



**Assessment Steering Committee
Monday, December 16, 2024
10-11 a.m. PT
Videoconference**

Bryan Sakuma, Chair, presiding

MINUTES

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Bryan Sakuma at 10:02 a.m. PT on Monday, December 16, 2024.

Committee Members Present: Bryan Sakuma, Rodrigo Aceves, Gunnar Avinelis, Jimmy Horrell, Brittany Lee, Brad Moorer, Ellie Norris, Denny Vander Kooi, Luis Miguel Vegas, and Brandon Wade

Committee Members Absent: Tom Bodtke

USDA/AMS Representative: Jeanette Palmer

Guests: Dan Barber and Jon Armato with Fleishman-hillard

Staff Members Present: Kasey Cronquist, Kevin Hamilton, Amanda Griffin, Joe Vargas and Melinda Kern

Quorum Present

Approval of Agenda

ACTION 1: Motion made by Gunnar Avinelis to approve the agenda for Monday, December 16, 2024.

Motion seconded by Denny Vander Kooi.

Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

ACTION 2: Motion made by Ellie Norris to approve the minutes from November 22, 2024.

Motion seconded by Brittany Lee.

Motion carried unanimously.

Progress Report

Kasey introduced Dan Barber and Jon Armato with Fleishman-Hillard who are assisting staff with strategic communications.

Cronquist shared on recent meetings in MI and at the WA small fruit conference.

Bryan Sakuma acknowledged the sensitive timeline before the steering committee in consideration of the USDA assessment approval process. The committee discussed the possibility of tariff implications to the assessment increase approval. The possibility of separate increase numbers for fresh and frozen was also discussed.

Cronquist and Sakuma expressed the value of taking time to provide all regions with the opportunity to deliberate. The committee shared industry interest in a greater understanding of how funds would be used.

Sakuma announced intention to pivot to a March meeting vote with efforts on gathering further industry feedback and assessment proposal details before then.

Items and Scheduling of Next Meeting

The next committee meeting will be held in January.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m. PT on Monday, December 16, 2024.