



CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.
Research Management Committee Meeting
Minutes
Friday, January 20, 2023

A meeting of the Research Management Committee of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Friday, January 20, 2023, at Ben Hill Griffin Hall, CREC, UF IFAS, 700 Experiment Station Road, Lake Alfred, FL 33850. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman John Updike. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Committee members participating were Bobby Barben, Larry Black, Holly Chamberlain, Ned Hancock, Aaron Himrod, David Howard, Ed Leotti, Tom Obreza, Pat Ouimet, Morgan Porter, Daniel Scott, Brian Scully, Shannon Shepp, Wayne Simmons, Buddy Strickland, and John Updike.

Also participating were Ron Brlansky, Amy Brown, James Cooper, Rick Dantzler, Bill Dawson, Stephen Futch, Jim Graham, Audrey Nowicki, Brandon Page, Amir Rezazadeh, Rashmi Singh, Daniel Stanton, Jim Syvertsen, Barbara Thompson, and Rosa Walsh.

Mr. Updike moved for approval of the minutes of the December 1, 2022, Research Management Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Porter and passed unanimously.

The first Directed Research and Off-Cycle Project for Consideration was the Y. Duan #22-022 pre-proposal, *Characterization of a new citrus virus and exploration of its potential for huanglongbing (HLB) control*. Dr. Scully provided insight on the unknown virus CMMV, noting that the National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, registers new viruses. The trees are showing some degree of tolerance or resistance, so this could be a good project. Mr. Updike noted that the decision was to defer the project for 3 months which Mr. Dantzler explained was to allow adequate opportunity for USDA to make a decision on certain safety considerations of this virus.

The second item up for discussion was the Lukasz and Kirsten Stelinski pre-proposal, *Effects of trunk injected oxytetracycline on tree infection and health, psyllid pathogenicity, and vector population*. The Committee recommended that the PIs be invited to submit a full proposal, with CRDF staff to meet with the PIs to discuss the following contingencies: 1) Monthly sprays of insecticides are not used by growers. 2) First do a greenhouse study to prove the concept that psyllids can take up OTC from a tree that was injected with OTC. 3) If “tree health” means canopy volume, why evaluate that? 4) Should we test other OTC formulations that are coming to the marketplace? 5) Assess fruit drop as part of the study. A motion was made by Mr. Howard to request a full proposal on the testing in the greenhouse and response to other concerns. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leotti and passed unanimously.

The third item was the pre-proposal from Ute Albrecht, *Evaluating different rates of oxytetracycline administered by trunk injection in mature sweet orange trees*. Growers on the committee stated emphatically the need to get competing products in the marketplace to achieve price moderation. There was discussion about the “me too” provision in the 24C process. Amy Brown helped clarify points. The Scientific Advisory Board had questions on how the treatment would affect psyllids. Mr. Howard made a motion to request a full proposal. It was seconded by Mr. Leotti and passed unanimously.

The next item was the Mark Ritenour pre-proposal, *Evaluation of potential HLB tolerant grapefruit rootstock/scion combinations in Florida*. The Committee recommended that the PI be invited to submit a full proposal, subject to the following contingencies: 1) Budget is too high. Strike canopy volume as one way to reduce the budget. Focus on yield and fruit quality. 2) Maybe a limb study would be good enough instead of picking and counting all the fruit on the tree. 3) Jim Syvertsen, Brandon Page, Daniel Scott, and Mark Ritenour should have a round-table discussion to decide the most essential work, as well as meet with the grower cooperators to decide which trees to pull for non-performance. Mr. Black made a motion to request a full proposal. It was seconded by Ms. Porter and passed unanimously.

Next, the Committee recommended that the Board invite CRAFT to submit a proposal for a CRDF Directed Research Project, utilizing funding from the uncommitted funds in the current year which is expected to be approximately \$750,000. The funds would be to test OTC and PGRs in large-scale field trials as envisioned in the next iteration of CRAFT.

A potential RFP topic discussed included application of OTC in combination with other antimicrobials showing efficacy against HLB. The committee recommended approval but does not limit it to only using in combination with OTC; antimicrobials could be used as standalones.

Indian River growers requested their IRCL discussion points on HLB management be postponed until they have completed their discussions of the topics.

Mr. Dantzler reported on the Legislative Request for 2023-2024. Mr. Joyner will advocate for a \$3M appropriation during the next legislative session.

Mr. Dantzler reviewed the Pathway 2.0 and Potential Research Topics that include eighteen research topics that could be the goals in the coming year, one of which was citrus research in North Florida. There was discussion as to whether CRDF should consider funding such projects since they are not part of the regulated citrus areas as delineated in the statute. RMC recommended approval but with the limitation that research be limited to projects that have the potential to help all growers in the state.

Mr. Dantzler reported that the rootstock trial recently planted washed out because of the hurricane and changing economic conditions for the grower-cooperator. Staff noted that CRDF has offered the 1700-1900 surviving trees to any grower willing to uproot and replant them. It was also stated that there are trees at Agromillora that are left over from the East Coast grower who asked to be released from the trial, and that these trees are available to growers who have an interest.

Mr. Page gave an update on the CRDF Scion Trials.

Seventeen pre-proposals were received in response to the Gamechangers RFP, which will go through the normal review process.

Currently an RFP is running for additional OTC Work, with eight directed research projects. CRDF is seeking pricing from researchers or crop consultants for this work.

IR-4 is willing to proceed on the CTV project. They are waiting on data to be provided by Mike Irely.

A decision on Vismax™ is now scheduled for May of 2023.

Minutes of the Research Management Committee Meeting

Friday, January 20, 2023

Page 3

Dr. Ron Brlansky, Dr. Bill Schneider, and Mr. Daniel Stanton were introduced, and Dr. Schneider presented their work on *Improving the Detection and Management of Citrus Blight*. The goals of their research are to detect blight more quickly so they can determine what triggers its activation, and to use CRISPR to silence the gene(s) that allow it to become active. After fielding questions from the committee, the RMC will recommend the Board request a pre-proposal.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14.

Minutes submitted by Barbara Thompson.