



**RESEARCH, EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday, November 18, 2025
Time: 12:00pm
Place: Lodi Winegrape Commission, 2545 W Turner Road, Lodi, CA 95242

1. The **meeting was called to order** at 12:08pm by Committee Chairman Dawson Lewis.
2. Those in **attendance** are indicated below.

First Name	Last Name	Attended
Scott	Armolea	
Amy	Blagg	X
Kyle	Brown	X
Kevin	den Hartog	
Mike	Klouda	X
Joe	Larranaga	
Dawson	Lewis	X
Keith	Striegler	X
Justin	Tanner	
Joe	Valente	X

Staff present: Stephanie Bolton and Stuart Spencer.

Guests present: Cameron Heinitz (Kautz Farms), Christa Petrillo Haefner and Brett (Cornerstone Canine Concepts, Winters).

3. **Consideration of previous minutes.** Brown/Klouda made a motion to approve the July 15, 2025 meeting minutes. The motion was carried on a vote of Committee members present. No “no” votes. No abstentions.

4. **Public comment:** none.

5. **Grower education programs.**

- **Review of recent initiatives and growing season**
 - Committee members agreed to participate in a new concept of “Member Projects” where each REC Committee member leads a project that they care about on behalf of the Commission to help the broader Lodi Winegrowing Community. Each project will be in the area of viticulture research, education and/or communications. Brainstormed ideas thus far:
 - Kyle Brown: Tree of Heaven removal workshop at LangeTwins
 - Mike Klouda: Regenerative viticulture trial at Michael David
 - Keith Streigler: Ant management at Gallo
 - Joe Valente (and Cameron Heinitz): Pruning competition in January
 - Amy Blagg: OSHA autonomous farm equipment regulations

- Roundtable review of recent meetings and events.
 - NASA DEVELOP fellow project and tour
 - Old Vine Conference (Stuart Spencer and Stephanie Bolton were invited speakers and Lodi was one of the locations hosting the international conference)
 - Sustainable Ag Expo (Stephanie Bolton gave a talk on Whole Farm Profitability and hosted a networking bonfire on behalf of Lodi Growers)
 - October IPM Network Breakfast Meeting: Insects
 - August IPM Network Breakfast Meeting: Abandoned Vineyards
 - Harvest Safety Seminar with LDGGA
 - NGRA Grapevine Improvement Workshop
- **Future outreach initiatives**
 - Committee members were invited to:
 - NASA DEVELOP presentation
 - December 2 IPM Network Breakfast Meeting: Trunk Disease Workshop with Akif Eskalen
 - January 6 IPM Network Breakfast Meeting
 - Unified Wine & Grape Symposium
 - February 3 Lodi Grape Day
 - March 3 Lodi Farm Safety Day
 - March 11 UC On the Road in Lodi
 - Ideas for future meetings: profitability, alternative crops, “A Journey Into Vine Health”, crop rotation and herbicides/plant back restrictions, rootstocks and drought tolerance, vineyard establishment workshop, beneficial insects, Axel Borg (UC V&E Librarian), grower/winemaker relationships, the grape market, field-in technology, a microscope series, robotics, and permanent/full ground cover.

6. Grower communications.

- Grower e-Newsletter emails are sent up to a few times per month as needed, with an extensive calendar at the bottom.
- The lodigrowers.com website is updated frequently with educational events (under the Education heading, Local Opportunities page). Stephanie Bolton manages our weekly viticulture blogs, which are often picked up by industry news outlets.
- Stephanie Bolton is providing extensive consultation to farming families regarding vineyard removals to help them through the process emotionally, logistically, and financially.

7. Winegrape research in Crush District 11. Research projects and focus group updates:

- The Commission continues to develop close working relationships with skilled scientists, who collaborate with us on research projects in the areas of soil, water, sustainability, pests and diseases, rodent control, climate change, and more.
- The Rootstock Research Focus Group meets on the second Thursday of the month at the Velvet Grill. Growers can contact Dr. Stephanie Bolton to participate in on-farm small rootstock trials.
- Maria Zumkeller has created an Arc GIS dashboard which works with the free iNaturalist app to track our local Tree of Heaven populations so we can monitor their presence, scout them for the spotted lanternfly, and monitor their destruction post-scouting.
- The NASA DEVELOP fellows finished their project with Stephanie Bolton, Katie Gold (Cornell) and Lodi Growers called “Leveraging NASA Earth Observations to Detect Vine Stress and Potential Viral Presence in Vineyards to Inform Management Decisions.” They are writing a technical paper and will host a virtual meeting to present their results.
- Stephanie Bolton shared an abstract she submitted to the International Conference on Grapevine Viruses called “An Ongoing Grower-Led Holistic Grapevine Virus Outreach & Extension Project in California, USA” which includes Committee members Mike Klouda, Keith Striegler and Kyle Brown as co-authors. This international conference is held every two years and this is the first time the organizers opened the abstracts to extension work.

8. Weather Network services. The annual Calibration Report was shared.

9. The **FY2025-26 Budget** was reviewed.
10. **Reports from other Committees.**
 - Stuart Spencer updated the Committee on marketing activities and the Business Improvement District.
11. **Public comment on items not appearing on the agenda (2 min limit):** Cornerstone Canine Concepts introduced themselves and discussed their project to pick up on the canine detection of grapevine viruses, building upon the Lodi Winegrape Commission's DPR grant project.
12. **Items for future agendas:** none.
13. The **next meeting is scheduled for January 2026.**
14. The **meeting was adjourned** at 1:42pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephanie L. Bolton, PhD
Research & Education Director
Lodi Winegrape Commission