

Summary
CITRUS CANKER TECHNICAL ADVISORY TASK FORCE MEETING

March 19, 1999 9:30 a.m.

Citrus Research and Education Center

Ben Hill Griffin, Jr. Citrus Hall

Lake Alfred, Florida

Members Present

Mr. John Barben (HCCGA)
Mr. Tony Bowen (PRUCGA)
Dr. Harold Browning (IFAS, CREC)
Mr. Gregory Carlton (FCM)
Mr. Richard Gaskalla (FDACS, DPI)
Dr. Tim Gottwald (USDA, ARS)
Mr. George Hamner (FCM)
Mr. Ellis Hunt (Hunt Bros. Cooperative)

Mr. Tom Jerkins (Dole Citrus)
Mr. Andy LaVigne (FCM) - Executive Committee
Mr. Calvin Lloyd (Hickory Branch)
Mr. Craig Meyer (FDACS) - Executive Committee
Mr. Gene Mooney (Orange Co.)
Mr. Chuck Reed (Citrus Nurserymen's Assn.)
Mr. Mike Shannon (USDA) Executive Committee
Mr. Norman Todd (FL Citrus Production
Managers Assn.)

Others Present

Mr. Kenneth Bailey (FDACS, DPI)
Dr. Carlos Balerdi (Ext. Agent - Multi-County)
Mr. Doug Bournique (Indian River Citrus League)
Mr. Dennis P. Broadaway (Hill Top Gold)
Mr. Mike Carlton (FCM)
Mr. Duke Chadwell (Citrus Adm. Commission)
Dr. Wayne Dixon (FDACS, DPI)
Dr. Jim Graham (CREC, UF)
Dr. James T. Griffiths (Citrus Growers Assoc.)
Mr. Ron Hamel (Gulf Citrus Growers)
Mr. Leon Hebb (FDACS, DPI)

Mr. Michael S. Irey (United States Sugar Corp.)
Mr. Richard Kinney (Florida Citrus Packers)
Dr. Andy Laurent (FDACS, DF&V)
Mr. Nolan Lemon (USDA, APHIS)
Mr. John Morrison (Indian River County)
Ms. Barbara Oxford (PRVCGA)
Mr. Bill Peeples (Commissioner Crawford's Office)
Ms. Liza Rath
Mrs. Connie Riherd (FDACS, DPI)
Mrs. Florence Roberts (FDACS, DPI)
Mr. Charles Youtsey (FDACS, Retired)

Note: Others were in attendance, however, we did not secure all their names .
Connie Riherd requested business cards from those in attendance who desired to
receive documentation such as minutes, reports etc. pertinent to the task force
meetings.

OPENING REMARKS

Craig Meyer mentioned that a few things happened since the last meeting.
Basically that Richard Gaskalla , he and Ken Bailey met with Cliff Asplundh of
Asplundh to talk about stepping up contract work by adding additional crews and
equipment in our eradication effort in Dade County. Craig said he felt it was a fairly
productive meeting and they learned a little bit more of what the difficulties are
going to be none of which are insurmountable and he learned a little bit more what
our needs are. We are going to be putting our cutting contract out in early May
because his contract with us expires on June 30, 1999 and we will put it out for
public bid. Craig said he doesn't know whether Asplundh will be the low bidder,
but unless there is another large tree cutting service that we don't know about,
Asplundh will probably be with us. It was a very productive meeting and they will

be committed to ramping up to keep pace with our discovery in our eradication effort. Craig said as he reported at the last meeting, the Commissioner said when we worked the backlog of infected trees down to where we are just waiting on the clock to run before we could cut, we are going to go back and cut the 125' exposed trees which will increase our cutting demand as well as effect the population in Dade County which we will also address as we work our way through today's agenda.

Question: In Miami, where you are cutting these trees, are there problems with root sprouts coming back?

Craig Meyer answered that sometimes this has been happening. Up until a year ago, we were using "Garlon 4" and that was pretty effective at killing off the roots, but as part of the public outcry and the Commissioner trying to work with the citizens, we "peeled back" to the over-the-counter version of Garlon 4 which is "Brush-B-Gon" and we are occasionally having to retreat some of the stumps, but since we are re-surveying in that whole area anyway, it has not been a problem and we have been addressing the ones that have sprouted back. Garlon 4 happens to be the brush chemical choice in the Dade Environmental Resource Management Agency, but it happened to be just one more thing that the plaintiffs in the class action law suit have zeroed in on to criticize us and that is why we tried the alternative and, it has been pretty successful.

Mike Shannon reported that the federal funds seemed to be locked on for the short term, anyway, for the next few months to begin gearing up the program to get us closer to where we need to be. The \$25 million has been released from emergency funds and they are in the process of setting up the agreement and such to get that money here to put it to work. They are working with the lawyers in Washington to get the agreement in place. The State has requested a pre-award whole amount for the Cooperative Agreement \$20.8 million; and to get \$5 million dollars right away in working capital to begin gearing up things to get all the people and equipment; hopefully that is coming. The funds contain \$700,000 for the enhancement of science and science-based methods for managing the citrus canker whatever they might be. Mike said it is agreed they will use the science issue group they have here as a management vehicle for the \$700,000 to make sure that appropriate projects will be set up the appropriate way knowing the outcomes that are needed. One of the things that will have to happen for the total federal money to come here (whatever words that are in the agreement) is the issue of protecting the potential environmental effect under the National Environmental Policy Act. Anytime the federal government is involved in anything, whether Medfly or citrus canker eradication, even bio control, they have to do an environmental analysis that is legally correct and so there is some discussion going on now that a larger analysis is needed than the one currently in place but that is an internal problem they will be working on, but it is a federal hurdle they have to work on.

Note: The federal people are working on obtaining the space that the state will need to house all the people that the money will allow the project to bring on board.

Manatee County Program Overview (Detailed information/data are attached for the record).

Leon Hebb talked about the activities of the Manatee County Citrus Canker Eradication Program and mentioned that outside of the Miami outbreak, it has been probably one of the most important areas just because it was the first area where citrus canker had moved not only into residential properties but into a commercial citrus growing area. It has been very important to "take the bull by the horns" and to try to deal with it there. Leon advised that, unfortunately, we had eradicated citrus canker there once before, maybe two times before if one considered the early part of the century and had we been a little bit more vigilant, we probably would not have had the problem that we have there now, but in 1994, we just had to stop looking there basically because there were no funds forthcoming, so we didn't have the personnel to take care of their other duties.

Leon talked about the extended quarantine area and about the grove and residential survey work that is being conducted in Manatee County. He showed the Palmetto Citrus Canker Overview map and transparencies on the overhead projector of the control work that has been conducted in each of the positive groves in Manatee County.

NOTE: It is agreed that the control work is very important but it is the survey work that makes the difference in Manatee County and all other areas as well. After you find the problem, you can deal with it.

Discussion ensued as to how the positive total acreage is determined.

Question: What measures are used in certain groves to control the disease?

Leon Hebb talked about the risk assessments that have been done in various groves and mentioned that risk assessment is still used very strongly in Manatee County. The risk assessment team is very active there. The benefits from it are that it is a learning process. People on the team have all experienced the disease; they have learned to make assessments in degrees of expression and have learned to recognize the virulence, etc. All of these things are important. Leon said in some cases they have taken less than 125' and have been apparently successful but in some cases, they have had to take much more. Risk assessment is not without risk, but it is minimal. Leon's opinion is that taking out 125' does serve a purpose,

but there is no guarantee that you are not going to have more citrus canker, so there is nothing magic about 125', 200', etc. It depends on each particular situation.

The recent research shows that citrus canker can naturally spread far beyond 125' and you have the factor of vehicles and equipment that can spread it. It is true that the fewer host plants you have in areas, the less the citrus canker can survive there. Leon advised that they have had adequate resources to survey in the Immokalee area and have fortunately been able to move very quickly on the control action. In most cases the people affected have been very agreeable as far as what we have taken out in groves. In some cases, some of the residential property owners have been very non-agreeable. In both situations, the control action can take up to 30 days to take out a positive grove but in most cases, we go out and burn trees in place on the property. There have been very few dooryard positive properties. Leon mentioned that his handout lists every single grove property that has been positive with a tree count, removed positive trees and the long list shows all the residential properties where control action has been taken.

Steve Poe asked Leon to comment on the status of control work in abandoned groves.

Leon Hebb advised that they think they have that problem licked and that they have probably removed close to 200 acres of abandoned groves. They have made an accelerated effort to locate the high risk abandoned groves; ones that they could not survey adequately and some that they could not get into sometimes and they have gone in and removed those groves, and cleaned them up. It saves us the trouble of having to go in those groves to conduct survey where it can't be conducted adequately because the trees are in such poor condition; canker does not show up on an unhealthy tree. This is wise to do because it allows us to use our resources in other areas and actually makes the neighborhoods look a little better.

Steve Poe asked Leon if we have any idea of how many acres of truly abandoned groves are sitting out there still.

Leon Hebb estimates in the quarantine area, we have probably cleaned up 1/3 of them. There are some abandoned groves that are out in pastures where the people want to leave the trees out there for the cows and the horses to eat and that type of thing.

Richard Gaskalla said what we have done, is identified the abandoned properties and the ones that are closest to infected properties, we are taking those out or have already taken those out so we are working from a priority list.

The Repetto Grove was discussed which was pushed out and replanted and the citrus canker was brought back in. Someone asked if there were recommendations

on what to do relative to that fallow land during the two-year period after a grove has been pushed and destroyed. Another question was asked if we were comfortable after a grove is pushed out; do we feel that there is not a need to have a protocol for that two-year protocol.

Leon Hebb responded that there is only a one-year requirement, but based on scientific evidence, he is sure they will repeat some of this, but the thing is that the association goes back to Manatee Fruit Company as far as harvesters, picking boxes, etc.

Carlos Balerdi asked Leon if we are allowed to use the "burn-in-place" method in residential areas.

Leon Hebb answered that they would probably not allow that. There might be some way but if it is a residential area, Leon thinks you would have to have a large wire box. It would be difficult because you would have to bring these things in. You would have to have some way to cool these things down as it would be dangerous to haul down the street. Leon thinks there are some other control things that should be investigated, maybe herbiciding that tree with some safe product and coming back later and raking up the leaves. There are some quick ways that would put this thing out of commission. If we had an herbicide that would kill the tree and it also contained a bactericide, it would be one of the best things we could have if it was systemic. If you had to spray it on the trees, you might be killing other plants in the area.

Note: **Tim Gottwald** reiterated the comment that Leon made which he thinks is the key to the entire thing and that is early detection. Tim mentioned that they have proposed a method of **sentinel trees** and putting them out first across some of the areas Leon described where they have low disease incidence, for a method of early detection. Tim said he would like to pass that on to the scientific subcommittee to be considered as something they should probably take a look at.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Craig Meyer explained that at the last meeting they had appointed three working groups to address some of the issues. Craig called on Richard Gaskalla relative to the Scientific Issues Group Report.

SCIENCE ISSUES WORKING GROUP REPORT

Richard Gaskalla reported that one of the first things their group did was to appoint Tom Jerkins as group leader chairman. Richard called on Tom to present the group's report.

Tom Jerkins advised that the purpose of the scientific working group is to support the regulatory and public relations/education working group with scientific opinions as to how to get the work done. Tom then talked about the position papers prepared by members of the scientific group.

Issue: Use of Epidemiology Research to Guide Citrus Canker Eradication Strategies (position paper attached for the record). Tom reported the recommendations set forth by the subcommittee:

1. *Establish a minimum distance standard of 125 ft for the removal of exposed trees beginning in April 1999.
2. *Remove citrus canker infected and corresponding exposed trees within 14 days of diagnosis as positive
3. *Increase the survey frequency to a 60-day cycle in all citrus canker survey areas including buffer areas.
4. Explore the development of disease inoculum/incidence thresholds that would trigger the removal of all exposed trees in a defined area beyond the 125 ft minimum.
5. Identify the boundaries of survey buffers in Broward, Dade, Collier, Hendry and Manatee counties (emphasis on the Broward/Dade County buffers.)

Tom Jerkins said they categorized the first three recommendations as * urgent (eradication will not occur without it); high-priority (means it is critical without it and would require resources from some other sources) and moderate (means things would happen in another way), but the consensus all day long was that these first three were pretty urgent for the purpose of eradicating citrus canker. In addition to those three, there was a recommendation to establish "hot spot" criteria (item 4) which is something that would enable the regulatory DPI people to look at an area with a particularly high infestation and go out and destroy beyond 125 feet; i.e., maybe go out 1,200 feet. That criteria hasn't been established yet but this would be categorized as high-level priority. The other issue of epidemiology had to do with approval of the mile-wide host buffer. The consensus of the group was that they would not propose that at this time because better allocation of resources would be to create instead a disease-free virtual buffer, same difference, probably less money, more effective and with the proper P.R. we would be able to establish two; one on the north to protect the industry's grapefruit and also one in the south to protect the limes. This was given high priority as well.

Question: With the establishment of the 125' minimum - is that even under the whole concept of risk assessment or is the risk assessment concept currently in place like going 50 feet or X feet up to 125 feet - was that discussed? Or is this going to replace what is currently being done?

Tim Gottwald answered that it is his understanding that this is simply a reestablishment of policies that existed prior to placement of a moratorium which

took it away which is simply the reestablishment of the 125' rule and will be applied in Miami once the backlog of trees have been cut out. The committee did discuss other issues, the hot spot kind of theory as something they would like to address, but the first step in the process was reestablishment of the 125' buffer as a necessity realizing in some instances, it may be inadequate.

Question: Does this only apply to Miami; not 125' distance statewide?

Tim Gottwald answered that most of this was discussed in the context of Miami. When you look at individual grove situations, each of those have gone under a unique risk-assessment, property by property. Considering the thousands of residential properties in Miami, it would be impossible to do risk assessment on every one where grove properties you can.

Comment: So there are two different standards; you are using the 125' rule in Miami and risk assessment in groves.

Richard Gaskalla advised that he feels that Tim has captured the scientific working group discussion, but they have brought these issues for discussion before the full committee and if it is the feeling of the group that we want to expand that beyond the urban setting in Miami, that is open for discussion.

Comment: I just wanted everyone to understand that you have two different standards here.

Richard Kinney commented that at a minimum, if you find citrus canker in a commercial area, you are going in with the perspective that you got a standard that we have some basis of experience in history with exposed trees and the 125', even though you may go to risk assessment, the perspective would seem to him to be you got a diseased tree and you are looking at the strong possibility of getting that tree out and going beyond that to 125'. That is prudent relative to the eradication of citrus canker. Now you may do a risk assessment on a valencia grove, for example, and there is less removal but we should perhaps consider setting that as a precedent to set that standard for commercial properties going in but knowing that there may be risk assessment. You don't have two different standards; you have at least that overlap of two standards.

Richard Gaskalla remarked that, in essence, has been the case every time. We go in and use that as a benchmark; we may do more and we may do less.

Tim Gottwald said that the concept of the scientific committee simply was to utilize this as an interim, immediate step and reestablishing this immediately so that we can get back into business but also to evaluate some of the information that has come in within the last few months which indicates we may want to modify that as it may not be wholly adequate in all situations, especially in Miami.

Comment: one of the issues that you will hit in each of the subcommittees is that you need to make sure you are dealing in dooryard type trees and issues and then you deal in commercial issues and I think the 125' was a dooryard issue. Part of this was there is a lot of data about the movement of air and disease and storms. If the inoculum area is dense enough, there may be some concern that the 125' is inadequate, but in order to solidify something in a dooryard setting and from a standpoint of legal issues that arise in the future, you have to put in a data base that proves that and all they have done here is to reestablish 125' which makes it mandatory to cut out which is a safety region and gives them a chance to put together stair-stepping data that may say it will have to go further if it is worse.

Richard Gaskalla agreed and one of the recommendations of the scientific working group is that the next step is to develop a threshold as far as incidence of disease which would require us to think about going beyond the 125'.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the 125' rule as applied to groves, risk assessment of each grove situation, etc. The comment was made that they believe there are two issues involved, i.e., one is whether or not it is mandatory to take out 125' each and every time in dooryard and commercial properties. The other is 125' enough or should it be 1,200 and these are two separate issues. The idea is that the 125' is to give the DPI the teeth it needs. This can be open to debate as to whether it needs to be mandatory or not. The comment was made that the scientific committee felt that the risk assessment in a commercial grove is much more easily done in a commercial setting and that is the reason there is the "split" and that is why you get urban versus commercial.

Richard Gaskalla commented that we are operating under risk assessment guidelines for Miami now and those guidelines basically say that we should apply the 125'. We did issue a temporary moratorium but the original risk assessment still stands. It might be time - a year later now - to risk assess Dade/Broward county to see if we need to apply a different distance factor.

Question: In Dade and Broward counties, where you were taking out 125' and those areas where you applied the moratorium, do you see higher incidences; can you tell from the data?

Ken Bailey answered that there is a lower incidence of infection in those areas where we removed the 125' of exposed trees than the area where we placed the moratorium since February of last year.

Tom Jerkins said a lot of factors are involved. Risk assessment needs to be done in each situation.

ISSUE: Use of Epidemiology Research to Guide Citrus Canker Eradication Strategies
(Position papers attached for the record)

MOTION 1: To accept the recommendation of the Scientific Committee to establish a minimum distance standard of 125 ft for the removal of exposed trees beginning in April 1999. (Passed unanimously).

MOTION 2: To defer back to the Scientific Working Group, development of criteria for a "hot spot" that would possible demand measures beyond the 125' minimum distance for removal of exposed trees. (Proposed and accepted by the group).

Question: What about some type of time frame for development of that criteria?

Tom Jerkins said that the committee has categorized this as "urgent", therefore it should not take more than a couple of weeks.

Comment: They have a lot of the necessary data to work with; they just have to get it into the proper format. The second part of that is, though, the implication that it will have long term effects and that is very simply, you just talked about 125' but as soon as you start talking about thresholds, risk assessment built into the thresholds, you may very well have commercial and urban in the same boat because threshold levels tend to mean the spreading of spores in any given area so you may not have a dual system, but you will have a "one" system, but you will increase your buffer zone once that happens.

Question: Will the larger cutting area 1,200ft. or something change what we are doing in commercial groves?

Answer : It could. When you are dealing with a threshold, when you have a super "hot spot" in a commercial grove, you are going to be under the same criteria, I would think, but the science would have to tell us. Then you will be moving towards much quicker eradication which is what everybody, I believe is trying to get to.

Richard Gaskalla commented that the 125' distance is being used because there was research at the time but now we have new research and he believes it would be irresponsible not to react to that and should be our next step.

NOTE: Because of the urgency of these issues, it was the consensus that these issues should be addressed as soon as possible - Thursday, April 1, 1999 was set for the next meeting of the CCTATF.

Discussion ensued.

Tim Gottwald thinks they are going to have a tough time getting the Scientific Committee to come up with the criteria you want in that short of time.

Comment: A lot of the data that has been set forth are straight forward and impressive, but the big question is the **density** - what is the density, not the distance so much, isn't that right?

Tim Gottwald advised that to be very candid with them, if they are going to use the research information that they have in its present form which has been distributed, that can be done, otherwise, the type of information they are asking for, could take months.

NOTE: It was agreed that the people with the regulatory responsibility will assemble a scheme that they think will help increase our eradication efforts and speed them up and the scientific people will address that and make a decision as to whether they think it will work based on the data so far and this will be presented to the CCTATF for consideration at the next meeting on April 1, 1999. Later in the summer, as more research evolves, these issues may be readdressed .

Tom Jerkins then talked about the other issues that the Scientific Committee's discussed and their resultant actions:

- ▶ "Remove citrus canker infected and corresponding exposed trees within 14 days of diagnosis as positive".
(Tom reported that this had no ambivalence to the committee and was proposed and accepted by their group)
- ▶ "Increase the survey frequency to a 60-day cycle in all citrus canker survey areas including buffer areas."
(This also had no ambivalence to the scientific committee and was proposed and accepted by their group).
- ▶ "To identify the boundaries of survey buffers in Broward, Dade, Collier, Hendry and Manatee counties, to include increasing the survey to a 60-day cycle in such buffers"

(Tom Jerkins advised that their committee was asked to consider the one-mile host free buffer and the committee decided that this was not the thing to do at this time, but instead to develop a virtual (disease-free) buffer).

NOTE: The CCTATF approved the Scientific Committee's recommendations pertinent to the **Epidemiology** as set forth by Tom Jerkins.

Steve Poe commented that with using the concept of the virtual buffer, the elements were to survey frequently enough to find every new infestation and to get those trees out of there absolutely as fast as possible and to absolutely have the exposed trees removed at the same time, that is to get the very best program you could get in that area because the thing that makes a virtual buffer work is that you do it fast.

Richard Gaskalla commented that it should be treated just like an infested area, and that is, the 60-day survey cycle and getting those trees out within the 14-day period would apply.

ISSUE: Use of remote Sensing Technology as a Survey Tool for Citrus Canker
(Position paper attached)

Tom Jerkins said basically this has to do with bringing together infrared aerial photography and light reflection signatures to develop a survey tool for citrus canker. The consensus of the group here is that this merging of technology and ground testing calibration will probably come a little bit "down the road." It is probably a little bit futuristic. Speaking for the group, they would support that to see how it develops to see how it can be used as a survey tool. Tom said they categorized it as a "moderate".

Comment: They are hoping to see these data next week so that when the committee again meets, the CCTATF can discuss this issue further.

ISSUE: Faster Procedures for Citrus Canker Diagnosis (Position paper attached for the record)

Tom Jerkins said the group discussed this and basically what this has to do is with the lab tests and methodology that must be done to confirm the citrus canker. Tim Schubert took control of this issue paper and basically, it introduces two modified diagnostic tools that will offer at least a regulatory confirmation of this disease so that they can act more quickly.

(The CCTATF group approves this recommendation).

ISSUE: Decontamination/ Disinfectant and Disease Control Products for the Citrus Canker Eradication Program

Tom Jerkins explained that these fall into two groups; disinfectant compounds and control eradication compounds. One recommendation is to spray with disinfectant which we have always done with the compounds provided. It was considered if we could improve the product and thus lower costs. There is some support to continue that effort and, in addition, there is a recommendation to look at new compounds by approaching pharmaceutical companies, but again, this was given "moderate" level of priority because the primary mission is to eradicate citrus canker. The Scientific Committee is proposing to put a letter together to solicit and test promising compounds. It was also recommended to prioritize rank. The last proposal on this issue paper was to prioritize rank a little bit in the "Precautions to Reduce the Risk of Spread of Citrus Canker in Groves and Nurseries" within the publication, but because the turn-around time on the committee, they just had their first cut at doing that and he thinks they need to get back together and look at that again so that the committee can present a prioritized list on those precautions.

Richard Gaskalla commented that they certainly need to make it in a more reader friendly format.

ISSUE: Movement of Citrus Host Fruit From a Citrus Canker Regulated Area

Tom Jerkins said basically, the scientific position is that fruit movement from a citrus canker regulated area that is harvested, transported and packed under current regulations does not likely present a risk to other citrus producing states or countries. That is the opinion of the committee, recognizing that your greatest concern will probably have some problems getting it to market.

ISSUE: Risk of Citrus Nursery Stock Movement from Quarantine Areas to Canker-free Zones

Tom Jerkins said the Scientific Committee had a very strong consensus and they consider it urgent that for the current policy which is **no movement** of citrus nursery stock from the quarantine area be continued. That was a very strong recommendation.

Chuck Reed asked if they used any other data than information from Brazil and information from the year 1910, and did they take into consideration the risk of moving a clean nursery tree out of a quarantine area versus moving citrus fruit out of a quarantine area?

Leon Hebb replied that the difference between a nursery tree and the fruit is that the fruit is going to be marketed and consumed but the tree is going to be planted for a long time.

Chuck Reed asked if the nursery does not have citrus canker, how can they keep a clean tree from moving out of a nursery that does not have citrus canker and they

have surveyed the nursery over and over.

Jim Graham commented that you just can't put a time frame on that and the risk is very high of transmitting canker over long distances. We know that there are wind-blown dispersals in all of the quarantine areas.

Comment: At the last meeting, Dr. Gottwald reported that in Florida, under our existing conditions, he would expect that citrus canker would express itself rather rapidly because the area is more suitable to manifestation of citrus canker. You don't think with a real strict inspection of a nursery within the quarantine area that it would be adequate if the nursery has not evidenced any citrus canker? You don't think that would be sufficient enough?

Tim Gottwald answered not trying to answer more than the biology, the difficulty is no matter how frequently you would insect any plant material which would be moved, there would always be the chance that you would have incipient infections in that material that goes undetected and would not develop until it reaches its origin and that has been implicated in a number of cases such as Brazil, and Japan, Australia, Argentina, and a number of other areas. It's not that the material isn't apparently clean; it's the fact that there is the potential, small, large whatever and that is the crux of the issue.

Tom Bowen I have an orange grove at my office property. It's between the Repetto and the Guthrie blocks. The Repetto block was removed two years ago; the bulk of the Guthrie block was removed about one year ago. Just now in the last month, the block at my office, early and mid-season oranges are starting to express disease symptoms; that's a year after the heavy infestation within 2,500 feet of that grove was removed. What they are removing now was missed on previous surveys. It is a very light infestation but it has been there for awhile. I have a hard time with movement of nursery stock from the quarantine area, outside the nursery, outside the quarantine area because the surveys are not perfect and they can talk about how fast the disease can manifest itself, but it doesn't have to only manifest itself, it has to manifest itself to a level where it is detectable; they don't find the first lesion in the grove.

Chuck Reed said he maintains that they are applying two different standards here. You are finding citrus canker in groves and you are removing only one citrus tree and you want to totally shut down a citrus nursery operation that doesn't have citrus canker; that never had citrus canker but it just happens to be in a quarantine area that someone draws on the line and what you have done is you might as well go in and burn that nursery because you have destroyed the economic value of those trees by doing that, and I think that is something that needs to be addressed. I understand the idea of what you are saying and you name all these countries where they have spread citrus canker through the citrus nurseries, but do they have the type of clean nursery operations, type of inspections such as the Division of

Plant Industry performs and the type of mandatory registration programs we have in this country.

Tim Gottwald answered that some do, some don't.

Comment: But we are basing everything we have on risk assessment and that is why we are all sitting here and we have to decide; we refer it to science and we, as a group will have to make some decisions.

Richard Gaskalla commented to use the Hendry/Collier county area as an example; you have citrus nurseries in Immokalee where infected groves have been found; say we clean this all up and we don't find anything else but we have to still quarantine a nursery, say, just for an arbitrary period of six months until we are confident we have it all cleaned up. What type of "death sentence" would a six-month period opposed to a one-year or two-year period; is six months just as bad - to shut someone down like that?

Chuck Reed not ---- right now we are dealing with two years. In most cases, six months would not be a death sentence.

More discussion ensued

Jim Griffiths said he wanted to ask a question about what they really did this morning if I may. You agreed in Miami, I think that you were going to ask that they push out the trees that were exposed within 125' of an infested tree. It is my understanding there is a commercial grapefruit grove in Collier County that has not had 125' pushed out around the infested tree. It has been 60'. Was that done with the approval of this committee; is that what you want done? I won't get into all the political implications; I could, but I think most of you know what they are. I don't think you need to sweep things like these under the rug. I think you need to put them on the table.

Craig Meyer asked that they have a brief discussion of what happened in that situation. The 60' was not on the first pass. On the first pass through, the distance actually exceeded 125'; the first time through, trees were removed that were about 250'. On the second survey, when there was a little light infection, we went about 125' and on the third pass, where the infestation was extremely light, that's when it fell below 125'. That is a different set of circumstances than saying we only went 60' in Collier County.

Jim Griffiths said he would ask to see a map that shows where the first trees were pushed and he would like to see how much overlap there is between where those trees are. What you are saying may be right.

Craig Meyer told Jim Griffiths that they are not about "pushing anything under the

rug" and will see to it that Jim is provided with the map and the risk assessment documentation will also be provided to him.

Jim Griffiths said you voted on a motion this morning that sounded like 125' distance virtually applied to everything. The motion didn't say that it was confined to Miami but I think there was general agreement that it was; probably it should apply to everything the way this thing has been going for the last ten years, we don't need to be taking chances now. You all have a problem with compensation and that is not talked about either when you go beyond 125'.

Richard Gaskalla replied that he would like to clarify because he doesn't want to give the wrong perception or view point on what they did on the motion pertinent to the 125'. It is Richard's understanding that we agreed that the 125' is going to be a benchmark and we are going to use it through the risk assessment and it can be increased or decreased depending upon risk assessment factors and that is exactly what we did in the Minton Grove.

ISSUE: Movement of Citrus Host Fruit From a Citrus Canker Regulated Area

Richard Gaskalla said he wanted to address fruit from a commercial grove. Is the CCTATF in agreement with the Scientific Committee's position paper and do we feel that the fruit from a commercial grove in a quarantine area that has been adequately inspected and found canker-free, that fruit can move within the state of Florida for distribution and sales?

Richard Kinney advised that has other ramifications because we are prohibiting receiving fruit from other citrus-producing regions of the world. What is California's reaction going to be to that? They are not going to take that recommendation very lightly. He feels it is an appropriate recommendation but it has some ramifications.

REGULATORY WORKING GROUP REPORT

George Hamner reported that the Regulatory Working Group met and they spent more time with questions than answers on issues the Scientific Group had to deal with and a lot of these issues have been touched on. First thing we did do on a regulatory basis is that we agreed that we need to differentiate, like it or not, between urban settings and dooryard trees and potential movement in an area that is highly developed with houses versus a commercial citrus area. We felt in the end we may have to have regulations that are different between these areas because of the way we approach the populace and/or tree settings; and risk assessment or whatever has to be done about taking out trees and you will see in the Regulatory Group's minutes that we have separated the issues of dooryard trees versus grove settings.

The first thing we talked about was **nursery stock** because it is a highly sensitive

subject to begin with and we asked a lot of questions more so than we came up with answers.

One thing we did do about **replanting commercial citrus within a quarantine area**, we did decide it was probably safe and from what we understood from risk assessment was that moving a nursery tree from within the quarantine area is fine but if you wanted to replant a grove, factors such as inoculum proximity to time of destruction in the past, risk assessment should be done, but it was probably okay to consider replanting, provided the scientific community, under the risk assessment, said the chance of reinfection here is low. Manatee County is suffering with this right now and we are gaining experience.

The big thing they did was they went through the documents needed for certification for a processing plant, packing house, contractor, yard man, etc. needed in a quarantine area where you are dealing with quarantined area fruit. Each of those have standards that are different than standards outside the quarantine area. You do have to tarp the fruit, chlorinate, treat equipment going in and out of the groves. There is a long list that the scientific community did develop a long time ago and it is probably "overkill" in that quarantine area right now but the fact is none of us want to risk changing anything in the quarantine area and all regulations should stand just. One exception from that is **the movement of fruit packed fresh fruit, when it goes through the proper channels, and it is treated at the packinghouse, the Regulatory Group feels that is perfectly safe to be shipped anywhere in the world, including Florida.** Paul Hornby was there and from the federal side, he is concerned about that because our trading partners may have problems with that.

Discussion ensued.

Comment: If we have that standard for ourselves, it would apply elsewhere, also.

Mike Shannon commented that right now our current policy on this for import is actually a trade barrier for a lot of countries that have citrus canker.

Richard Gaskalla said the difference is if you have citrus canker and an active eradication program is being conducted and it is now being controlled properly, but the minute that changes, you have to reassess the risk.

Question: Will you have enough field staff to make sure that if that fruit moves that they are going to follow the protocol "A through Z", and who is going to make sure that this is happening?

Richard Kinney said he thinks this is something that they have to look at again and our discussion on Argentina and the position we took on Argentina in the beginning. The industry has to feel comfortable that the science is there so that

we could face any of our support or opposition for any regulation changes. Right now after hearing the discussion, he feels hesitant to try to get something like that move forward and ask the USDA to try to make regulation changes if we are not quite ready to accept that ourselves. One very good point is that if we do it here, we got to expect that our trade partners will expect the same exact treatment there.

Richard Gaskalla said the thing that is hard to accept, right now is that, we are allowing fruit from a quarantine area to move outside a quarantine area to be packed to be shipped to non-citrus producing states. If there is any risk, it's moving that fruit from the grove to the packinghouse. We are allowing that, but we can't sell it back in Florida.

Connie Riherd said she agrees and she would not want to be on the witness stand, assuming that position.

Comment: On the other hand, you are not letting it go fresh; but you are allowing it to go process, that movement and that risk is still there.

Mike Shannon mentioned it is still another issue and given the resources that we would have to put to this problem, if we put them here, we are taking them from some other thing we need to work on; it is a resource priority.

Richard Gaskalla answered that there are not a lot of resources, however, all the groves in the quarantine area are going to be periodically inspected and it would be a matter of putting the processors and packers under compliance agreements which would involve some monitoring to make sure they are doing the things they need to be doing and, actually, it would probably be beneficial to ascertain that they are doing things such as cleaning out their trailers that they might not be doing otherwise.

Richard Kinney expressed his concern about setting a precedent for other countries.

More discussion.

George Hamner suggested that they leave this issue with the Regulatory Committee and they will discuss it within the next 2 weeks.

Mike Shannon said he agrees with Richard on this and he thinks it is the right thing to do.

Connie Riherd said she would like to see some action today if at all possible because there is a packing house that is implicated in this.

Craig Meyer asked, other than the government, how does the rest of the members

felt about this.

NOTE: The Issue of Movement of Citrus Host Fruit From a Citrus Canker Regulated Area was tabled for further consideration at the next meeting scheduled for April 1, 1999.

Movement of Citrus Host Fruit Outside of the Quarantine Area

Comment: Maybe the Science Committee can address at some time, kind of a list of degrees of severity relative to the potential to move the disease. We are seeing weather and grove care operations are probably the two highest methods to move the disease.

Richard Gaskalla said that has already been done and the Scientific Group has prioritized them in the position paper and they are going to make it more reader friendly.

George Hamner said the Scientific Committee has prioritized this although it is a little confusing but because of what they reported which in a nutshell has to do with if the inoculum is off the tree or it dries up, it dies. It is a hot item but it does not live as long as we thought in some cases. There are a lot lower priority items but the real risk seems to be movement of debris and nursery stock, wind and storms seem to be the top item, the question of birds, they are looking into, vehicle and heavy duty equipment when it goes through a wet grove; once it dries out, it seems to be much less risk than otherwise. These are things we have learned over the years. The important thing is to remove debris from your equipment. We need to come up with some practical terms. George said he would like to invite some harvesting people so they can get some practical terms/applications. Right now there are 50 growers with 50 procedures. Every one is clamoring for the list of what to do.

George Hamner reported that other issues that occurred to them was the distances of positive trees (talked about already); length of time it takes to make an official diagnosis in a newly infested section. The Regulatory Group wants this to be done quicker.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/EDUCATION WORKING GROUP REPORT

Ron Hamel reported that they did not have a committee meeting . Most of the members of the committee were out trying to get money for the effort, "beating on doors in Tallahassee and Washington" but Andy LaVigne and Ron had some discussions about where they need to go with the public information program. First thing they need to get some clarification on their ability to utilize some of the funding that they are fighting for to use in the public information program. You really have two general publics; you have the grower side of the industry and the

industry itself which we can pretty much try to work internally on. Then you have the external part which is primarily focused in the Dade County area to get in there and develop a strategic plan to work with the community there to communicate what we are going to be doing down there and to what level and extent. We need to certainly try to include in our funding in our plans some dollars to actually launch a pretty heavy information program in that metropolitan Dade area. Hopefully with the steering committee composed of communications people and/or field leaders within the Hispanic community.

The other part of this is we are trying to determine the dollar figure of just how much monies we will need for the effort and it is almost a "Catch 22" contingent on what the plan is - what level of communication do we really need down there. We are talking ballpark figures that run anywhere from \$75,000 down to \$50,000 and we will need to take a hard look at that and sharpen the pencil and look at what it is going to take and that would probably be on a per-year basis, depending on what we are doing.. Since this effort is going to be so expensive, from the layman's perspective, you are actually building "Sherman's Army" to go down there and really get on with taking trees out and in order to do that, we certainly need someone from our PR campaign to go down there and tell people what we are going to do and why and this should come through a major communications effort launched through the Hispanic community itself. Not saying that we are not going to do anything, but it is like speaking the language; you move to get the right people involved and steering it.

Andy LaVigne said the key thing with removing the 125' in an urban setting, in speaking with the Hispanic delegation from Dade County, is getting out there ahead of the "noise" that is going to be coming from the talk shows and the Hispanic newspapers. The description they gave us is very similar to the problem we had with "CRAM AND SCAM" in the malathion application for medfly. You have a very small, vocal group of people and if we can counter that somewhat, it will take care of the situation. We thought about a lot of different things to do, from everything to trying to get Jeb Bush and his wife on a PSA down in that area speaking Spanish about the program. The community down there has a very good relationship with the Governor so those kind of things would offset a lot of that if it comes from the industry requesting that, we could very well get these things done, so that is kind of the direction we would like to go. The thing we have to get with Mike Shannon and Craig Meyer is, of the monies that were acquired through the state and federal government, is there the ability to take some of that to use for public education and can you allow the industry to do that instead of the government to do that?. This is one of those things we don't know.

Comment: In all reality, the funding is the critical part because you can get all geared up and then get closed down at the border. In order to be effective, we need to get down there and start working on it right away, but we need some direction on finances.

More Discussion

It was mentioned that we have a lot of different initiatives on the communication part. Industry groups such as Mutual, Gulf, etc., and the Department of Agriculture have individuals who are working in there, but what they probably need is to enlist the services of a P.R. agency within that area that has the Hispanic people on their staff and to enlist some opinion leaders and get the support of the leaders of the community behind us. They know how to communicate with the people of the community.

Ken Bailey cautioned that they need to keep in mind that we have been dealing with the public in Dade and Broward (although not as long in Broward) counties for three and a half years. You are not the "good guys". If you are go down and want to bring in growers, etc., you are the "money people," and the reason we are burning their trees. The group you need to center around is the residents themselves to go on the radio to talk for you and to explain to the people that we are not just dealing with this problem for the industry; it's for everyone in Dade County and in the state of Florida that have backyard trees that are not currently affected by this disease, and if you want to have a successful campaign in Dade County, that is the group you need to get involved, not necessarily growers and industry leaders.

Comment: That is what the Public Relations/Information Group is looking at, the people that have volunteered their efforts to date are citizens of Dade County. They just happen to have groves, too, and they can speak the language and tell the people that there were 2 million citrus trees in Dade County ; now there are only 1.9 million and if we don't have a successful effort in Dade County, there will be no citrus trees in that county. But when we say growers, it is more people who understand the industry, but are also a part of the community. The group is trying to get the papers interested in Broward. There is virtually no interest in the Ft. Lauderdale Sun Sentinel. The Miami Herald and Dade County papers are showing much more interest. The Public Relations/Information Group is going to be pro-active in that they are going to pull together letters to the editors and information groups, but getting down to the people in the community is going to be very important.

Craig Meyer commented that the guiding principle in the Department in the medfly operations (the Commissioner said this), when people know what we know, they may not like what we do, but they will let us do it; and generally speaking, except for a vocal small group, people accepted what we had to do. Our biggest problem is to make sure that the people who are affected know what we know.

House bill 745 (Dooryard Compensation, 10 day notification)

Craig Meyer advised that this bill, among other things, would mandate a pretty

"hefty" reimbursement for dooryard trees that were removed. It was priced out at about \$55 million. That probably will have no chance of passing in Tallahassee. The other part of the bill which is actually going to be a big impediment is the notification requirement and they are working on that and that may be a component of the public relations program. If we have to send registered, certified mail to everyone before we even survey their property, it is going to be a great impediment.

Connie Riherd advised that they are still compiling their mailing list of people that want to be informed about the meetings and to get the meetings started, we just had the membership list. Connie asked that anyone who wanted to be on the mailing list to receive notifications of the meetings, or any of the proceedings of the working groups, to submit their business cards and/or name and address and she will see that they are included on the list.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 1, 1999 at 9:30 a.m. at the Ben Hill Griffin Auditorium, Lake Alfred

Submitted by Florence Roberts