

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
PRODUCTION RESEARCH COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

September 13, 2024

A meeting of the Production Research Committee (PRC) of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) was held on Friday, September 13, 2024, with the following people participating:

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING:

Danny Klittich, Chair
Jim Davis
Allisen Carmichael
Consuelo Fernandez
Daryn Miller
Ryan Rochefort

CAC STAFF PARTICIPATING:

April Aymami
Ken Melban

OFFICIALLY PARTICIPATING:

Dr. Tim Spann, Spann Ag Research & Consulting

GUESTS PARTICIPATING:

Victor Araiza
John Berns

CALL TO ORDER

Danny Klittich, Production Research Committee (PRC) Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with a quorum present.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2024 PRODUCTION RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

MOTION

To approve the minutes of the July 25, 2024 Production Research Committee meeting.

(Davis/Rochefort) MSC Unanimous

Motion 24-9-13-1

RESEARCH PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Spann updated the Committee on the situation surrounding the registration of Rely herbicide (glufosinate-ammonium) and the decision by BASF to discontinue manufacturing the product. Dr. Spann indicated that CAC had already had discussions with the California Department of Pesticide Regulation and had received a tentative ok to pursue a section 24(c) Special Local Needs registration for a generic glufosinate-ammonium herbicide. CAC has been reaching out to manufacturers of glufosinate-ammonium herbicides and will submit the 24(c) registration packet as soon as a supportive manufacturer can be found.

Dr. Spann then updated the Committee on a Zoom meeting that was held between CAC, Drs. Mark Hoddle and Martin Aluja, and Ramon Paz to discuss potential research in Mexico to collect data to document the non-host status of GEM and Lamb Hass varieties to Mexican fruit fly. Dr. Aluja is willing to work with CAC on this project and his methodology for this type of work is well accepted by USDA. Ramon Paz is working to find and secure cooperating growers who have trees of GEM and Lamb Hass.

Finally, Dr. Spann updated the Committee on discussions that CAC has been having with Dr. Mark Hoddle regarding Dr. Hoddle and his wife returning to Guatemala and other Central and South American countries that are likely to be seeking access to the U.S. market to determine what avocado pests exist in those countries and what threat they pose to U.S. avocado production. Additionally, recent information has indicated that what was previously identified as *Stenoma catenifer*, the avocado seed moth, may be a group of closely related *Stenoma* species across Central and South America and it is unknown if they behave similarly or if their original pheromone that was developed is attractive to all the different species. This is something else that Dr. Hoddle can work on while embedded in these countries.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Finalize list of research and grower education priorities

Danny Klittich asked the Committee if there were any further changes to the research priorities document that had been circulated among the Committee. Victor Araiza mentioned that some work looking at nitrogen deficiency and whether nitrogen requirements are equal across varieties may be worthwhile as this was something they had recently identified in work they are doing with Dr. Ali Montazar. The Committee agreed and directed Dr. Spann to draft some language and add this as Item 5.b. on the list.

Discussion then ensued about the next steps and how to distribute the document to the research community. It was agreed that the list should be circulated as widely as possible, not only to California and the U.S., but internationally as well. It was decided that researchers would be asked to submit a one-page concept proposal by the end of the year for the Committee to review at a meeting in January 2025. High ranking concept proposal authors would then be invited to a future Committee meeting (targeted for late February 2025) to discuss their ideas prior to development of a full proposal.

B. Open discussion of new or old business from PRC members

Jim Davis mentioned that he had recently learned about a new initiative targeting large-scale agricultural enterprises (e.g., dairies) to turn their waste products into fertilizers. Would there be any potential for orchard crops like avocados to produce biochar from pruning waste? Dr. Spann mentioned that Johan Six at UC Davis had worked on a project some years ago with a walnut grower in Winters, CA, to produce biochar from walnut shells and hulls and incorporate it back into the orchard.

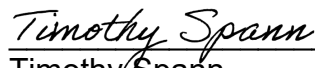
Daryn Miller discussed the Hass Avocado Board sustainability project and that growers were needed for interviews. Several Committee members said they would be interested, and Ken Melban agreed to send them the information on the program.

Danny Klittich mentioned a proposal that he had received from Mary Lu Arpaia and shared via email with the Committee to test artificial pollination strategies on avocados to see if they improve yield. There was general agreement from the Committee that this was an interesting proposal and worth discussing. The Committee agreed to schedule a follow up meeting to review this proposal and make a recommendation to the CAC Board for consideration at their November meeting.

ADJOURN MEETING

Danny Klittich, Production Research Committee (PRC) Chairman, adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy Spann

EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES

EXHIBIT A September 13, 2024 Production Research Committee AB 2720 Roll Call
Vote Tally Summary

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION****Production Research Committee****AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary***To be attached to the Meeting Minutes*

Meeting Name: <i>California Avocado Commission Production Research Committee Meeting</i>	Meeting Location: <i>Hybrid In-person – Ventura County Cooperative Extension Office, Ventura Online – Zoom</i>	Meeting Date: <i>September 13, 2024</i>
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Attendees Who Voted	<u>MOTION</u> <u>24-9-13-1</u>
Danny Klittich, Chair	<i>Did not vote</i>
Jim Davis	<i>Yea</i>
Allisen Carmichael	<i>Yea</i>
Consuelo Fernandez	<i>Yea</i>
Daryn Miller	<i>Yea</i>
Ryan Rochefort	<i>Yea</i>
<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Unanimous</i>