



CITRUS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION, INC.

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting

Monday, February 17, 2025

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc. was held on Monday, February 17, 2025, via Zoom only. The meeting was called to order at 9:06 AM by Chair Morgan Porter. Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Executive Committee members present were Rick Dantzler, John Davis, Chris Gunter, George Hamner, Ron Mahan, Morgan Porter, and Joby Sherrod.

Ms. Porter noted that the minutes of the December 22, 2023, Executive Committee meeting were in the materials. Mr. Hamner made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod and passed unanimously.

Ms. Porter recognized Mr. Dantzler to share the details of the suggested Brazil trip to tour with members from Fundecitrus and stated that she would be giving up her seat for the trip. She was excited for CRDF staff and growers to go, but it was not possible for her at this time.

Mr. Dantzler shared in his Friday report to the board that he, along with Jim Graham, Morgan Porter, Matt Machata, and Joby Sherrod, had a video call from Fundecitrus from Brazil. They shared a great deal of their research, and that in March they would be kicking off the largest International Biotechnology project against HLB in the world.

There were transgenic trees they have developed that repel the psyllid, and they have an idea in mind for grove architecture which attracts the psyllids and aggregates them where they are killed more easily.

Matt Machata would like to go. Joby Sherrod is considering going. Jim Graham would be going and Brandon Page and Rick Dantzler would like to go. The expenses would run somewhere between \$8 and \$9,000, depending on how many people were to go. We have found a direct plane flight out of Orlando for \$835 per ticket. The hotel expense is \$60 a night. Fundecitrus will be providing the ground transportation. It would be from April the 7th to the 12th.

Mr. Sherrod noted that the most interesting part for him was the rapid deployment of their transformed tree with the repellency gene that enhances the citrus tree's own ability to produce the compound. They had 5-year-old trees in a trial already producing fruit. There was no difference in juice quality. This, coupled with multiple other solutions, would provide a multivariate solution. He supported the CRDF staff of Rick Dantzler and Brandon Page, along with Jim Graham, going to Brazil with the other growers who would go.

Mr. Hamner thought it was a great opportunity for CRDF staff and growers who have been closest to the HLB research. He suggested that Jim Snively and Greg Nelson might want to go. He thought that the budget should be expanded to \$15,000 so that eight or nine people could go.

Ms. Porter agreed that any board member who wanted to go should have that opportunity along with a group of growers that we could reach out to. She shared that Trevor Murphy, Marty Riley, and a couple others were just in Brazil and came back excited about what they saw. There was contrasting information on the reception of GMOs, so she would like to see this group's perspective on this. If Trevor Murphy could go, he could compare the two trips. Mr. Hamner made a motion to set a budget of \$15,000 for the Brazil trip. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherrod and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dantzler asked Dr. Davis and Dr. Gunter if CRDF would have to go through UF travel since it was international and he and Brandon were UF employees. They both agreed that he and Brandon should go through UF travel and that the others could go through regular channels.

Dr. Davis was supportive of the trip but asked that they bring back with lots of data to share. He noted that the acceptance of biotechnology and GMOs is more widespread today than it was a generation ago.

Under New Business, Mr. Dantzler presented a new proposal based on information from Brian Updike. He has noticed that by adding ascorbic acid, which is vitamin C, that the solution stayed clearer much longer than either Remedium or Rectify without it. This could mean that perhaps it was effective longer and hopefully distributing throughout the tree a little bit better. Mr. Dantzler shared this with Dr. Ute Albrecht. She did some quick test tube tests and agreed that there might be something to this. So, Matt Machata went to work and provided a research proposal that was sent to Dr. Albrecht to review. She thought that \$30,000 was a reasonable amount for what Mr. Machata was proposing. This would be in addition to what she is doing with the CRDF funding on the Santra proposal.

Ms. Porter thought it was important to get this information to the growers before they do this round of injections. If something could be published in The Triangle, that would be the quickest way to get the info to growers with a disclaimer that this is not yet commercially usable. Therefore, CRDF is moving as quickly as it can to see if we can research this and get more definitive results and hopefully provide the basis for which this could be labeled appropriately. Dr. Gunter stated that CRDF needed to be cautious. You can say we are looking at it. We are reviewing it. We are doing all the due diligence, but he would not in any way say this is recommended.

Mr. Dantzler then moved on to the announcement that he had just turned 69 and was thinking that June 30, 2026 might be a good day for him to retire. He would be willing to stay longer if the board was so inclined either in a full-time or part-time capacity. June 30, 2026 gets us through two

legislative sessions for any kind of reorganization that may be planned. Maybe George Hamner and his Governance Committee might want to get together and start talking about where CRDF sees itself in any reorganization. Mr. Hamner said he would like to broaden the group and be proactive by figuring out where we wanted to be instead of being told where we were going to be. Ms. Porter said that change brings opportunity, so as long as we are part of the conversation, we can help shape it to we need it to be for us. She thanked Mr. Dantzler for all he had done to move CRDF closer to its goals. She thought that he had pointed them in the right direction and whether we transition to a new home or moved straightforward with succession planning and training the person behind him, that had brought a lot of value and it would be paramount to our success and the success of this industry's research to make sure he helped train whoever that person is, wherever the office is.

Dr. Davis raised a point about item number nine in the email sent regarding U-Farm and Deluca. He is in a strong position to assist with those concerns because both U-Farm and the Deluca preserve are organized through his office. He asked for the email address for Nate Jameson, Bo Meador, and Steve Futch so that he could get them connected with the people who can solve this problem.

Mr. Dantzler noted that he had communicated with Dr. Michael Rogers about Deluca and the idea of filling that property up with as much germplasm as possible. There are a lot of cancelled orders in the nurseries, so if either CRDF or a consortium of funders were to acquire those trees, it would help the nurseries but also get a large field trial in one place where everything could be viewed side by side. Dr. Rogers thought it was doable and receptive to trying to figure it out. Dr. Davis said it was a good time for a conversation to figure out what is broken, what can be fixed, and how to move forward.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 AM.