



RESEARCH, EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026
Time: 12:00pm
Place: Lodi Winegrape Commission, 2545 W Turner Road, Lodi, CA 95242

1. The **meeting was called to order** at 12:03pm by Committee Chairman Dawson Lewis.
2. Those in **attendance** are indicated below.

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

Staff present: Stephanie Bolton and Stuart Spencer.

Guests present: Phil Shoup (Lodi Grower), Marnie Martinez (Gallo), Dr. Karen Block (UC Davis).

3. **Consideration of previous minutes.** Brown/Klouda made a motion to approve the March 10, 2026 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 discussed the growing season at 2-17 days ahead of schedule.
 - Committee members updated everyone on their "Member Projects" where each member leads a project that they care about on behalf of the Commission to help the broader Lodi Winegrowing Community. Each project is in the area of viticulture research, education and/or communications. Project updates:
 - Kyle Brown: Tree of Heaven removal workshop at LangeTwins (by early Fall)
 - Mike Klouda: Regenerative viticulture trial at Michael David
 - Keith Streigler: Rootstock evaluation – July Committee Meeting to be on location
 - Joe Valente and Cameron Heinitz (COMPLETED): Pruning competition with 80 students, Cameron wrote a lodigrowers.com blog article
 - Amy Blagg: OSHA autonomous farm equipment regulations
 - Joe Larranaga: TBD, possible water project
 - Kevin den Hartog: TBD
 - Dawson Lewis: TBD, possibly mating disruption
 - Scott Armolea: TBD
 - Roundtable review of recent meetings and events.
 - March 11 UC On the Road in Lodi
 - April 7 IPM Meeting: Powdery Mildew & Barn Owls
 - April – NVEELC conference

- April 30 Ruhstaller Lodi Grower + UC Davis Mixer
- May 5 IPM meeting

- **Future outreach initiatives**

- Committee members were invited to:
 - May 21 Baby Barn Owl/Scientist Meet & Greet
 - June 2 Wildlife Field Day
 - June 15-18 ASEV National Conference
- Ideas for future meetings: profitability, alternative crops, "A Journey Into Vine Health", crop rotation and herbicides/plant back restrictions, rootstocks and drought tolerance, 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 monthly 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 demand as they process five years of research. Growers can contact Dr. Stephanie Bolton to participate in on-farm small rootstock trials.
- Stephanie Bolton delivered a keynote speech at 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.
- Three grant projects submitted to PD/GWSS work in partnership with Lodi Winegrape Commission and growers.

8. Weather Network services. No updates.

9. The **FY2025-26 Budget** was reviewed along with a FY2026-27 Draft Budget Request. Striegler/den Hartog made a motion to approve the FY2026-27 Draft Budget Request as presented. The motion was carried on a vote of Committee members present. No "no" votes. No abstentions.

10. Reports from other Committees.

- Stuart Spencer updated the Committee on the Lodi Winegrape Commission referendum passing, marketing activities, and the Business Improvement District.

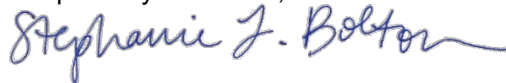
11. **Public comment on items not appearing on the agenda (2 min limit):** Dr. Karen Block shared updates on the UCCE Enologist and UC Oakville viticulture positions.

12. **Items for future agendas:** none.

13. The **next meeting is scheduled for July 29, 2026 at 8am at 21280 N Kennefick Rd, Acampo.**

14. The **meeting was adjourned** at 1:48pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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