

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)
ANIMAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY SERVICES (AHFSS)
MEAT, POULTRY AND EGG SAFETY BRANCH (MPES)
SHELL EGG ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 25, 2022**

California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N St, Room 133
Sacramento, CA 95814

Item
No.

(1) ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by Mr. Michael Abbott, Egg Quality Manager, Egg Safety and Quality Management (ESQM) Program. A quorum was established at 9:01 a.m.

Mr. David Will acted as the Chair and Mr. John Bedell was designated as a voting member.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Will, Chair
Mike Sencer, Hidden Villa Ranch
Kaliko Orian, Kaliko Farms
Andrew Demler, Demler Family Farms
Richard Breitmeyer, Public Member
Lupe Gutierrez, NuCal Foods
Steve Mahrt, Petaluma Farms
John Bedell, Alternate
Frank Hilliker, Alternate
Cathy Roache, CACASA Representative, Non-Voting Member

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Debbie Murdock

CDFA:

Dr. Annette Jones	Dr. Elizabeth Cox
Paula Batarseh	Michael Abbott
Penny Arana	Casey Luna
Brittany Cardoza	Logan Bartley

(2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Will asked SEAC to review the meeting minutes from August 16, 2022.

Motion #1: Mr. Mike Sencer made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Richard Breitmeyer seconded the motion. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

(3) **BORDER STATION UPDATE**

Mr. Casey Luna introduced this update by stating that the hold on egg loads has been low, including a few loads that were missing the California Shell Egg Food Safety (CA SEFS) statement due to labeling misunderstandings. He explained that the Bill of Lading requires the Proposition 12 approved statement and the CA SEFS statement.

Further, he stated that the number of loads being imported were consistent, with the following totals:

- August 2022: 2,159 Loads
- September 2022: 1,984 Loads

It was requested that CDFA provide a statement that clarifies the exact language needed on the Bill of Lading for the CA SEFS and Proposition 12, for the load(s) to be compliant.

Mr. Luna clarified that the number of loads being held for this reason are low and that he will contact companies that need assistance with the required language for the Bill of Lading.

(4) **PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Abbott began the update by stating that the ESQM program is attempting to get fully staffed. In the Northern Region, he announced that Fruit and Vegetable Quality Inspector, Mr. Bernard Carr, will be retiring, so the program will have an additional vacant position. The program will be looking to hire two Limited Term Environmental Scientists (ES). One ES position will be for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Grant to help implement the national standards; the second ES will replace an employee who is on extended medical leave. Additionally, the program is looking to hire one Agricultural Program Supervisor I and one Agricultural Program Supervisor II.

Mr. Abbott went on to explain that ESQM has been working with the FDA to develop a refresher training for program inspectors who perform FDA inspections.

Next, Mr. Abbott shifted to county updates. There is interest by one County to add a Compliance and Risk Based Inspections agreement, and another is interested in adding a Retail agreement. CDFA is seeing forward progress with the counties following the spring California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association meeting.

(5) **BRANCH UPDATE**

Mrs. Paula Batarseh introduced this item by announcing that Marc Shaw has left the program, for a promotion with the Horse Racing Board. Senior Special Investigator Brittany Cardoza will be backfilling his position in the interim.

Further, Mrs. Batarseh stated that she has been in contact with Mr. David Belt with Foster Farms, who is working closely with the University of Maine and with Mr. Mark Hutcherson on the proposal for the Poultry Carcass Composting Research Project. They expect to submit a proposal to CDFA for review towards the end of the year or early next year.

(6) **DIVISION UPDATE**

Dr. Annette Jones introduced this item by disclosing that High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI), has been detected in thirty-one counties within California so far. However, industry has done a remarkable job in their biosecurity. Despite the extent of the virus, the results have been good due to the all the efforts of staff and industry.

She continued that the Animal Health Branch has been working with the ESQM SEFS staff, in keeping an eye on the outbreak, since HPAI positive cases were affecting multiple aspects of the Division and Branch. Future efforts will be for the SEFS staff to enforce enhanced biosecurity and testing.

Since California is a geographically diverse state, the widespread extent of HPAI requires a lot of data reports from multiple sources. CDFA has improved the remote incident management, which can simplify the process of reporting data more efficiently.

Dr. Jones stated that there has been continued discussion on the national level on how to contain the HPAI outbreak moving forward.

Further, CDFA is also looking to restart farm inspections to ensure that the eggs are safe and to facilitate meeting contractual obligations with FDA.

(7) **PROPOSITION 12 DISCUSSION**

Dr. Elizabeth Cox shared a PowerPoint presentation consisting of the new regulatory requirements for Proposition 12 which were finalized and effective September 1, 2022.

Beginning January 1, 2024, all egg producers within the State of California must be registered with CDFA as an accredited certified agent or other government entity. Additionally, egg distributors who are selling to an end-user must be certified with CDFA as an accredited certified agent or another government entity. These registrations will be under the jurisdiction of the Animal Care Program and will be in addition to the existing egg handler and producer registration from ESQM Program.

Further, the Bill of Lading for egg loads being imported into California must include the following label: "Egg CA Prop 12 Compliant". This is exclusively for shipping documents.

(8) **COUNTY CONTRACT SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Sencer asked SEAC to review the subcommittee meeting minutes from September 14, 2022.

Motion #2: Mr. Will made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. John Bedell seconded the motion. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

The subcommittee recognized that CDFA has addressed all the issues and concerns that were brought to these meetings. The subcommittee felt that future meetings regarding these topics with this group, are not needed.

(9) **PENALTY MATRIX SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Steve Mahrt asked SEAC to review the subcommittee meeting minutes from September 27, 2022.

Motion #3: Mr. Sencer made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Breitmeyer seconded the motion. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

As discussed during the subcommittee meeting, the subcommittee decided that they are satisfied with the steps that the ESQM is taking to keep the Penalty Matrix focused on compliance and food safety.

(10) **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

It was requested that the Out of State Egg Shipment Report be distributed to SEAC. Further, a report with the projected number of layers and cases was requested as well.

(11) **UPCOMING SEAC MEETING DATES**

The next Shell Egg Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 9AM via Zoom.

(12) **ADJOURN**

Motion #4: Mr. Sencer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Breitmeyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.
Respectfully submitted:

Logan Bartley