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CDFa Announces Results of PD Referendum

Sacramento, CA, May 10, 2010 — The ballots are in and the votes have been counted to decide on whether or not to continue the Pierce’s disease (PD) assessment paid by California’s winegrape growers. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFa) Marketing Branch, which conducted the referendum, it has passed by an overwhelming margin of 84 percent in favor of continuing the assessment to fund research for another five years.

“California’s winegrape growers have shown their continuing commitment to fighting PD, which has the potential of devastating California’s \$61.5 billion a year wine and grape industry,” said A.G. Kawamura, Secretary of the California Department of Food (CDFa). “The assessment has played a vital role in moving the industry to a more predictable future where PD is no longer a threat. And with the new expanded scope, assessment dollars can now be directed towards other pests and diseases that threaten the industry as well.”

Referendum ballots were sent out by the CDFa in late March to some 6,300 winegrape-growing entities in the state. Approximately 45 percent of eligible growers cast ballots, satisfying the threshold for the referendum of 40% participation. Passage required either a “yes” vote by 65 percent or more of those voting provided they represent the majority of the assessment that was paid in 2009 by all who voted; or a “yes” vote by a majority of those voting provided they represent 65 percent or more of the assessment that was paid in 2009 by all who voted.

For more information about the PD/GWSS Board and how assessment funds have been used, visit www.pdgwss.net.