

California Department of Food and Agriculture

Marketing Branch

Approval of Meeting Minutes and Actions

Program:	California Pistachio Research Board
Meeting Date:	June 25, 2025
Meeting Location:	Fresno, CA and via Teleconference

Notable Actions:

2025 0625	#03	Motion to recommend the appointment of Joseph Coelho to fill a vacant member position, Michael Naito to fill the vacant second alternate member position, Todd Tracy to fill the first alternate member position, Hiroki Hiura to fill the third alternate member position, and Peter Allbright to fill the fourth alternate member position on the Board. [Approved by Department Order on August 14, 2025]
2025 0625	#04	Motion to recommend establishing an assessment rate of \$0.0015 per pound for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. [Approved by Department Order on July 24, 2025]
2025 0625	#05	Motion to recommend approval of the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget as presented. [Approved by Department Order on August 15, 2025]
2025 0625	#06	Motion to recommend retaining Cuttone & Mastro Certified Public Accountants to conduct a financial audit and a fiscal and compliance audit of the Board's the 2024-2025 fiscal year financial records. [Approved by Department Order on August 14, 2025]

APPROVED

SECRETARY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

BY: 
Joe Monson, Branch Chief
Marketing Branch

DATE: AUGUST 20, 2025



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MEETING MINUTES
CALIFORNIA PISTACHIO RESEARCH BOARD
Board of Directors Meeting

June 25, 2025 at 1:00PM
Western Agriculture Processors Association

Roll Call

Chairman Tom Coleman called the meeting to order at 1:02 P.M. A complete board roster is shown below with an * indicating those in attendance. A quorum was established.

Members	Alternates	Advisory Committee
* Tom Coleman, Chairman	1 st Alternate	Robert Beede
* Gerrid Climer	* Joseph Coelho	Carl Fanucchi
Jeremy Blackwell – resigned	2 nd Alternate	Todd Fukuda
Rob Goff	Clay Beck - resigned	Mike Harvey
* Joey Mendonca	3 rd Alternate	* Brad Higbee
* Brian O'Neill	* Todd Tracy	Anthony Rabo
* Zack Raven	4 th Alternate	Rod Stiefvater
Mike Smith	* Michael Naito	
* Erik Wilkins		
* Christine Milgrom (Public Member)		

*Indicates those members, alternates and advisors in attendance.

Others Present: Mirek Wilczek (CDFA), Cindy Dean, Stephen Vasquez, Dawnda Lowe, Kirk Squire, Peter Albright, Richard Kreps, Hiroki Hiura, Jeffrey Scheer, Gary Chastain, Joseph Mastro (Cuttone & Mastro, CPA Auditor)

Approval of the March 31, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #1

It was moved by Joey Mendonca and seconded by Brian O'Neill to approve March 31, 2025; minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

No Comments

CDFA Report

Mirek Wilczek CDFA representative noted an upcoming August 11, 2025 CDFA Meeting for commodity board executives. Stephen stated that he'd be attending, representing CPRB.

CPA Audit Findings 2023-2024 – Cuttone & Mastro

Joseph Mastro, CPA, Cuttone & Mastro, introduced himself. He went through the CPRB financials noting that to correctly state our financial position, they changed the way CPRB research grants were reported. On the Agreed Upon Procedures, it was noted that for support of meals it is required to list names and business affiliations of the meals paid for along with the receipt. The Board had no further questions.

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #2

It was moved by Brian O'Neill and seconded by Joey Mendonca to approve the 2023-2024 CPA Audit findings as presented. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Manager's Report

Stephen Vasquez went over the following topics:

- New Hire - The ACP has hired a new employee Fabian Hurtado, Special Projects Coordinator with a start date of 6/30/2025.
- Brussels Trip – Stephen and Laura went to Brussels to meet with the EU commission regarding the ACP PEAR Program. They discussed mycotoxins, lot failures and laboratory protocols for testing *Alternaria* spp. mycotoxins used in the EU and the USA.
- Mycotoxins – Stephen went over that the EU tests for 5-6 different mycotoxins that the US does not currently test for. He is working with local labs to determine a sample survey and collection protocol for the 2025 season to identify TeA levels.
- Stephen met with the CDFA Fruit Tree, Nut Tree, And Grapevine IAB Board to discuss removing pistachio from the exempt list. The move would allow for a 1% tax to be placed on sales and used for research and operations. Growers purchasing the trees will pay the tax. In the past 2 years the IAB hasn't spent any money on research due to poor sales of trees and grapevines. The IAB was open to removing pistachios from the exemption list. They are currently surveying the nurseries to determine what the industry feelings are.

Board Membership Vacancies

Tom Coleman, Chairman noted that there have been a few resignations on the board leaving open positions to be filled. Tom asked for a motion to move:

- Appointment of Joseph Coelho to fill the vacant position previously held and resigned by Jeremy Blackwell
- Move Todd Tracy from third alternate member position to first alternate member position and move Michael Naito from fourth alternate member position to vacant second alternate member position previously held and resigned by Clay Beck.
- Appointment of Hiroki Hiura to third alternate member position and Peter Albright to the fourth alternate member position on the Board.

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #3

- It was moved by Joey Mendonca and seconded by Brian O'Neill to appoint Alternate Joe Coelho into the vacant member seat, move Todd Tracy from third alternate to first alternate and appoint Hiroki Hiura to the third alternate and Peter Albright to the fourth alternate position on the board.

This action requires separate approval by the Department

MOU / Memorandum of Understanding

The Board went over the current MOU and Memorandum of Understanding between the CPRB and the ACP.

2025-2026 assessment rate

Stephen recommended that the CPRB assessment rate should remain the same as the previous crop year and be set at \$0.0015 per pound for the 2025-2026 crop year.

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #4

It was moved by Gerrid Climer and seconded by Brian O'Neill to set the CPRB 2025-2026 assessment rate to \$0.0015 per pound as recommended. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

This action requires separate approval by the Department

2025-2026 Budget

Stephen went over the 2025-2026 proposed budget. Explaining any changes or increases. There was some discussion.

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #5

It was moved by Joey Mendonca and seconded by Erik Wilkins to approve the CPRB 2025-2026 budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

This action requires separate approval by the Department

Targeted Research RFP 2026

Stephen shared that he, Bob Beede, Erik Wilkins and Tom Coleman met and discussed coming up with a more specific target research RFP for the 2026 proposals. The goal is to assist researchers in presenting proposals that produce usable and applicable data that's valuable for growers. A useful carbohydrate model was used as an example. Stephen will have Erik, Tom and Bob review the new RFP Before it gets shared with researchers in October.

CPRB Auditor Approval for the 2024-2025 Year

Chairman Tom Coleman called for a motion to approve Cuttone and Mastro, CPA firm as the auditors for the CPRB 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Board Motion 2025-06-25 #6

It was moved by Erik Wilkins and seconded by Brian O'Neill to appoint Cuttone and Mastro, CPA firm as the auditors for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Other Business

None

This action requires separate approval by the Department

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Topics for Future Consideration

None

Scheduling of Future Meetings

No future meetings were scheduled at this time.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:12pm

Certification

I, Stephen Vasquez, Executive Director, California Pistachio Research Board, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing is a true and correct account of the meeting of the California Pistachio Research Board conducted on June 25, 2025.

Date:

Stephen Vasquez, Executive Director California Pistachio Research Board