

**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  
January 14, 2020**

California Department of Food and Agriculture  
2800 Gateway Oaks Drive, Room 267  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Item  
No.

(1) **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. David Will, Chair, called the SEAC meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and a quorum was established.

(2) **ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken by Mr. Tony Herrera, Egg Quality Manager, Egg Safety and Quality Management (ESQM). Introductions were made.

**Committee Members Present:**

David Will, Chair  
Mike Gemperle, Vice Chair  
Mike Sencer, Hidden Villa Ranch  
Glenn Hickman, Hickman Family Farms  
Steve Mahrt, Petaluma Farms  
Lupe Gutierrez, NuCal Foods  
Kaliko Orian, Kaliko Farms  
Andrew Demler, Demler Brothers  
Dr. Richard Breitmeyer, Public Member  
Frank Hilliker, Alternate  
John Bedell, Alternate  
Ruben Arroyo, CACASA Representative, Non-Voting Member

**Interested Parties:**

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| Debbie Murdock | Mike Ames     |
| Stan Foster    | Mark Campbell |

**CDFA:**

|                   |                 |                |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Dr. Annette Jones | William Rohner  | Alan Pham      |
| Dr. Stephen Beam  | Joshua McDonald | Kathryn Tockey |
| Paula Batarseh    | Michael Abbott  | Candice Murray |
| Tony Herrera      | Paul Roos       | Holly Chang    |

(3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Will asked SEAC to review the meeting minutes from November 12, 2019.

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

(4) **BORDER STATION UPDATE**

Mr. Rohner updated SEAC on border station activities. At the end of January, there will be an upcoming border station training at Mountain Pass and an annual training in Sacramento. Chair Will inquired on the number of Notice of Violations (NOV) issued for paperwork errors. Mr. Rohner advised that most violations found at the border station are paperwork errors; however, companies are quick to correct those errors. Ms. Gutierrez expressed her concerns on verifying egg product compliance with the new law. Mr. Rohner explained that without regulations in place, it is difficult to enforce compliance.

Mr. Rohner introduced Joshua McDonald to SEAC. Mr. McDonald is a supervisor at the border stations and works closely with Mr. Rohner on egg product compliance. Mr. McDonald explained the different processes of reviewing, processing, and holding egg products at the border station. Chair Will thanked Mr. McDonald for their hard work and updates from the border station.

(5) **OTHER SPECIES OF FOWL (OSOF) & SANITATION**

Mr. Pham discussed the drafted minimum practices for the Other Species of Fowl & Sanitation (OSOF) project. Chair Will would like to review the draft and discuss the recommended practices at the next meeting.

Mr. Herrera opened discussion on project and service funding. He advised that there would be an additional service charge for OSOF biosecurity inspections.

Chair Will asked whether the “CA SEFS Compliant” statement can be added on a label if producers implement ESQM’s best practices standards for OSOF. Mr. Herrera stated that until regulations include OSOF, producers cannot include that statement on the label. Dr. Breitmeyer inquired on the data for cases of OSOF egg products sold. Mr. Pham advised that the data was collected through the registration forms in 2019, and he will present the data at the next SEAC meeting. In addition, Dr. Breitmeyer suggested to reach out to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Public Health to obtain data on disease outbreak cases from OSOF egg products. The data collected could potentially further justify the necessity of the project.

(6) **RETAIL VIOLATIONS**

Ms. Murray introduced herself to SEAC as the new lead retail inspector. She provided a brief overview of the inspection process and the different types of violations found in retail. Mr. Bedell asked whether farmer’s market violations have significantly decreased with retail inspections. Ms. Murray confirmed that there has been a decrease of violations found at farmers market – one of the most prevalent violation found was due to nonregistered egg handlers.

Mr. Hilliker inquired if producers are allowed to display an electronic copy of their egg handler's license instead of the hardcopy license at the farmers market. Mr. Herrera advised to check with the farmers market as each establishment has a different policy on displaying licenses.

(7) **PROPOSITION (PROP) 12 UPDATE**

Dr. Jones stated that the Prop 12 law is effective January 1, 2020. The regulations for cage size standards have not been finalized; however, cage size standards are being enforced through the law. The regulations have been posted for the general public to review and comment. The commentary period for the drafted shell egg regulations end on January 31, 2020. Dr. Jones anticipates completing the economic impact assessment for shell eggs by the end of March 2020.

Mr. Mahrt inquired on the amount of feedback received by the Department. Dr. Jones advised that there has not been any comments and/or feedback received as of current. Dr. Jones hopes that the regulation is finalized and effective by October 2020.

(8) **LABELING CLAIMS PROJECT**

Ms. Tockey presented the labeling claims project to SEAC. The project aims to accurately assess the legitimacy of label claims to ensure an even level playing field for all producers. Ms. Tockey discussed the process of verifying the validity of label claims. Inspectors will notate any label claims during their inspection and contact the producer to provide documentation and proof of their label claims.

There was a discussion on the definition of the term 'pasture raised'. Mr. Hilliker suggested the need for a definition on 'pasture-raised' within the regulations. Mr. Gemperle advised that it could be self-defined by the producer on the label.

Chair Will would like Ms. Tockey to provide SEAC a list of label claims at the next meeting. The committee would like to assess and make recommendations on the claim(s) most prevalent in the egg industry.

(9) **COMPLIANCE UPDATE**

Mr. Abbott presented to SEAC the breakdown of NOV's issued in the last quarter. As of current, there are two settlement requests in review. Mr. Roos reiterated that not all NOV's are processed into a Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA). The NOPA can be comprised of multiple NOV's that were issued within a specific timeframe.

(10) **FORMATION OF BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE**

Chair Will nominated Mr. Hickman as head of the budget sub-committee. The budget subcommittee shall be comprised of Chair Will, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Gemperle, and Mr. Rohner.

**(11) PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Herrera provided a brief update on the Program. As the Program redirects their focus from Prop 12 inspections, FDA inspections will resume in March 2020. Inspectors are collecting Annual Cases Available (ACA) data to assist with the formation of county contracts. Mr. Herrera will be participating in the International Productions Processing Expo at the end of January 2020. In addition, Mr. Herrera will also be attending his last National Egg Quality School (NEQS) board meeting next month.

Chair Will brought up concerns from the industry on properly notifying future meeting dates as well as conference call accessibility. Mr. Herrera and Ms. Batarseh will work on addressing those concerns and making accommodations for the industry.

**(12) BRANCH UPDATE**

Ms. Batarseh will be attending the Pacific Coast Renderers Association annual meeting in March 2020. Some of the concerns that were brought up in the last annual meeting included inedible kitchen grease, license renewal, and the NOPA process. Ms. Batarseh thanked Mr. Abbott for making significant progress in the Rendering NOPA process. In addition, there will be a Rendering Industry Advisory Board meeting on March 10, 2020. This meeting will focus on the discussion of carcass management.

The Egg Quality Manager position has been posted and the last filing date will be on January 17, 2020. The Branch will begin interviewing applicants three months from Mr. Herrera's last day with the Program.

**(13) DIVISION UPDATE**

Dr. Jones hoped to lift the virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) quarantine in January 2020 if all freedom from disease tests came back negative. However, there were 24 new positive vND results confirmed since November 2019. There was further discussion on vND quarantine efforts and the expected timeframe to lift the quarantine. Dr. Jones explained that the quarantine will be lifted once all test results come back negative in the span of three months. In addition, Dr. Jones has been working on Prop 12 regulations and carcass management.

**(14) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Murdock congratulated Dr. Jones on receiving an award for going above and beyond to protect the poultry industry.

**(15) ELECTION OF SEAC OFFICERS**

Mr. Sencer nominated Mr. Gemperle as the Chair and Mr. Will as Vice Chair of the SEAC.

**Motion #2:** Mr. Mahrt made a motion to close the nominations. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

**(16) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Budget Sub-Committee
- OSOF Registration Data
- Compliance Update
- Certified Farmers Market
- Prop 12
- Labeling Claims Project

**(17) UPCOMING SEAC MEETING DATES**

The next SEAC meeting will be on March 12, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. It will be held in Sacramento, at the Gateway Oaks location in Room 267.

**(18) ADJOURN**

Chair Gemperle asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion #3:** Mr. Sencer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Breitmeyer seconded the motion. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Holly Chang