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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Growers Reaffirm Support for Citrus Research Board

VISALIA, CALIF. – May 23, 2017 – By an overwhelming margin in a state-mandated referendum, California citrus growers voted to continue their support of the Citrus Research Board (CRB).

The just-concluded referendum, which must be held every five years, was conducted by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). Of all citrus producers eligible to vote, 79 percent submitted valid ballots. Their support was nearly unanimous – 98.86 percent, representing 99.64 percent of the state’s citrus volume, voted in favor of continuing the CRB.

CDFA Marketing Branch Chief Robert Maxie said, “Based upon this supportive vote of the citrus growers, the Department has authorized the California Citrus Research Program to continue operating for another five years, through September 30, 2022.”

Currently, the citrus industry is locked in a battle for its life against the deadly disease huanglongbing (HLB). The disease has devastated other citrus growing regions, including Florida. To date, it only has been found in 57 homeowners’ trees in the Los Angeles area; however, unless researchers are able to find a solution, it is only a matter of time before HLB gains a foothold in California’s

commercial groves. Over the past several years, the CRB has dedicated a significant portion of its funding to finding a solution to HLB, and the research results have been promising. In addition to pest and disease control activities, other areas the CRB funds include general production research, a variety improvement research program and a quality assurance program on agricultural chemical residues.

“We are pleased by the support of the growers,” said CRB President Gary Schulz, “and we look forward to continuing our partnership with them as we fund and conduct critical research designed to ensure the sustainability and success of the California citrus industry.”

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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