

My name is Ron Whitehurst in Ventura and a member of the Sustainable Pest Management Work Group that Julie Henderson described is developing a pathway away from toxic pesticides. I am a licensed Pest Control Advisor and co-owner of Rincon-Vitova Insectaries that has grown and markets beneficial insects and other products for organic pest management since 1950. Our decades of work and the success of over 2500 organic farms in California show that farmers do not need toxic chemical inputs. They, their farmworkers and neighbors are safe from toxic exposure and have many more benefits.

I suggest that you examine conflicts of interest by and risks for licensed Pest Control Advisors. First, all PCAs should be independent and base their recommendations on findings from monitoring and knowledge of an effective combination of least toxic solutions that Julie Henderson described in her presentation to the committee. Then, there would be less unnecessary use of toxic pesticides. Second, the state can insure independent PCA's from liability if a client experiences a loss from the PCA's biologically-based recommendation.