



CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.
Research Management Committee Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, July 16, 2024

A meeting of the Research Management Committee of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Tuesday, July 16, 2024, at the UF-IFAS-CREC, 700 Experiment Station Rd, Lake Alfred, FL 33850. The meeting was properly noticed and recorded. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Chair Aaron Himrod. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Committee members participating were Scott Adkins, Bobby Barben, Steve Farr, Ned Hancock, Aaron Himrod, Deeley Hunt, Matt Machata, Morgan Porter, Daniel Scott, Brian Scully, and Buddy Strickland.

Mr. Himrod noted the minutes of the June 3, 2024, Research Management Committee meeting were included with meeting materials. Dr. Adkins made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Porter and passed unanimously.

The committee took up the 3-Year Grand Plan from Drs. Chatter and Mattia. Mr. Himrod noted that it had been reviewed by the Plant Improvement Committee.

Mr. Dantzler and Dr. Futch discussed the PIs responses to previous questions on the project objectives, such as whether any of their trials would be a duplication of The Coca Cola project, who is doing the sequencing, how this project would interact with the transformation lab, and details of the budget. Dr. Scully moved to recommend approval of the project as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barben for the purpose of further discussion, who then questioned how long we would be asked to continue funding conventional breeding since we had been doing it for after almost fifteen years. Mr. Hancock requested a timeline, noting how long it would be until newly created trees would be planted. Dr. Chater said he has a number of DC3-36 and DC3-40 trees from MAC trials ready for planting as soon as UF prepares the land. Dr. Mattia has already identified what he is moving into the pipeline. Mr. Himrod said he thought objectives one and three – utilizing bioinformatics – were the most important.

Mr. Machata offered a substitute motion to fund objectives one and three. Mr. Barben agreed to the substitute motion. Dr. Scully pointed out objective two is for regional trials, which was important to the project, so the committee came back to Dr. Scully's original motion, which was to fund all three objectives. The motion passed with one dissenting vote.

Mr. Himrod moved on to the four projects being considered for continuation funding:

Project 22-002 S. Santra, 'Management of tree health and huanglongbing disease pressure using advanced Zn formulations.' – Dr. Santra gave a presentation on his progress to date. Ms. Porter moved to approve Year-3 funding. It was seconded by Mr. Barben and passed unanimously.

Project 22-003 F. Alferez, ‘Determining best timing for Brassinosteroid (Brs) application to achieve maximum beneficial effects on citrus tree health and fruit yield and quality.’ – Dr. Alferez presented his progress on the project. Questions were raised on the product volume used, and cost. Dr. Scully moved approval of Year-4 funding. Ms. Porter seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Project 22-017 A. Levy, ‘Improving the systemic uptake of therapeutic compounds by trunk injections.’ – Mr. Dantzler and Dr. Syvertsen summarized Dr. Levy’s progress. There was discussion on the formation of the callus tissue and how to approach callus inhibition impacting registration of a control product(s). Dr. Scully moved to approve. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barben and passed unanimously,

Continued funding for 23-021 R. Brlansky, ‘Using improved diagnostics to determine citrus blight prevalence,’ was deferred since the SAB had not weighed in on the merits.

A couple members left the Zoom meeting and there was no longer a quorum.

Mr. Dantzler informed the committee that the use of OTC in the third year was approved, followed by a presentation by Mr. Yonce and Mr. Minter of their findings and the GLP requirements and timeline for registering streptomycin as a standalone injectable or in combination with OTC.

Dr. Syvertsen reported on the possible use of Kasugamycin in citrus, currently labeled for apples, walnuts, and cherries but not citrus. It is used in Mexico on tomatoes that are imported to the US. Dr. Batuman is beginning field and residue studies in Immokalee. The rate has been established for greenhouse plants; they are ready to start field trials injecting it with OTC. It is sensitive to light, heat, and alkaline media. Mr. Aerts provided details on how the registration package should be prepared.

There were six revised preproposals that were considered for inviting Full Proposals:

Y. Ampatzidis, ‘AI-enabled automated needle-based trunk injection system’ – Withdrawn by the PI, so it was not discussed.

H. Cheng, ‘Determine the inhibition efficiency of *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLAs) in free-living culture and in citrus tree-trunk by a novel antimicrobial from *Sinorhizobium meliloti* for the control of citrus Huanglongbing.’ – Discussion followed that Dr. Cheng should do more work on his own, at least injecting a few trees and showing results and providing more baseline data showing proof of concept before further consideration. The lengthy time to register was also an issue.

T. Minter/H. Yonce, ‘Evaluation of TPR 1, a new bactericide, and PT 150, a new pesticide, for control of HLB in Florida Citrus.’ – Their presentation was given earlier in the meeting on Year-1 results. Several committee members expressed concern that the therapy, if it works, would arrive too late to help given the time required for registration.

J. Qureshi, 'Abatement of Asian citrus psyllid and HLB through treatments of OTC and systemic insecticides.' – A recommendation to invite a full proposal was made, with a suggestion to trade out Belay for thiamethoxan.

F. Zambon, 'Delivery of Mn and micronutrients to HLB-affected trees via standalone injection or mixed with OTC.' – Several concerns were expressed regarding mixing so many micronutrients together in the same solution with OTC. It was suggested by Dr. Scully that she use EDTAs at a 1% solution since most are on the EPA exemption list. There was no recommendation to invite a full proposal.

F. Alferez, et al., 'Assessing blending strategies with different Satsuma juice to boost orange juice quality.' – This was the project which combined the two Satsuma projects. The economics of transporting fruit was discussed. Dr. Scully said he believed it should be funded, but without a quorum, no vote was taken.

The 2024 RFP for Large-Scale Field Trials was presented and recommended to move to the Board for approval.

Mr. Dantzler noted that Dr. Albrecht's directed research project 23-005, 'Use of CRDF rootstock trial locations for testing bactericides inserted into trees through systemic delivery devices,' was coming up for renewal and consideration of funding years two and three. Support was expressed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 PM.

Minutes submitted by Barbara Thompson.