

# California Department of Food and Agriculture

## Marketing Branch

### Approval of Meeting Minutes and Actions

Program:	California Pistachio Research Board
Meeting Date:	February 9, 2026
Meeting Location:	Fresno, CA and via Teleconference

**Notable Actions:**

2026 0209	#02	Motion to allocate \$3,151,999.21 to fund the approved research proposals as presented for the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

APPROVED

SECRETARY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

BY: 

Joe Monson, Branch Chief  
Marketing Branch

DATE: APRIL 28, 2026



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

2026 0408 | 2026 0428 | 3634

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CALIFORNIA PISTACHIO RESEARCH BOARD**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**

**February 9, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.**

**Western Tree Nut Association**

**Roll Call**

Chairman Tom Coleman called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.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 <sup>st</sup> Alternate	*Robert Beede
* Gerrid Climer	Todd Tracy	Carl Fanucchi
Joseph Coelho	2 <sup>nd</sup> Alternate	Todd Fukuda
* Rob Goff	Michael Naito	Mike Harvey
* Brian O’Neill	3 <sup>rd</sup> Alternate	*Brad Higbee
* Joey Mendonca	*Hiroki Hiura	Anthony Rabo
Vacant	4 <sup>th</sup> Alternate	Rod Stiefvater
Zack Raven	*Peter Allbright	
* Erik Wilkins		
* Christine Milgrom (Public Member)		

\*Indicates those members, alternates and advisors in attendance.

Others Present: Mirek Miroslaw (CDFA), Laura Gulley, Cindy Dean, Stephen Vasquez, Laura Larsen, Fabian Hurtado, Giulia Moreno

**CDFA Report**

Mirek Miroslaw had nothing to report.

**CPRB Board Nominations**

Mirek Miroslaw went over the CPRB board election process. Nomination forms were mailed out by the CDFA. All board members in attendance expressed their desire to be nominated for the election.

**Approval of the June 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

**Board Motion 2026-2-09 #1N**

It was moved by Erik Wilkins and seconded by Brian O’Neill to approve the June 25, 2025; minutes after removing the duplicate word “hire” in the manager’s report. The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

No Comments

**Manager’s Report**

Stephen Vasquez went over the following:

- 1) Pistachio Day - Steve spoke at Pistachio Day with over 800 in attendance.
- 2) Weather Stations - We will be adding 5 more weather stations to the CPRB weather network.
- 3) Research Proposal Presentations – We would like to change up the PPT slide presentation format. He thanked Giulia Moreno for her help in keeping things running smoothly.
- 4) CPRB Website redo – We have obtained 3 bids and hop to have the new site up and running by June 1, 2026.
- 5) Weekly newsletter – Steve polled the board for thoughts on the weekly newsletter he sends out. The board feels it is relevant and should be added to the website.

- 6) TeA samples – The EU is very focused on mycotoxins and may move legislation in September to set an official tolerance limit for the Alternaria mycotoxin, TeA. As a result of the EU’s focus on TeA, the CPRB and ACP is collecting industry samples for laboratory testing to identify potential industry issues with regards to TeA. There was discussion of how this could affect exports for the industry.

**Review and Funding of the Proposals**

The 2025-2026 approved budget allocates \$4,300,000 for research (\$3,000,000 – standard research, \$350,000 -- research contingency, \$400,000 -- Education and Outreach, \$300,000 -- Food Safety). The Board received forty-six (46) proposals, requesting funds totaling a little over \$3.5 million. This year researchers presented their proposals in person to the board. The Board reviewed the 2026 proposals and made decision on which projects to fund. The Board granted funding for 41 of the proposals. A total of \$3,151,999.21 was allocated to fund research (\$37,500.00 – Education & Outreach; \$38,065.00 – Food Safety; \$3,076,434.21 – Standard Research). For detailed funding see exhibit A – 2026 Proposal Chart.

**Board Motion 2026-02-09 #2**

It was moved by Rob Goff and seconded by Gerrid Climer that the board allocate \$3,151,999.21 to fund the approved research proposals (Exhibit A). The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

**Other Business**

Mirek Miroslaw, CDFA, reminded the Board that Form 700 needs to be completed and turned in by March 30, 2026.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Topics for Future Consideration**

None

**Scheduling of Future Meetings**

None

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:47am.

**Certification**

I, Stephen Vasquez, Executive Director of the 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 February 09, 2026.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Vasquez, Executive Director - California Pistachio Research Board

**CPRB Funded Projects 2026 - Exhibit A**

<b>Principal Investigator</b>	<b>Project #</b>	<b>Proposal Title</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>	<b>Amount Funded 2/9/26</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
<b>Education</b>					
Julia Stover-Blackburn	ED-2026-1	California Pistachio Nitrogen and Potassium Model	\$15,000.00	<b>\$15,000.00</b>	yes
Julia Stover-Blackburn	ED-2026-2	Wildeye Weather Station Data Management and Integration	\$7,500.00	<b>\$7,500.00</b>	yes
Julia Stover-Blackburn	ED-2026-3	California Pistachio Research Board Event Facilitation	\$15,000.00	<b>\$15,000.00</b>	yes
<b>Entomology</b>					
David Crowder	ENT-2026-4	Validating the navel orangeworm model using site-specific weather data	\$33,702.00	<b>\$33,702.00</b>	yes w modifications
Gerhard Gries / Kent Daane	ENT-2026-5	Identification, field-testing, and operational development of the sex pheromone of female Gill's mealybugs, Ferrisia gilli	\$77,203.00	<b>\$77,203.00</b>	yes
David Haviland	ENT-2026-6	Optimizing chemical control programs for Gill's mealybug in pistachios	\$34,076.00	<b>\$34,076.00</b>	yes
Andrea Joyce	ENT-2026-7	Revisiting Damage of Key Insect Pests and the new invasive Carpophilus Beetle During the Pistachio Growing Season	\$60,000.00	<b>\$30,000.00</b>	Funded for a lesser amount
Joel Siegel	ENT-2026-8	Control of navel orangeworm: focus on increasing insecticide efficacy and reducing application volume using organosilicone adjuvants	\$78,063.00	<b>\$78,000.00</b>	Funded for an adjusted amount
Spencer Walse	ENT-2026-9	Identification and characterization of female pheromone for Gill's mealybug	\$57,646.00	<b>\$57,646.00</b>	yes
Houston Wilson / Rijal / Gyawaly	ENT-2026-10	New Tools for Monitoring Leaf-footed Bugs in Pistachio Orchards	\$72,118.00	<b>\$72,118.00</b>	yes
Houston Wilson / Burks / Bansal	ENT-2026-11	New Rearing, Irradiation and Marking Methods to Improve Sterile Insect Technique for Navel Orangeworm	\$108,573.00	<b>\$108,573.00</b>	yes
Houston Wilson / Rijal	ENT-2026-12	Improved Monitoring and Management of the Invasive Carpophilus Beetle	\$81,611.00	<b>\$81,611.00</b>	yes
Robert Van Steenwyk	ENT-2026-46	Evaluation of currently registered insecticides for Carpophilus truncatus control	\$30,414.00	<b>\$30,414.00</b>	yes
<b>Food Safety</b>					
Themis Michailides	FS-2026-13	Identification of sources of and factors affecting ochratoxin A (OTA) contamination in California pistachios and its management.	\$76,130.00	<b>\$38,065.00</b>	CPRB Funding 1/2 & ACP Funding half
<b>Horticulture: Agronomy</b>					
Gurreet Brar	HA-2026-14	Dormex and Oil for chill management: Combination of reduced rate applications in pistachios	\$82,880.00	<b>\$82,880.00</b>	yes w modifications
Mae Culumber	HA-2026-15	Evaluation of new subsurface irrigation technologies for pistachio	\$89,011.00	<b>\$89,011.00</b>	yes w modifications

Mae Culumber	HA-2026-16	Evaluating new training systems for pistachio	\$69,811.00	<b>\$69,811.00</b>	yes
Georgia Drakakaki	HA-2026-17	Assessment of boron toxicity on pistachio yield	\$51,181.00	<b>\$75,000.00</b>	Funded w revisions up to 75,000.00
Phoebe Gordon	HA-2026-18	Determining non-bearing pistachio nitrogen and phosphorus needs	\$49,979.34	<b>\$49,979.34</b>	yes
Tobias Oker	HA-2026-19	Evaluation of vertically installed subsurface drip emitters as a form of subsurface drip irrigation	\$38,661.10	<b>\$38,661.10</b>	yes w modifications
Alireza Pourreza	HA-2026-20	Leaf Monitor for Pistachio Real-Time, In-Field Diagnostics of Leaf Nutrients, Biochemicals, and Stress	\$63,630.00	<b>\$63,630.00</b>	yes w modifications
Sara Rosenberg	HA-2026-21	Evaluating Ground Cover Options and Integrative Crop-Livestock in Californian Pistachio Systems	\$74,318.00	<b>\$74,318.00</b>	yes w modifications
Dilruba Yeasmin	HA-2026-22	A Ground Penetrating Radar Based Non-Destructive Pistachio Root Evaluation Method for a Sustainable Nut Production System	\$54,615.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	not funded
<b>Horticulture: Genetics</b>					
Patrick J. Brown	HG-2026-23	Propagation and Improved Maintenance of the NCGR Pistachio Collection	\$43,380.00	<b>\$43,380.00</b>	yes
Patrick J. Brown / Trouillas / Michailides	HG-2026-24	Collaborative Pistachio Rootstock Breeding	\$152,764.00	<b>\$152,764.00</b>	yes
Patrick J. Brown	HG-2026-25	Pistachio Improvement Program	\$246,866.00	<b>\$246,866.00</b>	yes
Christine Diepenbrock	HG-2026-26	Profiling of macronutrients including dietary fiber in pistachios	\$50,581.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	not funded - move to ACP
Ewelina Jacygrad	HG-2026-27	Molecular basis of sex determination in pistachio to enable self fertility and improve productivity	\$114,969.00	<b>\$114,969.00</b>	yes
Grey Monroe	HG-2026-28	Next-Generation Genomic Tools for the Pistachio Industry	\$127,341.00	<b>\$127,341.00</b>	yes
<b>Horticulture: Physiology</b>					
Barbara Blanco -Ulate	HP-2026-29	Improving Pistachio Harvest Decisions Through Image-Based Maturity Assessment	\$84,023.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	not funded
Barbara Blanco -Ulate	HP-2026-30	Using Thermal Risk to Guide Pistachio Management Decisions Validated Tools for 'Kerman' and Emerging Guidance for Early Varieties	\$94,508.00	<b>\$94,508.00</b>	yes
Christine Diepenbrock	HP-2026-31	Evaluation of sensory attributes and consumer preferences in pistachio	\$64,059.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	not funded - move to ACP
Georgia Drakakaki	HP-2026-32	Establishing a MaxCel application protocol to promote yield and split nut percentage	\$66,193.00	<b>\$66,193.00</b>	yes
Georgia Drakakaki	HP-2026-33	Evaluation Accede to promote the mechanical harvest efficiency of Kerman	\$99,811.90	<b>\$99,811.90</b>	yes w modifications
Phoebe Gordon	HP-2026-34	Examination of biostimulants in field planted pistachios in drought stressed and well-managed conditions	\$94,992.87	<b>\$94,992.87</b>	yes
Giulia Marino	HP-2026-35	Combining proximal and remote water stress Indicators to optimize pistachio water use	\$101,454.00	<b>\$101,454.00</b>	yes

Giulia Marino	HP-2026-36	Developing non-structural carbohydrate-based indicators for improved pistachio orchard management	\$143,514.00	<b>\$143,514.00</b>	yes w modifications
Giulia Marino	HP-2026-37	Selection of male pollinizers for increased nut quality and yield	\$87,923.00	<b>\$87,923.00</b>	yes w modifications
Li Tian	HP-2026-38	Assessing chemical treatments for enhanced bud break in pistachios	\$91,050.00	<b>\$91,050.00</b>	yes
Maciej Zwieniecki	HP-2026-39	From physiology to practice: Integrating seasonal dynamics of non-structural carbohydrates into pistachio orchard management	\$89,916.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	not funded
<b>Pathology</b>					
Themis Michailides	PA-2026-40	Quantification and management of fungicide resistance in Alternaria populations causing Alternaria late blight in California pistachio orchards	\$88,080.00	<b>\$88,080.00</b>	yes
Themis Michailides	PA-2026-41	Management of aflatoxin contamination in pistachio using atoxigenic strains of Aspergillus flavus biocontrol technology: Improving the efficacy of biocontrol treatments, including area-wide applications	\$93,424.00	<b>\$93,424.00</b>	yes
Florent Trouillas	PA-2026-42	Managing Alternaria Toxins in Pistachio Nuts	\$107,744.00	<b>\$107,744.00</b>	yes
Florent Trouillas	PA-2026-43	Characterization and management of Phytophthora crassamura and Phytophthora nicotianae, two new and emerging crown and root rot pathogens of pistachio trees in California	\$79,490.00	<b>\$79,490.00</b>	yes
Andreas Westphal	PA-2026-44	Protecting current and future rootstocks from damage by plant-parasitic nematodes	\$66,296.00	<b>\$66,296.00</b>	yes
Bo Xu	PA-2026-45	Improving Pistachio Aflatoxin Biocontrol Safety and Efficacy via Sexual Reproduction in Aspergillus	\$30,000.00	<b>\$30,000.00</b>	yes
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>\$3,539,502.21</b>	<b>\$3,151,999.21</b>	

	<b>Funded</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>Not Funded</b>	
Education	<b>\$37,500.00</b>	\$37,500.00	\$0.00	
Entomology	<b>\$603,343.00</b>	\$633,406.00	\$30,063.00	
Food Safety	<b>\$38,065.00</b>	\$76,130.00	\$38,065.00	
Horticulture: Agronomy	<b>\$543,290.44</b>	\$574,086.44	\$30,796.00	
Horticulture: Genetics	<b>\$685,320.00</b>	\$735,901.00	\$50,581.00	
Horticulture: Physiology	<b>\$779,446.77</b>	\$1,017,444.77	\$237,998.00	
Pathology	<b>\$465,034.00</b>	\$465,034.00	\$0.00	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$3,151,999.21</b>	\$3,539,502.21	\$387,503.00	\$3,151,999.21