

**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  
November 15, 2023**

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
1220 N St, Room 333  
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 9:02 a.m.

Mr. John Bedell and Mr. Frank Hilliker were designated as voting members.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

David Will, Chair  
Mike Sencer, Hidden Villa Ranch  
Glenn Hickman, Hickman Family Farms  
Andrew Demler, Demler Family Farms  
Lupe Gutierrez, NuCal Foods  
Richard Breitmeyer, Public Member  
John Bedell, Alternate  
Frank Hilliker, Alternate

**INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Bernardo Santillan, Denver Farms

**CDEFA:**

Dr. Annette Jones	Dr. Elizabeth Cox
Paula Batarseh	Dr. Fernando Umayam
Michael Abbott	Penny Arana
Brittany Cardoza	Paul Roos
David Bohrer	Casey Luna
Andrew Halbert	Kim Ellis
Olivia Call	

**(2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. David Will asked SEAC to review the meeting minutes from March 28, 2023.

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

(3) **BORDER STATION UPDATE**

Mr. Casey Luna introduced this update by presenting a spreadsheet indicating the total amount of truckloads of eggs being imported into California, by month:

- September 2023: 2,172 truckloads of eggs
- October 2023: 2,393 truckloads of eggs

The presented spreadsheet also included a further breakdown of the egg truckloads by Border Station. On average, the Needles Border Station received the most egg loads coming into California.

Mr. Will asked Mr. Luna to provide a more detailed list at the next meeting, to include the numbers for full truckloads of eggs or the exact cases of eggs crossing the border. Mr. Sencer requested to add information on if the product amount is increasing or decreasing. Mr. Luna confirmed he would pull more detailed data and present the numbers at the next meeting.

(4) **PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Abbott began the update by introducing the newest northern district Agricultural Program Supervisor for ESQM, Kim Ellis. Additionally, ESQM is currently working to hire a Senior Environmental Scientist.

Mr. Abbott then stated, that the ESQM program recently completed a program meeting which covered all required trainings for the inspectors. ESQM will also be participating on the manufactured food meeting, where ESQM will present with the Food and Drug Administration on egg manufacturing standards, best practices and ideas.

(5) **BRANCH UPDATE**

Ms. Paula Batarseh began the update by providing the status on upcoming composting projects, MPES is currently working on. The first project is the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program which is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. Gemperle and Ms. Debbie Murdock will be collaborating on this project along with Dr. Mark Hutchinson, a subject matter expert from Maine. The project will include egg laying hens and shell eggs beginning sometime in late 2024.

The second project is funded by a grant from CDFA to the California Dairy Research Foundation (CDRF) and will include livestock and poultry. Ms. Batarseh stated the goal of these projects is to address the operational or regulatory gaps and to work closely with the regulatory agencies and stakeholders on composting and training in California. She concluded by stating MPES will have a project stakeholder kickoff meeting with CDRF, sometime in February.

Mr. Will asked if there were any questions. There were none.

(6) **DIVISION UPDATE**

Dr. Annette Jones began with an update on the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza statistics. There has only been one case that was resolved quickly. Because of the low

numbers, Dr. Jones thinks the current management system is working well and thanked the board members and their staff for their assistance in controlling the disease.

Mr. Will asked Dr. Jones if any surveillance was being conducted on wild birds and if so, what detections are being found in California. Dr. Jones confirmed that wild bird surveillance has just begun, all updated data can be found on the tracking map posted on the CDFA website. Mr. Will asked if the map shows the types of species. Dr. Jones confirmed it does not and offered to provide a more detailed data during the next board meeting.

The next topic Dr. Jones discussed was the Animal Care Program (ACP) third party certification process where she invited the board to inform her of any issues they are having related to certification. No concerns were mentioned.

Dr. Jones invited ACP Dr. Elizabeth Cox to answer any remaining questions the board had. There were none.

(7) **PROPOSITION 12 DISCUSSION**

Dr. Cox began by informing the board that the border stations have begun conducting surveillance on trucks that are hauling shell eggs, liquid eggs, whole pork meat and whole veal meat. This surveillance includes looking for the Proposition 12 statements on shipping documents. Trucks that are non-compliant are being logged into an online form that goes directly to Animal Care, who then reaches out to do a follow up with the shipper.

Ms. Lupe Guterrez asked Dr. Cox what the repercussions are if a shipper does not have the Proposition 12 shipping documents. Dr. Cox confirmed there is no penalty fee, but the shipper will receive a call and email from ACP informing them of what the requirements are.

Mr. Sencer asked Dr. Cox how the Proposition 12 work is being funded. Dr. Cox confirmed that charges for the program are paid separately to the Proposition 12 budget.

Mr. Will asked Dr. Cox if the Proposition 12 budget is general fund and asked if it can be accessed, to see what the budget is and where the money is going. Dr. Cox confirmed the budget is split funded with the agriculture fund and she would need to confirm where the budget resides for public review.

Mr. Abbott stated the current budget amount for the Border Station inspection agreement is \$376,970.00.

Dr. Cox offered to provide a visual inspection checklist at the next board meeting.

Mr. Glenn Hickman requested to appoint a committee to determine how border station inspections can be more cost effective. Mr. Will agreed and asked the board to determine subcommittee members and a meeting date before the next SEAC meeting.

Dr. Cox continued with the upcoming deadline for producer certification, which is January 1, 2024. She confirmed the producer certification includes any in-state egg producers in California or any out of state egg producers who are going to be selling liquid or shell eggs into California. Dr. Cox reported that ten private companies have been accredited to certify operations, of which seven are domestic companies and three are foreign companies that only do foreign operations. Four producers are currently in the queue waiting to be certified. Because of this, ACP will be hiring three additional staff that will include a Special Investigator, Environmental Scientist and a Field Inspector.

Lastly, Dr. Cox informed the board that the presentation Dr. Jones and Dr. Cox presented at the United Egg Producers meeting is currently posted to the CDFA website. The presentation explains egg producer Proposition 12 compliance requirements and can be used to answer any questions producers have about the certification process.

Mr. Will asked if there were any additional questions for Dr. Cox. There was none.

**(8) BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Abbott began by asking the board members who would like to be a part of the budget subcommittee, so he can establish who will be attending the meeting to be scheduled in March. Mr. Will proposed Ms. Gutierrez, Mr. Demler or Mr. Hickman to join the subcommittee. All three recommendations will need to be confirmed, prior to scheduling the meeting.

**(9) REVIEW RENEWAL TERMS**

Mr. Abbott showed the board the list of renewal dates for each member and stated that most members are good until 2026, except for Mr. Richard Breitmeyer whose term expires July 2024. Mr. Will asked if Mr. Breitmeyer will be renewing his term. Mr. Breitmeyer confirmed he will not be renewing after his term ends.

**(10) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

**(11) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Budget Subcommittee Discussion
- Proposition 12 Subcommittee Discussion

**(12) UPCOMING SEAC MEETING DATES**

The next Shell Egg Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 9AM.

**(13) ADJOURN**

**Motion #3:** Mr. Sencer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gutierrez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Olivia Call