

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday –November 4, 2024

UC Cooperative Extension Auditorium, 2156 Sierra Way, San Luis Obispo 93401

Members and Alternates Present: Tom Ikeda (Zoom), Sarah Kramer, Dan Rodrigues, Paul Clark, Lisen Bonnier, Matt Merrill (Zoom), Ron Harben (Zoom), Jennifer Szeliga

Staff Present: Marc Lea and Ian Landreth – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture, Chris Greer – UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

Absent Members: Craig Pritchard, Jerry Diefenderfer, Randy Diffenbaugh, Daniel Jones, Dylan Theobald, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Claire Wineman, Jeff McKee

Guests Present: Patricia Wilmore (via Zoom)

Call to Order, introductions, quorum determination.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rodrigues at 5:05 p.m. There were not enough members present to have a quorum.

I. Open Comment

Members wishing to address the ALAB on matters other than the scheduled items may do so at this time, when recognized by the Chairman.

Dan Rodrigues opened public comment.

Dan Rodrigues closed public comment.

II. Previous Minutes – July 2024

There were not enough members present to have a quorum. No motions were made.

III. ALAB Governance Membership Updates

Marc Lea explained that representative appointments for Supervisorial Districts 1, 3, and 5 terms are due to expire on January 1, 2025. Supervisor Peschong contacted the Ag Department and indicated he was most likely going to be appointing a new representative for District 1. Lea reminded Tom Ikeda that there are no limits on the number of terms that he can serve as the District 3 representative. District 5 will now be held by Supervisor Heather Moreno. Lea mentioned Moreno most likely will be selecting a new representative unless Jerry Diefenderfer wishes to continue serving if asked. The next representative seat to expire is not until August 2026. The Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD is still looking for a representative.

IV. Updates from Ag Department Staff:

Marc Lea provided an overview of the annual crop report process. It was explained that typically the department is finished by July but with the Board of Supervisors only meeting twice a month, now

it makes getting on the agenda tricky since the schedule is fairly packed each meeting. A copy of the 2023 Crop Report was provided to those present at the meeting.

Paul Clark recounted his attendance to the Central Coast Economic forum last Friday. Clark spoke to an economist that presented and informed members of the agriculture community attending the forum that they had contributed by responding to crop surveys for the past two years.

Marc Lea informed the ALAB that the department has already started working on the 2024 Crop Report. Lea explained that the responses to crop surveys are confidential and not shared with the public. Two sectors that need more data and more responses are cane berries and cattle.

Patricia Wilmore stated that the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance received a grant to gather more data about the wine industry. As part of that they are looking at the economic impact of all aspects of the winegrape industry. The Alliance has hired Beacon Economics to do that part of the analysis.

Pesticide Regulatory Front. Marc Lea recounted to the ALAB on the many changes that took effect in January 2024. There are still a few more pesticide regulations that will be coming in January 2025, but it does not appear that they will significantly impact the agricultural industry. Changes on the Neonicotinoids that went into effect at the beginning of this year pertain to residential use and not agriculture. The same goes for Chlorophacinone changes that pertain to non-agricultural wildlife habitat settings and residential uses.

Paul Clark asked about the wildlife setting in terms of grazing land. It may be one of those scenarios where the labels must be reviewed closely to ensure that the appropriate setting (e.g. rangeland, pasture, etc.) is listed on the label. It should not impact rangeland as Lea understands it because that is considered production agriculture.

The Statewide Pesticide Notification program. Marc Lea stated that when there is an investigation, pesticide sampling, drift sampling, all that information goes to the Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR) lab. If there are questions about the department's enforcement ability, whether we can fine, can't fine, or if there is discretion, all these questions go to the DPR. The Agriculture Department works with DPR a lot because they have specialized staff such as toxicologists and chemists with the ability to further analyze the information being sent to them. The Statewide Pesticide Notification program is DPR driven and is in response to pressure received from environmental justice organizations who want quicker and easier access to info about pesticides that are applied. The program only deals with restricted materials. It is unknown if the program will be impactful because of the low number of pesticides that are on the restricted materials list. The only real change for applicators is that NOIs will have to be submitted electronically. For the public, anyone who wants to be on the notification list will receive a notification about pesticide applications of restricted materials scheduled to occur within a ¼ mile radius. The program is a state-controlled database and will begin operating sometime in 2025 once the system is up and running.

V. Presentation: Updates on Cannabis Cultivation Projects in San Luis Obispo County – Seeking updates on any potential incompatibilities.

Marc Lea provided a high-level overview on the state, local, and pesticide regulatory framework for cannabis cultivations in the county. The potential conflicts & incompatibilities between cannabis growers and existing growers were revisited. Lea also highlighted the departments collaboration with County Counsel to establish a condition of approval (COA) waiver for proposed cannabis cultivation projects, and the criteria for when the COA is recommended.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation: [november-2024-alab-meeting-cannabis-updates](#)

VI. Future agenda items/meeting dates, adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14PM. The next monthly ALAB meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Ian Landreth, San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture\Weights & Measures.