

California Pepper Commission

531-D North Alta Ave ~ Dinuba, CA 93618, Phone (559) 591-3925 Fax (559) 591-5744

-June 2026-

Chairman, California Pepper Commission **Matthew Terra, Eckert Cold Storage**

The California Pepper Commission focuses its efforts on improving the chemical, disease and pest issues that concern the pepper industry. The Commission met earlier this year with the purpose of discussing any current and future issues along with research projects that can improve the California Pepper industry. Consisting of five producers, five processors and one public representative, these members are nominated by the industry to represent their interests on the Commission.

For the California Pepper Commission to operate effectively it requires the industry to work together. Each year the CPC determines an assessment rate that is equally split between the processor and producers. While it is an equal contribution, the CPC office relies on the processors to pay the assessment rate. Despite the CPC efforts to maintain a complete processor list there is always the possibility of processors who are not receiving the assessment form and paying their share. The CPC office is always seeking out possible processors that are not contributing and will continue to do so.

The Pepper Commission will be meeting remotely on Wednesday, November 11, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. to discuss its research and research priorities via the following Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3Pz4VdY> - Phone # 1-669-900-6833 - Meeting ID: 821 8653 7612 - Passcode: 357825

For the past several years the Commission has been a member and active participant with the California Specialty Crops Council (CSCC). The CSCC provides the Commission the opportunity to work with similar groups to focus on research, education, and regulatory activities, which can affect California agriculture. By representing a variety of groups, the CSCC is well supported when communicating industry issues with state and federal agencies. The CSCC also acts as a conduit of information between its members and various entities. For more information you can visit the CSCC website at www.specialtycrops.org.

The Commission is currently working on a comprehensive email list to streamline the distribution of information to the industry in a more efficient and cost-effective method. Please reach out to the Commission office or email nathan@tabcomp.com to be included.

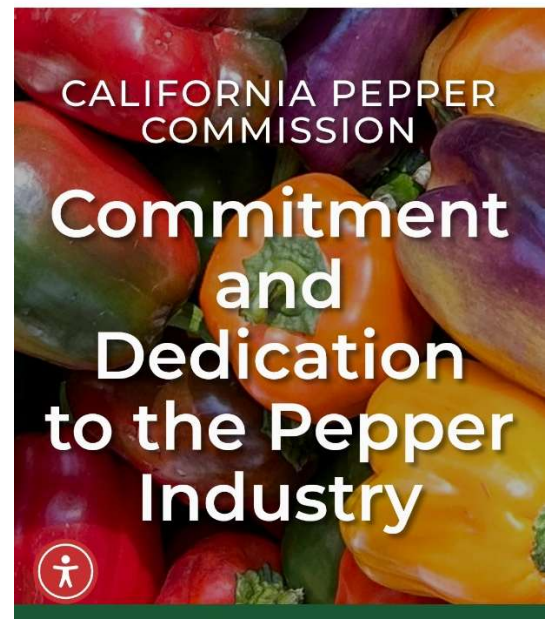
The 2027 International Pepper Conference will be held in California, with the dates and location yet to be announced. Once more information is available it will be posted on the Commission website.

The California Pepper Commission has updated its website <http://www.calpeppers.com>. The CPC wanted to provide a resource growers could utilize when searching for information

regarding the pepper industry in California. Along with a comprehensive library of research funded by the CPC, industry updates and news are available. The CPC will continue to update the site with new features over the next few years.



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2026-27 Research Projects

Kung Lee	Insect Pest Management	\$20,000
Bob Gilbertson	Surveillance for TSWV Resistance	\$17,500
Scott Stoddard	Neonic insecticide alternatives	\$2,400
Allen Van Deynze	Chili Pepper Tolerant to Water Stress...	\$2,500
TOTAL		\$42,400

Research Priorities 2026

Approved November 18, 2025

Research priorities change from year to year which will help our growers to continue to grow peppers profitably in California. Research dealing with control of insects, weeds, and diseases has been the major focus of our funding, and we expect that to continue. Areas of interest that have been discussed recently in our latest commission meeting are topics such as:

Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus - Statewide

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Verticillium Wilt – Santa Clara Valley
Beet Curly Top Virus – San Joaquin Valley and Oxnard Plain
Pepper Weevil – Oxnard Plain
Aphid Control – Statewide (projects that will help with the removal of Imidacloprids)
Psyllid Control – Oxnard Plain
Mechanical Harvesting (dislodging peppers from plant – Varieties)- Statewide
Bacterial Leaf Spot Tolerance – Coachella
Thrip Control (monitoring for new strains of thrips that could spread virus) – Statewide
Powery Mildew Control/Resistance
Drone Applications
Broomrape – Chemical/Label Updates
Weed Control
Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In addition, research proposals involving the efficiency of water and fertilizer use will be considered.

2025-2026 Research Projects

Kung Lee	Insect Pest Management.....	\$20,000
Bob Gilbertson	Surveillance for TSWV Resistance	\$15,000
	TOTAL	\$35,000

Insect Pest Management on Peppers – Greg Kund and Chow-Yang Lee, UC Riverside

A pepper field insecticide trial was conducted at the University of California Riverside Agricultural Operations. Bell pepper, *Capsicum annuum* L. ‘Huntington’ seedlings were transplanted into sandy loam soil on May 14, 2025. Experimental plots measured 3 rows wide (with 5-foot centers) by 48 feet long and were separated by a 3-foot buffer. Each bed contained two rows of peppers. The project involved three IPM trial rotations, two of which were organic-based, along with a single application treatment, a chemical standard, and a non-treated control. The field trial used a large-scale commercial field design to evaluate treatment rotations against a complex insect group for efficacy.

The three IPM trial rotations and single application treatment were compared to a chemical standard and an untreated control for efficacy. The first IPM treatment involved a rotation of Intrepid 2F + Sivanto Prime and Radiant SC. The second ‘organic’ IPM rotation consisted of Pyganic 5EC, Trilogy EC, and Entrust SC. The third ‘organic’ IPM rotation included Pyganic 5EC, Venerate, and Dipel DF. The materials used in the IPM trials were applied according to rotational strategies that support a commercial grower operation. All IPM treatments, including the organic IPM options, were applied six times each in a rotation. The single-application treatment involved PureCrop 1, applied six times as a foliar spray. The chemical standard was Asana XL, also applied six times.

A mid-season field count was conducted, and overall, insect pressure was low to moderate this season. The insects of concern, aside from the pepper weevil, were present in the field. Field insect counts included potato psyllids, lepidopterans, leafhoppers, thrips, aphids, and whiteflies. Pepper psyllid numbers steadily increased throughout the growing season but did not affect the quality of the fruit produced. The fruits from the study were harvested and examined for insect damage. The harvest assessment covered damage from lepidopteran worms, pepper weevils, stink bugs, aphids, mites, potato psyllids, and bagrada bugs.

Our harvest assessment showed low to moderate insect numbers and damage across different treatments, with no significant differences except for damage caused by *Lygus* and stink bugs. The ‘organic’ rotations did not perform as well as the ‘low input’ IPM or chemical standard program for controlling *Lygus*. All treatments had less than 5% damage from lepidopterans, while the untreated control had 11%. Aphid pressure was low this year. Bagrada bug damage has been increasing over several pepper growing seasons, and this trend continued in this field trial.

Virus Research and Surveillance – Bob Gilbertson, UC Davis

This overall goal of this project is to provide the California pepper industry **expertise and knowledge on diseases caused by viruses in the state and worldwide**. Because the virus landscape for peppers and other crops is ever changing, the pepper virus disease surveillance system was developed and brings together world class expertise in plant virology and a statewide network of Farm Advisors, growers, PCAs and industry collaborators to (i) allow for rapid recognition and identification on the viruses that exist in California as well as new and exotic viruses, and (ii) providing information on virus disease biology and integrated pest management (IPM). Like 2024, **the overall incidence of virus diseases of peppers was relatively low in California, but there were some notable differences**. In 2025, most samples were from Yolo and Ventura counties, and tomato spotted wilt disease (TSWD) was most common. Interestingly, there was an increased detection of aphid-transmitted viruses in Yolo County in 2025. **Intensive monitoring for thrips and tomato TSWD in four pepper fields in Yolo County** revealed that thrips were present in early April, but TSWD appeared 1-2 months later, indicating the virus was being brought into fields by thrips rather than with transplants. The field with the highest thrips populations (Syr North) had the highest TSWD incidence (12%), whereas fields with lower populations had TSWD incidences of 1-3%. As in 2024, most of the TSWV isolates from pepper (mostly susceptible varieties) in Yolo County in 2025 were the RB tomato strains YPT, CPN or

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mixed infection based on RT-PCR tests, and RB-pepper based on infecting resistant cv. Huntington. **Thus, these are isolates of the new super RB (SRB) strain, which overcome Tsw in pepper and Sw-5b in tomato, and seem to be becoming predominant in the North.** We also showed that the predominant thrips species recovered on yellow sticky cards (YSCs) around pepper fields in Yolo County was the western flower thrips (WFT, *Franklinville occidentalis*), a good TSWV vector, whereas small numbers of *Thrips tabaci*, a poor TSWV vector, were also detected. **Intensive monitoring in Ventura County revealed no outbreaks of CTD in peppers**, although low populations of beet leafhoppers were captured on YSCs from around pepper fields in Piru and some carried beet curly top virus (BCTV), but this was below the threshold needed for CTD to occur. **In late August, CTD-like symptoms of stunting, distorted growth and upcurled yellow leaves were observed in peppers on the Oxnard Plain.** Samples of pepper plants with these symptoms **tested negative for infection with BCTV and phytoplasma.** However, the observation of **psyllids on these plants along with PCR detection of Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum (Lso)** indicated this disease was **psyllid yellows (PY)**. Inspection of YSCs from around pepper fields on the Oxnard Plain **revealed high populations of psyllids.** Lso was also detected in psyllids from the disease pepper plants and from YSCs from the Oxnard Plain. Notably, there were few psyllids on YSCs from other locations in Ventura County, including the Piru area. **Thus, two virus-like diseases of pepper occur in two parts of Ventura County: CTD in Piru and PY on the Oxnard Plain.** We also **maintain isolates of TSWV and BCTV strains and have capacity for high throughput screening of peppers for resistance to these viruses.** In 2025 we conducted a TSWV pepper RB strain screening as part of the UC Davis pepper breeding program. Taken together this program brings together statewide virus surveillance and testing, intensive monitoring in virus hot spots and resistance screening that allows the California pepper industry to keep ahead of potentially damaging virus diseases and their insect vectors.

If you have any virus questions or concerns, contact Bob Gilbertson at rgilbertson@ucdavis.edu or call [530-752-3163](tel:530-752-3163)

California Pepper Commission		
MEMBERS		ALTERNATES
Producer Representatives		
Brian Alarid Gonzales	District 1	<i>Vacant</i>
William Terry Ventura	District 2	Grant Talley Arroyo Grande
Mike Chuck Gilroy	District 3	Colin Muller Woodland
Ben Migliazzo Le Grand	District 4	<i>Vacant</i>
Adrian Zendejas Coachella	District 5	Patrick Pinkard Helm
Handler Representatives		
Matthew Terra Escalon	Bell Pepper Processing	<i>Vacant</i>
Carlos Marquez Le Grand	Chili Pepper Processing	Dan Brotslaw Turlock
Glen A. Fischer Ventura	Bell/Chili Pepper-Other	<i>Vacant</i>
Emily Baloian Fresno	Fresh Bell	<i>Vacant</i>
Benito Juarez Woodland	Pepper Seed	Brandon Kreutz TS&L Seeds
Public Representative		
Dave Nirenberg Camarillo		<i>Vacant</i>
Staff		
Nathan Sano (Manager) Dinuba		JD Allen (Asst. Manager) Dinuba

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Financial Report

Fiscal Year: March 1, 2025 through February 28, 2026

<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Amount To Date</i>
INCOME		
Assessment Income, 2025-26	\$141,000	\$140,272
Interest Income	1,000	4,988
Total Income	142,000	145,260
Carryover from 2024-25	85,000	95,660
Income/Carryover	\$227,000	240,920
EXPENDITURES		
Management Services	\$36,000	\$36,000
Legal Counsel	2,500	0
Audits	4,450	4,775
Office Supplies	300	993
Telephone	750	766
Postage	300	0
Reports & Publications	1,200	0
Travel & Mileage	400	435
Meetings	1,000	0
Insurance	1,400	778
Website	3,500	2,810
Marketing Branch, CDFA	16,000	11,435
Market Enforcement Branch	3,200	0
California Specialty Crops Council	6,000	6,000
Production Research	35,000	28,513
Production Research Reserve	5,000	0
Chemical Research	4,000	0
Total Expenditures	\$121,000	\$94,603
Net Income	\$142,000	\$50,658
Cash Balance	\$106,000	\$146,317

Budget Approved

Fiscal Year: March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027

<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Budget Approved</i>
INCOME	
Assessment Income, 2026-27	\$132,000
Interest Income	2,500
Total Income	134,500
Carryover from 2025-26	107,000
Income/Carryover	\$241,500
EXPENDITURES	
Management Services	\$37,800
Legal Counsel	2,500
Audits	5,000
Office Supplies	600
Telephone	800
Postage	300
Reports & Publications	1,200
Travel & Mileage	400
Meetings	1,000
Insurance	1,400
Website	3,500
Marketing Branch, CDFA	18,000
Market Enforcement Branch	3,200
California Specialty Crops Council	6,000
Production Research	42,400
Production Research Reserve	5,000
Chemical Research	4,000
Total Expenditures	\$133,100
Unallocated Reserve	\$108,400
Total Expenditures & Reserve	\$241,500

The Commission and staff are always available to answer questions or assist in any way they can. Nathan Sano (nathan@tabcomp.com) is the Board Manager, and JD Allen (jdallen@tabcomp.com) is the Assistant Manager, and they can be contacted via email or at (559) 591-3925.