphics and logos and that the theme should be "your dollars at work." They discussed how best to demonstrate the "dollars at work" concept; they decided the presentation should include Farmgate values, and focus on production research, health research, and market development. Mr. Crane also suggested that the CWB staff introduce any Board or Commission members who are present at each of the grower meetings or show a slide with the names of the district members.

Under other business, Mr. Eidsath commented on a recent recall on inshell bleached walnuts in Canada (Compass Foods). The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) claims to have isolated salmonella from a retail store. He stated that there has been no contact between Compass and the handler from whom the walnuts were purchased, nor has there been any direct contact between CFIA and FDA. A handler bulletin was sent out this past Friday regarding the recall with the information we know, which is not much at this point. Mr. Eidsath will keep the industry informed as information becomes available.

There was no further business to discuss. The time and place of the next meeting will be determined at a later date. No closed session was necessary. The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Keyawa at 12:20 p.m.