



MEETING SUMMARY

Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC)

9:30 a.m. – 12:55 p.m., August 14, 2025

Northern Regional Office
3077 Fite Circle, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95827

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present (24, all attended remotely):

- **Emily Ayala** – Community Alliance with Family Farmers
- **Jonathan Evans** – Center for Biological Diversity
- **James Farrar** – University of California Statewide IPM Program
- **Christopher Finarelli** – Household and Commercial Products Association
- **Chris Flores** – California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association
- **Terry Gage** – California Agricultural Aircraft Association
- **Tim Galarneau** – Center for Agroecology at UC Santa Cruz
- **Thomas Getts** – University of California Cooperative Extension
- **Brian Gress** – California Department of Food and Agriculture
- **Matthew Grieshop** – Grimm Family Center for Organic Production and Research
- **Bart Haycraft** – Jackson Family Wines
- **Elizabeth Henry** – Pro Farm Group
- **David Hinrichs** – California Pest Management Association
- **Carly Hyland** – Berkeley Food Institute
- **Victoria Kalkirtz** – California Stormwater Quality Association
- **Anne Katten** – California Rural Legal Assistance Organization
- **Nick Lupien** – California Association of Pest Control Advisers
- **Nicole Quinonez** – Madden Quinonez Advocacy
- **Margaret Reeves** – Pesticide Action Network North America
- **Eric Stein** – Western Plant Health Association
- **Siavash Taravati** – University of California Cooperative Extension
- **Bill Turechek** – California Strawberry Commission
- **Efrain Velasco** – California Pest Management Association
- **Karey Windbiel-Rojas** – University of California Statewide IPM Program

Department of Pesticide Regulation Staff Present (11):

- **Karen Morrison** – Director
- **Sapna Thottathil** – Deputy Director, Sustainable Pest Management
- **Tory Vizenor** – Environmental Program Manager I

- **Hannah Ferguson** – Staff Services Manager I (Supervisory)
- **Matt Fossen** – Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
- **Jordan Weibel** – Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
- **Andy Nguyen** – Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
- **Shannon Mooney** – Associate Governmental Program Analyst
- **Sean Detweiler** – Associate Governmental Program Analyst
- **Ayca Revaz** – Associate Governmental Program Analyst
- **Peggy Vargas-Paranial** – Senior Staff Attorney

Guests (6):

- **Kerry Mauck** – University of California, Riverside
- **Themis Michailides** – University of California, Davis
- **Yong Luo** – University of California, Davis
- **Daniel Hasegawa** – U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service
- **Ian Grettenberger** – University of California, Davis
- **Stephanie Bolton** – Lodi Winegrape Commission

AGENDA ITEMS

- I. **Introductions and Opening Comments** – Sapna Thottathil
- II. **PMAC Process Updates** – Karen Morrison
 - a. Dr. Morrison provided an overview of PMAC process updates, including an increased funding pool of \$4.9 million for the next solicitation and approximately \$6 million moving forward, a combined grant solicitation for proposals that advance sustainable pest management (SPM) practices, a new quarterly meeting structure that will provide PMAC with more opportunity for ongoing feedback about the grant cycle and solicitation topics, and review of about 20 proposals taking place during one quarterly meeting.
- III. **PMAC Process Q&A** – Karen Morrison, Sapna Thottathil, Tory Vizenor
 - a. A PMAC member wanted to flag that in other grant panels, the extension/education proposals tended to rank lower than the research proposals, just because of the specificity that the research proposals can put in as opposed to the extension/education proposals. Dr. Morrison stated that DPR is open to recognizing different areas of focus for different grant types.
 - b. A PMAC member commented that proprietary or high-tech topics could be elements of prioritizing that have not been addressed yet. Dr. Morrison replied that this would be a good conversation topic for the April 2026 PMAC meeting.
 - c. A PMAC member asked for clarification on the rationale for combining Research and Alliance grants into a single program. Dr. Morrison stated that the new program allows more flexibility in funding grants. Dr. Vizenor added that DPR intends to shift away entirely from using the Research and Alliance terms in the grants program and that DPR will do an upfront review of all proposals to

determine alignment with priority topic areas listed in the solicitation; roughly twenty prioritized proposals will be presented to PMAC for review. Dr. Thottathil emphasized that the changes to the review process include more feedback opportunities from the committee regarding the overall process.

- d. A PMAC member noted that DPR has historically focused more on funding agricultural versus urban projects and acknowledged that DPR is doing a great job to achieve more balance. They asked if DPR has any preferences on public health pest control projects, such as mosquito or vector control. Dr. Morrison replied that DPR's new approach allows a broader range of projects to be funded and noted that the committee's rankings are very helpful. She remarked that DPR has done a lot of work to increase the variety of researchers applying for grants as well.
- e. Dr. Morrison concluded the discussion by stating that DPR will send the committee a follow-up email and invited the committee to submit any questions they have.

IV. **Grants Program Update** – Jordan Weibel

V. **Research Grant Presentation** – Kerry Mauck, University of California, Riverside

- a. Dr. Mauck presented her grant project *“Enhancing Virus Control in Lettuce and Melons by Optimizing Immunity Priming Approaches.”*

VI. **Research Grant Q&A** – Tory Vizenor

- a. A PMAC member asked about the availability and cost of the elicitors and whether the project team plans to look into more organic products as well. Dr. Mauck replied that the elicitor acibenzolar-S-methyl product is widely available and that significant cost savings can be realized since the standard dose of the commercial product is about twelve times higher than is needed to achieve results. The project team considered availability when choosing products for field testing.

VII. **Research Grant Presentation** – Themis Michailides and Yong Luo, UC Davis

- a. Dr. Michailides and Dr. Luo presented their grant project *“Decision Support Systems to Reduce Fungicide Applications in Pistachio Orchards.”*

VIII. **Research Grant Q&A** – Tory Vizenor

- a. There were no questions.

IX. **Research Grant Presentation** – Daniel Hasegawa, U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service

- a. Dr. Hasegawa presented his grant project *“Receptor Interference: A Novel IPM Technology for Managing Key Insect Pests of Vegetables in California.”*

X. **Research Grant Q&A** – Tory Vizenor

- a. A PMAC member asked if there are plans to look into sub-lethal effects. Dr. Hasegawa stated that while the “gold standard” for determining efficacy is mortality, he thinks it is really important to look at sub-lethal effects as well.
- b. A PMAC member asked how the project team plans to ensure that the peptides do not impact pollinators or other beneficial insects. Dr. Hasegawa replied that they have not investigated non-target effects yet, but they envision conducting feeding assays or obtaining receptors from non-target insects and conducting peptide-receptor binding assays.
- c. A PMAC member commented that they also believe that it is important to evaluate sub-lethal effects.

XI. **Research Grant Presentation** – Ian Grettenberger, University of California, Davis

- a. Dr. Grettenberger presented his grant project, “*Novel Precision Technologies to Reduce Insecticide Use Targeting Aphids and Thrips in Lettuce.*”

XII. **Research Grant Q&A** – Tory Vizenor

- a. There were no questions.

XIII. **Research Grant Presentation** – Stephanie Bolton, Lodi Winegrape Commission

- a. Dr. Bolton presented her grant project, “*Canine Detection of Invasive Vine Mealybugs and Leafroll Virus (GLRaV-3) in California Vineyards.*”

XIV. **Research Grant Q&A** – Tory Vizenor

- a. Several PMAC members commented that this was an impressive and successful project.
- b. A PMAC member asked about potential next steps. Dr. Bolton replied that they need to figure out how to keep the dogs actively working in an economy where vineyards and nurseries may go out of business, and that they want to help people understand that they have mealybug and virus issues in their vineyards.
- c. A PMAC member commented that canine detection is an underutilized tool and asked if the dogs could be trained to detect more than one disease or pest at a time. Dr. Bolton stated that it is possible, and while training for multiple detections is considerably more expensive and time-consuming, it can and should be done for the most value.

XV. **Closing Remarks** – Sapna Thottathil

The next PMAC meeting will be held on November 6, 2025.

PMAC agendas, meeting summaries, membership roster, and other information are posted to DPR’s Website at: <https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/committees/>

Please direct questions about the PMAC or agenda topics to:

Matt Fossen, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), Integrated Pest Management
Branch: PMAC@cdpr.ca.gov