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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRB Announces Request for Research Proposals for the 2017-18 Fiscal Year

VISALIA, Calif. – March 10, 2017 – The California Citrus Research Board (CRB) today announced the release of its 2017-2018 Request for Proposals (RFP) for scientific research projects that address the needs of California citrus growers. Key priorities for the organization this year include: research efforts to provide both short- and long-term solutions to huanglongbing (HLB or citrus greening), research that addresses water and labor needs and securing adequate data to support trade activities and deal with barriers to citrus exports.

The CRB is looking for solutions to HLB, a devastating disease that results in declining fruit quality and citrus tree death. HLB is vectored and transmitted by the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP). The disease was first described in 1929 and first reported in China in 1943. Eventually, HLB made its way to the United States, reaching Florida in 2005. Within three years, it had spread to the majority of Florida citrus groves. The rapid increase in this disease has threatened the citrus industry not only in Florida, but the entire US. The devastating disease has been associated with a 70% decline in Florida citrus production. Over 33 countries have reported HLB infection in their citrus crop.

“The CRB is committed to finding a permanent solution to HLB” said Dr. Melinda Klein, CRB Chief Research Scientist. “While the disease has only been found in residential areas of California to date, we recognize that it’s only a matter of time before this disease could be found in commercial citrus groves.”

In addition to supporting HLB research efforts, the CRB has also identified the following as research priorities for 2017-18:

- Development of mechanical harvest technology and automation to reduce production costs and increase productivity.
- Conduct field trials to maximize fertigation and water use efficiencies in citrus orchards.
- Secure adequate data to support industry positions dealing with trade activities and barriers to the citrus export industry.

A full list of priorities can be found in the RFP document at www.citrusresearch.org/research.

“The most exciting part of the RFP is reflected in the priorities established by the growers on our board and research committees,” said Gary Schulz, CRB President. “CRB-funded research projects will be crucial to the sustainability of the largest fresh citrus production area in the world.”

New to this year’s RFP process is a streamlined online RFP submission component of the CRB website. The deadline for new project pre-proposal submissions is **April 7, 2017**. Please see the [request for proposals](#) for additional details.

The CRB administers the California Citrus Research Program, the grower-funded and grower-directed program established in 1968 under the California Marketing Act as the mechanism enabling the State's citrus producers to sponsor and support needed research. More information about the Citrus Research Board may be found at www.citrusresearch.org.

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