



SUMMARY | PEST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ALLIANCE GRANT REVIEW MEETING CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

November 14, 2019

Produced by the Consensus and Collaboration Program, CSU Sacramento College of Continuing Education

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1. Attendance

Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) Members

- 1. Brenna Aegerter, University of California Cooperative Extension
- 2. Steve Blecker, California Department of Food and Agriculture
- 3. Emily Buerer, Community Alliance with Family Farmers
- 4. Caroline Cox, Center for Environmental Health
- 5. Perry Elerts, Center for Biological Diversity, (alternate)
- 6. Jim Farrar, University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program
- 7. Julia Inestroza, California Citrus Mutual (via webcast)
- 8. Farzaneh Khorsandi, University of California Cooperative Extension
- 9. David Lawson, Western Plant Health Association
- 10. Nick Lupien, California Association of Pest Control Advisors
- 11. Nicole Quinonez, Consumer Specialty Products Association
- 12. Keith Pitts, Marrone Bio Innovations, Inc.
- 13. Margaret Reeves, Pesticide Action Network
- 14. Timothy Spann, California Avocado Commission
- 15. Steve Scheer, California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association (alternate)
- 16. Dave Tamayo, California Association of Sanitation Agencies

California Department of Pesticide Regulation

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| 17. Val Dolcini, Director | 24. Rodney Jones |
| 18. Jesse Cuevas | 25. Catherine Bilheimer |
| 19. Joe Damiano | 26. Jordan Weibel |
| 20. John Gerlach | 27. Tory Vizenor |
| 21. Matt Fossen | |
| 22. Jill Townzen | |
| 23. Atefeh Nik | |

Facilitation Support

28. Ariel Ambruster, CSUS

This document summarizes those portions of the meeting relevant to the Pest Management Advisory Committee's grant consideration process.

2. Opening Comments and Background

Introductions and Chair's opening comments

Val Dolcini, Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Director appointed October 14, 2019, welcomed everyone and thanked members of the Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC), including new members, for joining the meeting. He introduced himself to attendees, noting that he previously served as Deputy Secretary for Agriculture at CalEPA, in federal positions and worked in the NGO sector on pollinator issues. His priorities for DPR include emphasizing customer service, accessibility, and transparency for all stakeholders, including community and EJ advocates concerned about pesticide impacts in their community, as well as those in agriculture and those looking to register pesticides; fostering less-toxic emissions; ensuring DPR is a can-do department; and supporting DPR staff as they undertake their work on controversial topics. He will be on the road around the state in 2020, elevating the importance of IPM.

Background on DPR's Pest Management Research Grant Program, Project Proposal Review, and Basic Procedures

Jill Townzen, Environmental Program Manager I, Pest Management and Licensing Branch, DPR, thanked PMAC members for participating, and provided background on the Department's Research and Alliance Grant Programs and other relevant updates.

Dr. Townzen introduced Pest Management Grants staff, including two new staff members, Jordan Weibel, who will take on the lead role in regard to the Research Grant Program, and Tony Vizenor.

Regarding 2019-20 Pest Management Research Grants, she noted that the amount of available funding for the research grants was less than originally anticipated. However, DPR will

ultimately be able to fund the five recommended proposals, by using a new grant source and bringing the PI for one project under contract.

Dr. Townzen reviewed funding details and priorities for the current round of Research Grant Program funding. The 2020-2021 Pest Management Research Grant Program will have two funding sources, \$2.1 million allocated for projects that identify, develop and implement safer, practical and sustainable **Alternatives to Chlorpyrifos**; and \$500,000 for projects that develop methods or practices to **reduce risks** associated with pesticides.

Dr. Townzen reviewed the response to the Research Grant solicitation and key grant program milestones:

Alternatives to Chlorpyrifos:

- 6 concept proposals were submitted
- 2 applicants were invited to submit full proposals

Reduced risk:

- 13 concept proposals were submitted
- 6 applicants were invited to submit full proposals

She noted that the PMAC review period for DPR’s Research Grant Program will begin December 27, and the deadline to submit reviews is February 6, 2020 for the February 13, 2020 PMAC evaluation meeting.

2019-2020 Alliance Grant Summary of Proposals		
Proposal Short and Full Title	Principal Investigator	Budget
Lamb – IPM in affordable housing Expanding IPM adoption among affordable housing providers	Anne Kelsey Lamb	\$172,500
Larbi – Citrus spray application Dissemination and training for citrus spray application expert system adoption in California	Peter A. Larbi	\$194,591

Dr. Townzen identified that \$400,000 was available for the 2019-2020 Alliance Grant cycle. She noted that PMAC members had initially reviewed three proposals, but DPR, on closer examination, identified that one proposal did not meet solicitation requirements, as results would not be available on a public website. She apologized that, earlier in the year, DPR had sought to conduct the PMAC review via email, because of the small number of proposals. It was brought to the Department’s attention that a public meeting is needed to allow for public observation and comments, resulting in the late Alliance Grant consideration today.

Criteria for Ranking Proposals and Grant Program Procedures

The facilitator, Ariel Ambruster from the Consensus and Collaboration Program at Sacramento State University, took roll call and DPR officials ascertained that a quorum of PMAC members was present. Ms. Ambruster reviewed the role and purpose of PMAC in the grant funding process, which is to advise DPR on the Department’s grant funding decisions.

Ms. Ambruster affirmed the importance of the diverse perspectives of the PMAC members. She noted that the goal of the meeting is to gather the diverse perspectives of all of the PMAC members present, not to reach consensus.

Ms. Ambruster reviewed the meeting objectives:

- Identify proposals PMAC recommends for possible DPR funding
- Rank those proposals in order of preference
- Record merits and concerns for all proposals, to inform DPR and the PIs

She reviewed the criteria for review:

- How well each proposal meets the solicitation focus for funding priority
- Overall quality of each proposal

Ms. Ambruster reviewed the meeting ground rules. No PMAC members needed to recuse themselves for any proposal.

3. Rankings and Reviewers' Scoring

Twenty PMAC members reviewed and scored the 2 proposals prior to the meeting. The numeric scores were converted to ranks, where 1 was the most highly regarded proposal and 2 was the least. These ranks were averaged, as presented in the following chart:

2019/2020 Alliance Grant Review Summary by Reviewer, Initial Review																									
Project	Rank	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17	R18	R19	R20	Avg	High	Low	\$
Lamb - Affordable Housing IPM	NA	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1.50	1	2	\$172,500
Larbi - Citrus Spray Application	NA	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1.50	1	2	\$194,591

Because the simple ranks added up to an equal average rank, PMAC review raw scores, which contain sufficient detail to indicate rank, are provided below:

2019/2020 Alliance Grant Review Summary by Reviewer, Initial Review - Raw Scores																									
Project	Rank	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17	R18	R19	R20	Avg	High	Low	\$
Lamb - Affordable Housing IPM	1	70	83	95	100	87	80	97	88	91	81	79	90	94	87	84	77	97	83	89	69	86.05	100	69	\$172,500
Larbi - Citrus Spray Application	2	86	77	44	72	29	81	42	64	81	84	90	35	96	90	78	86	79	86	92	73	73.25	96	29	\$194,591

Ms. Ambruster noted that the two projects had an equal refined rank, and DPR has sufficient funding for both, so that a discussion on which projects are fundable and which are not may not be needed. She asked if any PMAC member considered that any of the proposals were unfundable. No PMAC member responded.

4. Discussion of Proposals

PMAC members discussed the merits, concerns, and areas needing clarification for the two project proposals, in the order of their initial ranking. Below is a summary of PMAC members' comments for each proposal. Comments reflect individual PMAC member observations, not consensus opinions. Thus, merits and concerns may occasionally appear to be contradictory.

Lamb - Affordable Housing IPM

Merits

- The proposal has the potential to positively impact the health of residents of affordable housing, and incorporates a valuable component of outreach to residents.
- There is a public health need. The asthma/pesticide link is an important focus, and agencies and NGOs involved in asthma could be useful partners.
- Targeting affordable housing providers seems like an effective method, as they own multiple properties; in addition, regional and statewide affordable housing organizations can help to disseminate IPM results and information.
- The team is qualified.
- The evaluation system seems good.
- Evaluating tactics, as described, will help to drill down to effective interventions and allow for return on investment.
- The stipends are a good incentivizing tool, and could be used as an incentive for residents.
- The requirement that affordable housing providers contribute their own resources, as well as receive stipends, will foster involvement.
- The description of risks was good.
- The tools that will be used seem effective.
- It is an alliance building on previous alliance work by the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association.

Concerns

- It would have been helpful to include discussion of factors resulting in the success of the previous Alliance program.
- The evaluation plan and methods are not yet delineated. It will be important that methods include collection of data, as well as interviews and/or surveys.
- In the budget, the two percent allocated for PI time seems low.
- There needs to be additional information about the stipends: how much will they be, either as a percentage or dollar amount? How will stipends be defined and calibrated? Who receives them?
- There was no letter of recommendation from the Co-PI.
- There was no support letter from the pest control company sector.
- It is not clear how dissemination will occur as far as adoption by residents, other projects, and other affordable housing providers.
- The IPM participant in the project will need to work closely with a pest control operator (PCO), not only a local individual pest control advisor (PCA).
- The pest focus needs to be balanced, with sufficient attention given to rodents as well as insects.
- A justification for the inclusion of particular pests is missing.

- The plan should address applicability to the rest of the state, whether these pests are particular issues in this region specifically, or whether the results of this project may be applicable statewide.

Requested Clarifications

- It is unclear if a portion of the stipend funding is given to residents, or only to housing providers.
- Clarification is needed on the use of a PCA or PCO.
- In response to a question about the dates identified in the proposal, DPR officials confirmed that those timeframes can shift forward with the later timeframe of DPR review of the proposal.

Larbi – Citrus spray application

Merits

- It would reduce pesticide use, so could be considered a narrow component of IPM.
- Expert systems are a useful tool.
- This approach can be used for training and for farmers.
- It is a simple Windows system and could be made available on mobile systems.
- The system is based on several factors.
- There is a strong collaborative team, including UC Cooperative Extension and schools.
- The project has potential multiplier effect to other crops, and there has already been outreach to the almond industry, which could bring in 8,000-9,000 additional users.
- The professional applicator association is another sector that could be brought in to support this effort.
- There is a potential for synergy with other efforts.
- It would be a huge benefit to the citrus industry.
- It has an important focus on the calibration of spray equipment, and on education.
- It has a good cost-benefit ratio.
- It will help to address the sloppiness in the field that exists.
- If it is successful, it could help to mitigate some of the pesticide use issues raised in a presentation earlier in the meeting on pesticide drift issues. For example, the issue of lack of seasonal calibration.
- This addresses a key gap that other programs don't have the bandwidth to address. If spraying is done effectively, that will limit drift.

Concerns

- It is questionable if it is IPM. It seems too narrow, and doesn't fit the intent of the grant to promote overall IPM. It does not address how to manage the disease beyond the vector, or managing plants to reduce the impact of the disease. IPM is typically a whole system approach addressing pesticide issues. There are organic citrus grows, and sanitation, biocontrol, and plant nutrition are parts of those practices.

- In response to the vector issue, a PMAC member said that in California, the vector was a problem before the appearance of the disease, and spray efficiency is very important in addressing the vector.
- One component, resistance management, is missing. That needs to feed into the expert system.
- There is no information about the success of similar previous programs.
- What procedure will be used to evaluate the impact and success of the system? It assumes it will meet its objective. The effectiveness at reducing pesticide use should be measured.
 - There is a pesticide use reporting system that would be an evaluation tool – it should have been mentioned.
- This expert system could be inclusive of organic sprays.
- The software is not that accessible to spray applicators in the field, and the program is not offering a mobile option.
- Field information such as pest modeling, trapping, pheromones, and life stages should be incorporated.

Requested Clarifications

- It would be helpful to include information on why, if the expert system exists, it has not already been adopted.
- The Objective 4 discussion raises the question of whether this might be a Research Grant project rather than an Alliance Grant project. It would be helpful to include information on the budget percentage devoted to this objective. If feedback is still being integrated, is this system ready to disseminate?

5. Recommendations for Funding

One PMAC member asked if PMAC members considered any proposals to be unfundable, noting that he saw one of the proposals as unfundable.

Typically the PMAC goes through a re-ranking process to identify how members evaluate the proposals after they have had the opportunity to hear the range of PMAC views. In this case, given the small number of proposals and the discussion on fundability, DPR officials asked that PMAC members identify on their re-ranking forms those proposals that they recommend for funding, and those they do not recommend for funding. PMAC members agreed to this approach.

The results of this tally are shown in the table below:

Project	Recommend Funding	Do Not Recommend Funding
Lamb – Affordable Housing IPM	15	1
Larbi – Citrus Spray Application	11	5

DPR staff affirmed that the discussion as well as the proposal rankings provided them with the information and feedback they need to make funding decisions on this proposals.

6. Grant Program Process Feedback

PMAC members were invited to provide feedback to DPR on the Grant Program review process. The following summarizes feedback from PMAC members about the review process:

- It will be important to clarify the key purposes and utility of the PMAC and its review process, and the process and objectives of both the “fundable/not-fundable” and re-ranking portions of the PMAC meeting.
 - Circulating the charter and providing the PMAC review process in written form would be helpful in this regard.
 - DPR officials identified the goals of the fundability discussion to include:
 - Identifying a bright line if there are more proposals than available funding.
 - Speeding discussion.
 - It had previously been identified that PMAC, in this discussion, does not focus on dollar amounts, but instead on proposal quality.
- The focus of review is on how to improve proposals.
- Review comments are more important than ranking numbers.
 - In response, DPR officials and the facilitator emphasized that the comments are very valuable, and that PMAC written comments are highly encouraged during the review process.
- It would be helpful for PMAC members to receive contextual information on how proposals fit in with research or alliance work that has been undertaken and completed on the focus area.
- Director Dolcini identified the importance of providing sufficient context to new PMAC members on their charge and process.
- PMAC members gave kudos to DPR staff and the PIs. They thanked Mr. Dolcini for his presence throughout the meeting.

7. Closing Remarks

Mr. Dolcini thanked PMAC members for their feedback, affirming that it is very helpful to DPR’s funding decisions.