



Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
BOB CRAWFORD, Commissioner
The Capitol - Tallahassee, FL 34399-0800

Please Respond to:
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July 7, 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Florida Citrus Canker
Technical Advisory Task Force (FCCTATF)

FROM: Richard Gaskalla, ^{RG} Director
Division of Plant Industry
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

SUBJECT: Summary Minutes of the FCCTATF - June 22, 1999

Please find enclosed the above subject meeting minutes for your information and review. Please note that the location, date, and time of the next FCCTATF is:

Friday, July 16, 1999, 9:30 AM, Room #1, at the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Citrus Research and Education Center, 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred.

Should you find any errors or omissions in the minutes or have any questions or comments, please contact my office. Thank you for your assistance.

RG/bsm

xc: Craig Meyer
Richard Gunnels
Sandy Roberts
Alternate Members
Interested Parties

Enclosure: FCCTATF Minutes

Summary
FLORIDA CITRUS CANCKER TECHNICAL ADVISORY TASK FORCE (FCCTATF) MEETING

June 22, 1999 9:30 AM
Citrus Research and Education Center
Ben Hill Griffin, Jr. Citrus Hall
Lake Alfred, Florida

Members Present

Mr. John Barben (HCCGA)
Mr. Gregory Carlton (FCM)
Dr. Jonathan Crane (UF/IFAS/TREC)
Mr. Hugh English (FCPC-Duda)
Mr. Richard Gaskalla (FDACS/DPI)
Dr. Tim Gottwald (USDA/ARS)
Mr. George Hamner (IRCL)

Mr. Ellis Hunt (Hunt Brothers
Cooperative)
Mr. Craig Meyer (FDACS)-Executive
Committee
Mr. Chuck Reed (Citrus Nurserymen's
Association)
Mr. Mike Shannon (USDA)-Executive
Committee
Mr. Norman Todd (Florida Citrus
Production Managers Association)

Others Present*

Mr. Kenneth Bailey (FDACS/DPI)
Ms. Lisa Backman (FCM)
Mr. Michael Barnes (Galileo Group,
Incorporated)
Mr. Peter Chaires (Florida Gift
Fruit Shippers, Association)
Dr. Wayne Dixon (FDACS, DPI)
Dr. James T. Griffiths (Citrus
Growers, Associates)
Mr. Leon Hebb (FDACS/DPI)
Mr. Michael Hornyak (USDA)
Ms. Laurene Levy (USDA)

Mr. A.C. McAulay (FDACS/DPI)
Mr. Vince Mercurio (Galileo Group,
Incorporated)
Mr. Jack Nietzke (FDACS/DPI)
Mr. Bill Peeples (Commissioner
Crawford's Office)
Dr. Steve Poe (USDA)
Mrs. Connie Riherd (FDACS/DPI)
Mrs. Florence Roberts (FDACS/DPI)
Ms. Vivian Rudd (FDACS)
Dr. Tim Schubert (FDACS/DPI)
Dr. Xiaolan Sun (FDACS/DPI)

***Note:** There were others in attendance; however, their names were not recorded as they did not sign the attendance sheet.

OPENING REMARKS

Craig Meyer gave an update regarding the Dade County situation and reported that they went to Dade County Thursday and held a press availability meeting which was attended by several of the television stations. The group that went down was Mike Shannon, Tim Schubert, Ken Bailey, Mike Hornyak, Vivian Rudd, Liz Compton, and himself. On Friday morning, they met with the new Citizens Committee. They talked for several hours, with familiar faces present, the same things were again said although they tried to ask them in an organized fashion for some of their issues, and Dr. Schubert, again, went through the results of the experiment. **Craig** said he thinks it was eye-opener to the citizens who are on the panel, which includes Ms. Brackett, who is one of the leaders of the vocal group in Dade County. The committee was made up of program people. Richard Gaskalla chaired the meeting and they had five citizens recommended by legislators in Miami. Effective yesterday morning, they started marking the trees that were within 125 feet of positive trees and it is anticipated within ten days or less, those trees will start coming down.

Earlier Thursday, Richard Gaskalla, Ken Bailey, Craig, and Terry Smith met with Chris Asplundh and his Dade County manager and they discussed ramping up in our need to make some changes to their cutting procedures. In listening to some of the complaints that we have down there from the citizens, one of their biggest complaints has been about the chipping. The people who are opposed to what we are doing are complaining that we are spreading the disease through the chipping in that

Dr. Gottwald's research has recovered some bacterium in the air around the chipper. We don't know whether that is significant for spread or not, but it is irritating to people and it is giving our critics ammunition. We informed Asplundh that we are just going to cut the trees and haul them off from the curb sides rather than chipping at the curb sides and they are going to take them directly to the landfill which is a program change and, hopefully, will alleviate some of the anxiety in the neighborhoods where we have been chipping away all day long which would be the case again as we are now removing the exposed trees as well. Basically, that was the fun part of the trip last week. **Craig** is anticipating that now as the word is out regarding the removal of the 125 feet exposed trees, that we will be hearing from a much larger number of citizens now that we are impacting them and it will be a little more difficult for people to raise a rational objection to our cutting exposed trees, based upon the reaffirming science of Dr. Gottwald and his team.

Mike Shannon stated that we are moving forward, although it may not be as fast as everybody might like. They are pulling together the program and are working with several of the states and sharing vehicles, supervisors, and facilities so they can get the ground forces on the ground in an effective way. They will be meeting next week on a contract to develop the data base information system to drive this program in an effective way and it is not going to be cheap, but it will be a mechanism to increase our efficiency and it is critical to us. However, it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

CITRUS CANKER ERADICATION PROGRAM (CCEP) UPDATE

Miami - Citizens Committee

Richard Gaskalla said, to follow up on some of Craig's comments regarding the Miami meeting, although none of them were really looking forward to going down there to tell everyone that we were going to go back and cut exposed trees and then meeting with the citizens who had probably the most concerns; but as far as going down there and delivering bad news, **Richard** said he doesn't think it could have gone any better. They got pretty good balanced coverage from the media. The group that they met with over all were pleased with the makeup of the citizens that are on that committee. They have a lot of questions about the eradication program and our procedures, some of which we addressed at the meeting; others they took copious notes on and they are going to attack it similar to how they did with the Mediterranean fruit fly program - if there are issues that they can "give" on and still eradicate citrus canker, they are going to, but the issues they can't "give" on, they will bring the right technical expertise to talk to these citizens and explain why it is that way, so that they are not hearing it from the program people but are listening to an outside party that is more knowledgeable on this subject than anyone else. **Richard** feels this will pay dividends. It's good to have some industry representation on the Citizens Committee. Lisa Backman from Mutual was there

for the first meeting; Craig Wheeling was there from the lime industry and anytime the citizens got off base on the fact that this was just an industry problem of something we are doing that doesn't really benefit the citizens, they were quick to put that back into the proper perspective. **Richard** said he is encouraged and feels if we use this Citizens Committee right that it will help us get the job done, from the Department's standpoint, we are committed to follow through on the issues that are identified to get the job done.

Richard advised that there have been a few significant events that have occurred since our last meeting outside of Dade County.

Collier and Hendry Counties

Richard reported that we had a new detection in the Hendry County area in a residential area, more of a ranch type community, called Montura Ranch Estates. **Richard** said that Jack Nietzsche is a pretty good "detective" since Jack knew the high risk areas in the Collier/Hendry area that he has followed up on and that has paid dividends because if canker is out there we need to know where it is in order to deal with it. Jack knew there was a connection between the Montura Estates area and Dade County and we did some survey there. The initial survey was all negative. This property that was found positive was one that we could not get access to and we asked the party to call us back to allow us to get in. There were 21 trees on that property and we did find 19 positive trees there. The good thing about it is that it is relatively isolated even in the ranch community as far as any door yard citrus being close to that property and Jack Nietzsche reports that all positive trees have been destroyed. We dealt with that, but it just emphasizes that we have to be ever vigilant and we must implement our Statewide survey as quickly as we can to know if there are any other Montura Estate-type sites out there so we can get rid of them as quickly as possible.

Collier County

Richard reported we re-surveyed the Minton Grove since the last meeting on a 30-day cycle; we found some additional positive trees in all the grapefruit blocks; those trees were burned in place. We have initiated a contract to take out all the grapefruit blocks; and then murcotts that fall within 125 feet of any of the positive grapefruit sites. An immediate final order has been issued to John Minton to that effect. Contract bids have been opened so everything is falling in place to get that done. If everything goes like we like, **Richard** assumes we can be in there as early as this week to start this control action.

Craig Meyer said this would be an appropriate time to recognize Dr. Griffith's foresight in advising us at the last meeting that we would find citrus canker in there and we did and he was absolutely correct. Once **Craig** informed the Commissioner about this find, he told us to get all the grapefruit out of there as quickly as possible and while we did not detect any canker in the murcotts, we are going to follow the 125 feet rule as **Richard** has specified.

Manatee County Program Area

Richard said there was not much new to report there, but A.C. McAulay reported that they had one positive grapefruit find in a residential area which has been removed. All surveys are on schedule.

Citrus Canker Program Director's Meeting

Richard reported that they had a program director's meeting last week while they were in Miami to talk about ramping up of the program and set up some bench marks as to where we want to be by September on the program. We have a big task ahead of us; things are starting to fall in place as far as getting office locations, vehicles, and additional personnel on board and **Richard** feels that momentum will continue to build and we are on track for meeting the goals and objectives that we set forth in the strategic plan.

Question: What are the plans in Montura as far as control; are you going to go five miles?

Jack Nietzke answered that we started out with a radius of a half mile; then we will go to one mile; two miles, and then move into the citrus grove called Desiree Farms which is scheduled for tomorrow, also at their request. So we are just going to keep moving out in a wider band to see if there is any other indication of disease. **Jack** said this particular location is relatively isolated. There are probably 500 feet around the whole thing where there are no residences with citrus. The oldest tree could be two and a half to three years old; it has been frozen off a couple of times, but almost everything else has been planted within the last six to seven months and mostly maybe five-gallon pot size. We are trying to find the source and we have been told that they bought them at K-Mart, Home Depot, and Walmart but we are having difficulty because some of them are out of business and people do not keep track of that anymore. Some of them did come from a nursery; whether we can run it down, we just don't know at this time.

Richard Gaskalla said there is also evidence that a couple of those trees were dug up possibly from Miami and transplanted because the man who lived there had contacts in Dade County. **Richard** advised that this will continue to be investigated.

Further discussion ensued regarding the positive Montura trees and the possible origin of these trees.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Regulatory Issues Working Group

George Hammer reported that the Regulatory Issues Working Group does not have anything to report, but there is going to be a joint meeting between the Regulatory and Science Issues Working Groups to discuss the buffer zone and some of the issues that they are going to bring up from a regulation standpoint next Wednesday morning at 10:00 AM at the Indian River Citrus League office.

Science Issues Working Group

Richard Gaskalla advised that Tom Jerkins is on vacation and has asked **Richard** to move ahead with some of the science issues in his absence. The issues that were referred to the Science Issues Working Group from the Regulatory Issues Working Group were: Nursery stock movement in quarantine areas; decontamination disinfection guidelines, specifically the use of non-porous picking equipment; the wisdom of hedging and topping in quarantine areas; and the last issue was the risk assessment that was the research work that was

done by Drs. Gottwald, Sun, and Graham on the need to go beyond 125 feet on exposed trees. As George Hamner mentioned on the risk assessment of going beyond 125 feet, a meeting is going to be held of the science and regulatory working groups to discuss that issue to determine what the best course of action is to implement those recommendations. Relative to the other issues, they assigned them out for issue papers. Drs. Graham and Dixon developed the issue paper on nursery stock movement (attached is packet relative to issues distributed at the meeting.)

Risk of Citrus Nursery Stock Movement from Quarantine Areas to Canker-Free Zones

Richard Gaskalla advised that the scientific group looked at this issue again to determine if there were any ways they could work with the nursery industry on nursery movement within the citrus canker area. Unfortunately, the bottom line on this issue is that probably the most dangerous means of spread of citrus canker is on plant host materials and if you have a nursery that is within a quarantine area, it is high risk, you don't want to let that nursery stock move around the State in that multiple focal point, should that nursery at sometime show positive for citrus canker. Dr. Graham went back and looked at the program at the turn of the century and that is how citrus canker was distributed Statewide to start with. It is just a high-risk issue. **Richard** thinks the best we can do is to say that nurseries that fall within the quarantine area, we will try to apply the risk assessment guidelines to that nursery as best we can to determine if there is some way that nursery stock can move out of that nursery over time in a safe manner. Certainly, there will be some time period that the nursery is going to have to go through before nursery stock can be moved. Richard mentioned that one of the changes that should be made on the issue paper is (on the back page) when they are talking about the nursery "undergoing long-term quarantine (six months to two years)" the words in parenthesis "(six months to two years)" should be deleted because the long-term quarantine period will be determined through the risk assessment.

Decontamination/Disinfection and Disease Control Products for the CCEP

Richard Gaskalla reported that this issue was to integrate the non-porous picking equipment into the decontamination/disinfection guidelines. Dr. Schubert took the lead on this issue. **Richard** asked Tim if he had any specific comments he would like to make specific to this issue.

Tim Schubert stated that the document was pretty straightforward and that they just incorporated it into the text for harvesting and they added another box to the chart under harvesting to accommodate that new information. They left it as recommended rather than mandatory, recognizing that it may impose severe economic hardships on some folks to switch over to aluminum, plastic, and smooth fiberglass equipment, but we do highly recommend it.

George Hamner remarked that at their group meeting next week, they are going to look at the possibility that in a quarantine situation, in a quarantined grove, as making that a requirement of the compliance agreement because there is no question that the use of non-porous equipment is better because it is easier to decontaminate and less likely to spread the canker.

Note: Under the Groves (Caretaking) recommendations, number 5, second sentence, which reads, "Require grove service contractors (for hedging topping, fertilization, weeding, mowing) to follow prescribed disinfection procedures before entering and after leaving an operation", the words "after leaving an operation" should be amended to read, "before leaving an operation". The reason for this is if there is a crew coming in that has been within a mile of an infection, the grower wouldn't want them cleaning out when they get to that grower's grove which the word "after" would allow. They need to get cleaned when they come in and cleaned when they go out.

Consideration of Prohibiting Hedging and Topping Within Quarantine Areas

Richard said this issue was given to Pete Timmer for research and development of an issue paper which is the last paper in the packet. Pete did a nice job of looking at the issue from "A to Z" as to what one should be thinking about it you have a grove in a quarantine area. Richard said he thinks the theme is that one needs to minimize activities in that grove that involves contact with the trees which goes beyond hedging and topping to fertilization, pesticide treatments, etc. Tim went on to say that you should time the activities when the grove is not as susceptible as it would have been otherwise; in other words, when it is dry and it doesn't have a great amount of flush in it. Applications of fungicides, particularly copper, should be minimized. But, if you have to use copper for a specific disease control activity, other than canker, it should not be prohibited, but you should do everything you can to find an alternative so that it does not suppress symptoms of citrus canker because if it is present, you want to detect it and get rid of it. One thing that the science working group added this morning in their deliberations is there should be an inspector in that grove immediately prior to hedging or topping to help assure that there is no citrus canker present and this will be incorporated into the issue paper.

Question: Michael Shannon asked, after this committee acts on these documents, will they be incorporated into our control practices?

George Hamner answered that these items will be discussed at their next meeting. The consideration on hedging and topping which could be a major item which is if we required rather than requested that there be a pre-inspection prior to hedging or topping or something of that sort in the grove.

Leon Hebb remarked that he didn't think there was any problem at all because in the quarantine area, they have regular inspections anyway. We have regular inspections 60 days in the quarantine area and every 30 days in the positive area.

George Hamner said it should not be any problem, but that is why they are going to talk about. George doesn't think it is a huge burden on anybody and he feels it is just common sense; but it may create some implications that we may not be aware of and that is why it is the last item for them as they go through the paper if there is any other regulation they want to put in place.

Mike Shannon asked if there could be a change in regulations?

George Hamner said it could be in the quarantine area.

Mike Shannon asked, then the reaction on this is pending further discussion by the regulatory group?

George Hamner said it was brought to them for further review.

Mike Shannon asked **George Hamner** if there were any issues left for the regulatory subcommittee to discuss on the decontamination/disinfection issue ?

George Hamner replied that there were no other issues to be discussed on the decontamination/disinfection issue.

Mike Shannon asked if it is ready to go, if there is no more discussion necessary, where does it go to make it available to the people who need it?

Richard Gaskalla said he thought the regulatory group was going to give it its final blessing and then it will be available for distribution and at that point, he feels it should be sent out with a cover letter of explanation to the trade magazines and industry groups.

George Hamner remarked, in theory, the regulatory working group would have to come back to this group for final approval; but he is hoping instead to go around that by receiving pre-FCCTATF approval. They are into three issues: one is the 1900 feet; the other has to do with harvesting equipment, which may or not be added to the compliance agreement; and/or this pre-inspection. The biggest item is the 1900 feet.

Richard Gaskalla said his "read" on that is on these subtle changes to the sanitation guidelines that if the full committee is in agreement that we could bypass bringing that back but the 1900 feet issue should probably come back before the full committee.

Mike Shannon said then the sanitation guidelines are open for acceptance by the committee at this time.

George Hamner agreed that whatever comes out of their regulatory meeting next week will be handed out accordingly.

Mike Shannon remarked, in other words, the regulatory group wants to have a run at it? Is that what you are saying?

George Hamner answered that the regulatory group is satisfied with the scientific report from what he heard today. The difference is that there is some concern on the regulatory side that asks the scientific group to look at making part of these recommendations mandatory. The recommendations from the scientific group right now were simply that these are good ideas and we should implement them; nothing was mandatory and the regulatory committee thinks we should look at whether or not we want to have one or two of the items made mandatory or incorporated into the compliance agreement.

Mike Shannon remarked, then the action today is to refer these to the working group for final implementation?

More discussion ensued.

Tim Schubert said he thinks we need to consider this as a dynamic document and after the regulatory and scientific groups meet Wednesday, it will be in final form.

Mike Hamner stated that acceptance by this committee is nothing more than the fact that from the regulatory standpoint, the regulatory needs to look at this and determine if they want to change anything. It is going to be flowing as it goes and since they are meeting, that is why it will be coming under them next Wednesday. The main part of the meeting next week with the joint meeting between the scientific and regulatory is to come up with some kind of solution or deal with the 1900 feet.

Motion 1 was made concerning the document containing the two issues, "Consideration of Prohibiting Hedging and Topping Within Quarantine Areas" and "Decontamination/Disinfection and Disease Control Products for the CCEP."

MOTION 1: Tim Gottwald moved, seconded by George Hamner, that the FCCTATF accepts this document of the Science Issues Working Group relative to the sanitary guidelines as a dynamic document, not having to pass through the full committee for approval. Passed unanimously.

Fruit Movement from Quarantine Areas

Richard Gaskalla said going back to our long-standing discussion on fruit movement from quarantine areas, the USDA did set up a work shop in California to introduce this issue to the other citrus-producing states. They had a two-to-three-hour discussion in Riverside, California. All the citrus producing states were represented at that meeting. The reception to this issue was "COOL". They had a lot of questions about the risk assessment document that had been developed. Admittedly, some of the information that is in the risk assessment is "informed opinion" rather than published scientific facts. We don't apologize for that because informed opinion sometimes can be just as valuable as published research data. Tim Gottwald is making some of the changes that were recommended at the meeting and we are going to send a revised copy back to the USDA asking them two things (i.e., (1) We would like to be able to distribute this fruit in Florida from quarantine areas, first and (2) Beyond that, at some future date, we would like to be able to move fruit from the quarantine areas to the citrus-producing states. Just what is going to result from that proposal, Mike Shannon might want to comment on that.

Mike Shannon said the proposal will go out in the Federal register and then those who have problems with it will have an opportunity to express their views.

Steve Poe reported that except for the meeting in Riverside, even the people who had serious reservations about the risk assessment, really liked that we

had the meeting and they got a lot of positive feedback on that and we certainly think it was worthwhile because among other things, it gave us a much better indication of where people who didn't like the concept at all were coming from. It was a nice opportunity to ask people to show their hands on this before we got into rule making.

Mike Shannon asked if they felt that the meeting changed people's minds? Do they feel that the people who came to that meeting just walked away with maybe a different way of thinking about it?

Richard Gaskalla replied that he thinks they certainly have a better understanding of the "method behind our madness". What we presented made a lot of sense to a lot of people. **Richard** said he just thinks it is hard for them, as it was for us, to talk about moving fruit from the quarantine area until you really look at the science behind it and the safeguards in place and then it becomes clearer.

Tim Schubert commented, if we could get to the point where we could set up Florida as a pilot program, test the theory that it can be safely undertaken to move fruit from a quarantine area, that we would be in excellent shape, but that is a tricky issue from a Federal standpoint to mark off Florida as unique entity as far as regulations concerning fruit movement from a quarantine area because it would set a precedent.

Steve Poe said that is still a real problem to be resolved as to how do we distinguish between a part of Florida outside the regulated area and other citrus producing states. In the past, with every dealing we have had with the officers of the General Council as far as they are concerned, they are all the same.

George Hamner said the dilemma, and mind you, the Citrus League and a lot of the citrus industry - not all groups, but some of the groups - did support this, but there is one thing we need to think about in a pilot program. In theory, we are believing that this is okay because we have the scientific data and he thinks a lot of people in Florida believe that, but what are our outside markets going to think if not all citrus producing states in the United States will not take this product and we have a pilot program in Florida? The theory was that once we opened it to all states, then we are telling the rest of the world that our program is sound. You go to Europe - and the only state that is doing this is Florida - and we want to ship to Europe. Are the people in Spain really going to accept this until the people in California do, or are we going to shut ourselves off and create a problem over there that we don't want? **George** said he would have to back up and rethink. He said he has seen the data and he believes it, but he doesn't know if, politically, that would be in their best interest.

Steve Poe answered, also, the other issue that was on the minds of the people meeting in Riverside, was if that would represent the weakening of their current restrictions on accepting fruit from other countries with citrus canker such as Argentina, etc.

George Hamner said from what he has heard here, the people that were here, their objections were less focused on the data and the safety of that fruit as they were the whole protocol system and George thinks that is probably the California people's general feeling. George is more concerned as to what happens to their trading partners if they are the only state that is allowing this in and we are the only State doing the export, what credit ability does that give us on the acceptability of the product?

George Hamner asked Mike Shannon what their plans are concerning this shipment; are they going to rework their paper and try to prove to the delegation out west that the data is correct or are we going to go to the federal people and the government is going to apply for a pilot program because if we are going to a pilot program route, he wants the industry to be involved in it because George does not think it is a good idea at all and this is not rubber-stamped at this level unless we are voting on it.

Mike Shannon explained that the risk assessment team would rework the document and add some information that was generated at the California meeting and then the request would be referred forward to the USDA to enter into channels of the Federal rule that would be required with the idea of making this part of the pilot program.

George Hamner remarked that he did not hear this panel request a pilot program. George said he did hear this committee ask for certification of fruit in all citrus-producing states. Right now he feels this is a dead issue.

Steve Poe advised that he is very pessimistic about us ever handing out a proposal or rule that would treat the non-quarantine part of Florida differently than other citrus producing states.

More discussion ensued.

MOTION 2: George Hamner moved, seconded by Greg Carlson, that the issue of movement of fruit from a quarantine area be sent back to the Regulatory Issues Working Group for them to again deal with the issue and the new circumstances that have developed. The Regulatory Issues Working Group will then bring their recommendation back to the FCCTATF for further discussion/action. Passed Unanimously.

Federal Research Monies (\$700,000) Allocation

Laurene Levy reported that they have put together a panel of scientists and industry representatives for distribution of the \$700,000 research monies allocated for this year by the Federal government. Initially, they went out to individuals who they knew were currently doing citrus canker research and asked them to submit their proposals and tell us their needs to accomplish their research, not only in the first year but also for the second year which will give them the ability to go back and ask for additional funds. They will be opening that up for a call for proposals for other types of research such as chemical controls, etc. Laurene further explained the process that they are following relative to distributing the Federal monies for citrus canker

research. A report will be sent out to the FCCTATF members as to the research projects that have been proposed and the research that has been funded and then some type of accountability mechanism will be set up for reporting back to everyone concerning this research.

Richard Gaskalla reported that proposals have been sent out to pharmaceutical companies and several products have been brought to their attention, the ones that seem to show the most promise are new chemicals that actually stimulate the plant's defense mechanisms. There are new bactericides that are being used in tomatoes to fight off *Xanthomonas*-type bacteria in that crop; whether or not they are going to work as well in citrus is unknown, but it is something they are going to look at.

Public Relations/Education Issues Working Group Report

Lisa Backman said to reiterate what Richard Gaskalla had reported previously, coverage at the Citizens Committee meeting was pretty balanced relative to the television and radio coverage they received. They are in the process of setting up with the Miami Herald later this week. Ken Bailey, Vivian Rudd, Lisa Backman, Craig Wheeling, and some lime growers in the area to basically talk to reporters to give them a better understanding of the eradication program. **Lisa** said she is hoping to be able to get Dr. Schubert to speak to them, also. **Lisa** also reported that Carlos, who is an extension agent in Broward County, participated in a Hispanic radio talk show two days after the announcement regarding the 125 feet rule where they discussed citrus canker.

Research Report - Aerial Technology for Detecting Citrus Canker

Jack Nietzke introduced Vince Mercurio and Michael Barnes of the Galileo Group. **Jack** said the Galileo Group has come here this morning to make a short presentation. As a little bit of background, an industry group or a grower brought the Galileo Group to us because they felt they might be able to detect citrus canker through imaging. We combined this project with two projects of IFAS and several other projects. We put *Diaprepes*, citrus tristeza virus, invasive plants, and citrus canker in a program as a joint effort between industry, IFAS, and DPI. The Production Managers Association loved the first piece of it. It is hyper spectral imaging.

The Galileo Group gave a slide presentation explaining the work they are doing. They reported on the analysis and progress they have made to date on the hyper spectral imaging relative to citrus canker detection. The biggest advantage that hyper spectral imaging, if perfected, would provide is that it would allow for more timely detection of citrus canker. If you find the canker early, there is less chance of spread. They also talked about the monies spent thus far on this research and their future financial needs to continue this research work.

The Galileo Group, Incorporated, believe their research shows great promise. Results are inclusive and there is more research needed.

NOTE: Booklets containing informational brochure and hand-out were distributed to interested parties about the company, its operations and applied hyper spectral imaging process, including their citrus canker mission.

Craig Meyer mentioned that he would like to see this work go forward. At a minimum, if we had the technology that could fly a grove and ascertain that it does not have citrus canker or even 99 percent accuracy because eventually, it will show up because we are charged to inspect all citrus Statewide and it is part of our Department's strategic plan adopted by the legislature, etc. In particular, in addition to flying a grove, of great interest to us in the program is the urban issue, because there is so much dooryard citrus in urban settings and that is very difficult to survey. After the complaining about cutting the trees, and complaining about not getting paid for the trees, the number one remaining complaint we get from citizens in the Dade county area are surveyors coming on to their properties. They don't like strangers coming into their back yards. If we had a way to fly these urban areas, particularly along the East Coast, north of Indian River where there is still a lot of back dooryard citrus, where we are close enough to the water, there may be citrus canker there. Those are the two things that would help us in the program immensely. In addition to the \$700,000, **Craig** believes there will be more research monies in the next batch of money which will come October 1.

Communication to the Industry

George Hamner mentioned that we need a better method of communication to the industry. **George** said it was assumed that everybody knew about the Manatee find, but he doesn't think that half of the industry knows about it. **George** said we keep talking about notifying Florida Citrus Mutual, Indian River Citrus League, and the major grower groups. It won't take but a paragraph-we need to let them know.

Richard Gaskalla mentioned that each time they would update the web site and electronically mail each grower group and to let them pull the information off.

Craig Meyer advised that it will take a combination of things. The citrus canker web site needs to be updated immediately and that is going to be our "Bible". If we know about it, it will have to be in our citrus canker site. That will require our diligence in posting it. The second thing is we will be pro-active when canker is found and we will intensify our efforts by all means to get it out to the grower associations.

Lisa Backman said she just wanted to point out that she is in regular contact with Richard Gaskalla and Connie Riherd. Usually they call Andy, but if Andy is not in the office, he has her contact Richard or Connie and run down the situation and she was informed about the Montura Estates find and usually the discussions center around as to whether or not it is going to be released to the news media because she is public relations. Of course, the information they get, is released to their board members after that, but she wanted to clear up any questions that they are not in regular contact with them, because they are.

More Discussion Followed.

Virtual Buffer Concept

Question: What is the status of the virtual buffer to the north? If and when is that virtual buffer going to be enacted?

Craig Meyer answered that there has not been any virtual buffer yet and when we do, it will be on both ends. It will be discussed at the joint regulatory/scientific meeting on Wednesday. We have the funds and we are coming up on the deadline for the governor to sign the general agriculture bill and within that bill, one of the components is for our authority to cut an actual buffer. **Craig** says he thinks we have the legal authority to do that, but there is some debate going on, so we put some additional language into the bill and **Craig** feels that we will be strong enough to cut an actual buffer, not even a virtual buffer which, with the science group's input will allow us to design buffers on either end, but the urgency for the north part is that from the data, we are getting more spread northeast than southwest.

Question: From what I read in the minutes, they were talking about a two-mile type buffer?

Craig Meyer answered that is early discussion and we are not anywhere near that at all. We don't have the money to do that. The concept of the buffer is based on the theory that if you look over time at the data on the spread of canker in Dade County, 99 percent, plus is weather-driven. The point is that when he looks at the data and he looks at the map of the spread, with the exception of the jump up to Coral Springs, and the one find over in eastern Broward, there is no big jump north in big increments; it's more weather related than it seems to be man movement. We can't defend against man movement of plant material, short of police state tactics. But we can empower ourselves somewhat against weather movement, except for the extraordinary weather events. Hopefully, and the Commissioner is comfortable with this, if we get a hot spot in Broward County, armored with our new data and where we are cutting at least 125 feet, we may go into a hot spot and cut more than 125 feet and let the legal people sort out if we have any financial restitution to make where we go beyond 125 feet. That issue is yet to be resolved, but outside the current quarantine area. Outside the quarantine area, if we get a hot spot, we will be much more aggressive now than before. So, we will be testing our science eventually in court when we do that, but we don't have the money to do the two-mile buffer.

Richard Gaskalla said one thing we might want to do is the survey we did up around Callary Judge, at their request, the lime industry is kind of piecemeal down there, but if we can identify a lime growing area, we can have some dialogue with Ken Bailey, about designing some type of a start-up survey down around the groves; not necessarily in the groves which is probably the most important thing to do.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 16, 1999, at 9:30 AM at the Ben Hill Griffin Auditorium, Lake Alfred.

Submitted by Florence Roberts.