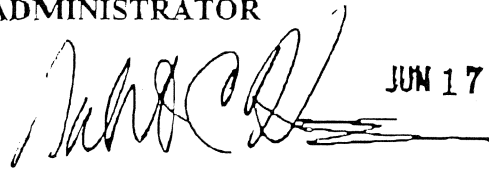


DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: Robert C. Keeney
Deputy Administrator
Fruit and Vegetable Programs



JUN 17 2011

SUBJECT: Appointment of six members and six alternates to the Administrative Committee for Pistachios

ISSUE

Appointments are needed for six members and six alternates to serve on the Administrative Committee for Pistachios (Committee). The Committee locally administers the marketing order that regulates the handling of pistachios grown in California, Arizona, and New Mexico.

SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS AND NOMINATION PROCEDURES

Marketing Order No. 983 is effective under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674). The marketing order authorizes quality requirements and domestic aflatoxin testing requirements for pistachios grown in California, Arizona, and New Mexico. The Committee consists of nine producer members, two handler members, and one public member. Each member has one alternate. The marketing order specifies a two-year term of office that ends June 30. About one-half of the Committee is selected each year. Current nominees will serve until June 30, 2013. A public member and alternate will be nominated at their next meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for the week of July 11, 2011.

STEPS TAKEN TO INCREASE OUTREACH

The Committee conducted extensive outreach to eligible producers and handlers, including women, minorities, and persons with a disability, to encourage their participation in upcoming nominations. The Committee's diversity letter was published on February 11, 2011, as a public announcement in the *Western Farm Press* newsletter, in addition to being posted on *Western Farm's* website and the Committee's website.

During the week of February 21, 2011, handouts about the annual nominations and elections were made available at the Western Pistachio Association conference. The handouts included a letter from the Committee outlining the importance of diversity. The Committee also sent nomination packages containing diversity letters to 873 eligible pistachio producers and 25 eligible handlers. In response, the Committee received 209 valid producer nomination ballots and 12 valid handler nomination ballots, which resulted in 12 nominees for 12 positions. The Committee's outreach efforts resulted in the addition of one new member. The Committee would retain two other individuals who are minorities, five who are women, one person with a disability, and two organic handlers.

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As the Committee works to increase the effectiveness of its Diversity Plan, the manager continues to schedule Executive Committee diversity meetings to develop innovative approaches to outreach and inclusion.

CLEARANCE PROCESS

The persons listed were nominated in accordance with order provisions. USDA records indicate that no current nominee is in violation of any Federal marketing order provision regarding payment of assessments or filing of reports, is not under Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act employment and licensing restrictions, and is qualified to serve.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Administrator appoint the six members and six alternates listed in this appointment package.

Attachments

**CANDIDATE SLATE
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE FOR PISTACHIOS**

The following nominees are put forth for your selection to serve on the Committee. Please indicate your acceptance with a check in front of their name.

Producer Representatives

District No. 1 – Southern CA

Members:

 Todd B. Tracy *
 Buttonwillow, CA

 Jeffrey Gibbons *
 Terra Bella, CA

Alternates:

 Tiffany Weldon *
 Wasco, CA

 Cynthia Klein *
 Delano, CA

District No. 2 – Central CA

 Robert M. Keenan *
 Avenal, CA

 Todd S. Lewis
 Palo Alto, CA

 Jeff Curry *
 Madera, CA

 Larry B. Lowder
 Madera, CA

District No. 4 – Arizona and New Mexico

 Marianne Schweers *
 Alamogordo, NM

 James H. Graham *
 Cochise, AZ

Handler Representatives

 Randy L. Raber
 Hanford, CA

 Andrew Howe
 Tulare, CA

*** Incumbent**

I hereby appoint the candidates annotated above.



Rayne Pegg
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service



Date