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October 2, 2015

To: California Department of Food and Agriculture
grants@cdfa.ca.gov

***Suggestion Regarding
New Program Priorities of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.***

As part of my efforts towards collaboration with the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians (“Kashia”) for the purposes described in this suggestion, [but not acting on behalf of Kashia], and with the encouragement of the University of California, Department of Agricultural and Natural Resources, Hopland Research and Extension Center, (*see, attached letter from Kimberly A. Rodrigues, Director*), I submit this suggestion in response to the September 18, 2015 solicitation by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (“CDFA”) for *Public Comments on New Program Priorities of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program*.

The purpose of CDFAs Funding Area III, Research, is to “. . . focus on improving the competitiveness of California specialty crops through projects that invest in specialty crop research.” The USDA Definition of Specialty Crop states: “If a naturally occurring population of plants is brought under management and that plant satisfies the definition of specialty crop presented in the second paragraph of this document, then those plants would be considered specialty crops.” The definition referred to includes tree nuts, and states that “natural populations of native plants that are *brought into cultivation* . . . are considered specialty crops by USDA.” Further, “. . . states may choose to define plants collected from the wild as specialty crops.”

The nuts of the California Bay Laurel tree (*Umbellularia californica*), among other traditional native foods in California, including, for example, manzanita, meet the USDA definition of specialty crop, but are not, to my knowledge, currently “under management” on a level that supports production on a viable commercial level because of *lack of the necessary scientific information*.

My informal analysis of public reaction to the taste of roasted Bay Laurel nuts has confirmed powerful public appeal and commercial interest. In furtherance of its commitment to developing the Bay Laurel nut as a commercial food product, I caused a laboratory analysis to be performed on roasted Bay Laurel nuts to meet FDA labeling standards. That analysis revealed that the nutritional content of Bay Laurel nuts is similar to that of walnuts. Unfortunately, there

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is currently no means to produce those nuts in commercially viable quantity.

I therefore respectfully suggest that Funding Area III, Research, be expanded to expressly include research to:

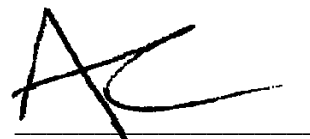
- 1) Identify the factors that determine the health and level of production by native plants of their edible products, for example the nuts of the California Bay Laurel tree and the berries of the manzanita; and to
- 2) Develop the knowledge and techniques necessary to begin *commercially managing or cultivating* native food plants for the production of significant marketable quantities of those products.

I believe that adoption by CDFA of these suggested changes would lead to the creation of a significant new horticultural industry in California. Because the subject plants are *native to California*, and well adapted to their environment through millennia of evolution, developing them as food products is by nature environmentally friendly and sustainable in the long term, even in drought conditions.

Kashia owns over 500 acres of historic Kashia lands and will soon own a total of more than 1,000 acres. Those properties are potentially available for the contemplated research, as are thousands of acres of Kashia traditional homelands held by public land trust organizations. Several of those organizations, including Pepperwood Preserve, a 3,000 acre land trust, have expressed interest in collaborating with Kashia on such research. And, as noted in Director Rodrigues' attached letter, UCNR has offered access to an additional 5,300 acres for the contemplated studies.

For all of the above reasons, I urge the California Department of Food and Agriculture to improve its *Specialty Crop Block Grant Program* by making the minor changes I have suggested. I would be happy to meet with CDFA personnel to discuss any aspect of these suggestions. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AC' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Anthony Cohen

Cc: Reno Franklin, Tribal Chair, Kashia
Kimberly A. Rodrigues, UC Davis



Kashia Band of Pomo Indians
Of the Stewarts Point Rancheria

Kashia Round House
Founded in 1916

To: California Department of Food and Agriculture
grants@cdfa.ca.gov

***Support for Suggestion of Anthony Cohen Regarding
New Program Priorities of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.***

I write on behalf of the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians to support the suggestion recently made by Anthony Cohen in response to the September 18, 2015 solicitation by the California Department of Food and Agriculture ("CDFA") for *Public Comments on New Program Priorities of the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program*. Mr. Cohen made that suggestion as part of his collaborative efforts with Kashia and with the encouragement of the University of California, Department of Agricultural and Natural Resources, Hopland Research and Extension Center. For your convenience, I have attached the letters from Mr. Cohen and from Kimberly A. Rodrigues, Director, Hopland Research and Extension Center, to which I am referring.

For the reasons set forth in those letters, Kashia joins in urging the California Department of Food and Agriculture to improve its *Specialty Crop Block Grant Program* by making the simple, but very important, changes Mr. Cohen suggested. Kashia would be happy to meet with CDFa personnel to discuss any aspect of these suggestions. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Reno Franklin
Tribal Chair

Cc: Anthony Cohen
Kimberly A. Rodrigues, UC Davis, HREC



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources ■ **Research and Extension Center System**

Hopland Research and Extension Center

September 30, 2015

California Department of Food and Agriculture,

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Letter of Support for Kashia Band of Pomo Indians

I fully support learning more about our native plants through traditional ecological knowledge and science working together in new ways. The University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Hopland Research and Extension Center (UC ANR HREC) has hosted gatherings on this general topic and are hosting another event this coming month to support these new working relationships. We can offer 5,300 acres of oak woodlands with mixed species, including Bay Laurel, to study. We also have a greenhouse and other facilities to expand the field research.

Kashia owns 480 acres of historic Kashia lands and is about to obtain another 500 acres. Both of those properties are available for the research, as are thousands of acres of Kashia traditional homelands held by public land trust organizations. Several of those organizations, including Pepperwood Preserve, a 3000 acre land trust, have expressed interest in collaborating with Kashia on such research. As a researcher and the Director for the UC ANR Hopland Research and Extension center, I will work collaboratively with the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians, Pepperwood Preserve and other partners to learn more about the growth and sustainable production of these traditional crops.

It is exciting to support an effort that recognizes and values traditional ecological knowledge and builds new partnerships with Universities and other partners in our local communities. I sincerely hope this can be considered for future funding and support. The Bay Laurel tree is often ignored or neglected in our native stands as it is not considered a commercial timber production species. The lack of commercial value has resulted in lack of comprehensive research or attention to this important species, although recent research has focused on its role as a host species in Sudden Oak Death.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

With Respect,

Kim Rodrigues

Kimberly A. Rodrigues, PhD

Director, UC ANR Hopland Research and Extension Center

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