

**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
March 12, 2020**

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

Item
No.

(1) **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Mike Gemperle, 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:

Mike Gemperle, Chair
David Will, Vice Chair
Steve Mahrt, Petaluma Farms
Lupe Gutierrez, NuCal Foods
Dr. Richard Breitmeyer, Public Member
John Bedell, Alternate

Interested Parties:

Debbie Murdock
Richard Jenkins

CDFA:

Dr. Annette Jones	William Rohner	Alan Pham
Paula Batarseh	Jenna Celigija	Kathryn Tockey
Tony Herrera	Michael Abbott	Holly Chang
Laura Barlow	Paul Roos	

(3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Gemperle asked SEAC to review the meeting minutes from January 14, 2020.

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

(4) **BORDER STATION UPDATE**

Mr. Rohner provided an update on border station activities. There has been extensive efforts to review the cases of liquid and dry egg products being shipped into California. In the last two months, there has been an increase of liquid egg products shipped into California. Mr. Herrera added that there was a slight discrepancy with reporting the numbers of liquid egg products at the border stations. The issue has been addressed with border station personnel.

Most recently, there were training sessions conducted at the Mountain Pass and Needles border station. Each of the training sessions had about twenty-two (22) inspectors. Mr. Rohner noted that training sessions have increased due to high turnover as well as an increase of new seasonal workers hired at the border station.

SEAC members inquired on ways to verify compliance with the new cage standards at the border station. There was further discussion on whether the Food Safety Inspection Services (FSIS) have an obligation to verify cage standard compliance on shipping invoices. Mr. Rohner will be in contact with FSIS for more information on this matter.

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

Mr. Pham presented the data on all current registered OSOF egg handlers. The data was broken down by the species type and flock size. Mr. Will asked whether salmonella transmission from OSOF egg products pose the same risks as chicken egg products. Dr. Breitmeyer advised that it would be difficult to measure through sample environmental testing; it is recommended to review past findings and studies to determine similar salmonella transmission risks. Mr. Pham discussed studies from other countries with a high intake of OSOF egg products and found that there were similar transmission risks.

Mr. Mahrt suggested to begin with educating producers on basic biosecurity standards. In addition, Ms. Batarseh recommends to start with larger flock sized producers. There was further discussion on implementing OSOF into the current regulations.

SEAC would like to invite Dr. Maurice Pitesky to discuss and assess OSOF transmission risks at the next SEAC meeting.

(6) **LABELING CLAIMS PROJECT**

Ms. Tockey provided SEAC a list of labeling claims the Program will be further reviewing for validation. Ms. Tockey reiterated the importance of validating label claims as it would provide an even playing field for the industry and ensure legitimate labeling claims for consumers. SEAC discussed the current labeling claims and included additional claims for further inspection.

SEAC thanked Ms. Tockey for the initiation of the project as it is very important for the industry to provide quality and wholesome eggs to their consumers.

(7) **COMPLIANCE UPDATE**

Mr. Abbott provided an overview of the Notice of Violations (NOV) and Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) issued during the first quarter. Mr. Roos noted that there has been an increase in NOVs issued for nonregistered egg handlers due to the enhanced border station enforcement. Additionally, Mr. Roos discussed the inquiry from the last meeting regarding the number of violations for noncompliant eggs being shipped into California from the last meeting. As of current, six (6) of the eight (8) NOVs for noncompliant eggs have moved to NOPAs.

(8) **PROPOSITION (PROP) 12 UPDATE**

Dr. Jones updated the current status of Prop 12 regulations. The majority of the comments were received from the pork and veal industry. Dr. Jones stated that the regulation package will be moving forward in the formal rulemaking process and hopes to have the regulations published by the end of June 2020. Mr. Will inquired the hire status of the new Prop 12 managerial position. Dr. Jones advised that the new staff will start at the end of March 2020. SEAC would like to invite the new staff to the next SEAC meeting.

Mr. Mahrt inquired whether powdered and frozen egg products will be included in the regulations. Dr. Jones explained that the definition of different egg products was modeled after USDA. Additional comments were made regarding regulations for online egg sales; Dr. Jones will look further into the matter and report her findings to SEAC.

(9) **CERTIFIED FARMERS MARKET (CFM)**

Ms. Celigija updated SEAC on the status of the Certified Farmers Market Project. Ms. Celigija provided the breakdown of the number of inspections and violations found at the farmers market. There was further discussion on the different types of violations issued. SEAC would like to ensure that small producers are aware of the new cage size standards as there has been compliance issues found in the past.

Ms. Celigija advised SEAC that they are now reviewing and analyzing data collected in order to finalize procedures in the farmers market. Mr. Will inquired whether the number of violations found by inspectors are reported back to the farmers market. Ms. Celigija stated that she will be following up with the farmers market on the number and types of violations issued. In addition, Ms. Celigija will begin moving special labeling claims NOVs to NOPA in the future.

(10) **PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Herrera provided a brief Program update. At the last SEAC meeting, the committee expressed their concerns regarding meeting accessibility for out-of-state producers. Mr. Herrera recognizes the importance of accessibility for meeting attendees and is working closely with staff to maximize meeting notification efforts. Under the Bagley-Keene Act, conference calls into the meeting location would be allowed only if a SEAC member was physically present at the public call-in location.

Mr. Herrera will be coordinating a Budget Sub-Committee teleconference meeting. He also attended the National Egg Regulatory Officials conference last week in San Diego. Mr. Herrera noted a presentation regarding the pooling of environmental samples. The study showed that the method of pooling does not equate to FDA's standards for environmental swabbing.

Mr. Juan Gonzalez, the Program's auditor, is no longer with CDFA as he recently promoted. Mr. Gonzalez is now with the California Public Utilities Commission. The Program and SEAC thanked Mr. Gonzalez for his major contributions to the Program.

(11) BRANCH UPDATE

The Branch conducted the first round of interviews for the Egg Quality Manager position; they will be moving forward with potential candidates for a second interview. Ms. Batarseh would like to have representatives from SEAC to join the next interview process. Ms. Murdock inquired on the status of the recent rendering plant shutdown. Ms. Batarseh stated that a notice was issued for alternate disposal methods; all rendering plants are now back in service.

(12) DIVISION UPDATE

The Division is still conducting free from disease testing for virulent Newcastle Disease (vND). Dr. Jones hopes to declare freedom from disease by either May or June 2020 depending on the test results.

Mr. Bedell inquired on the Division's efforts to help CDFA employees navigate and transition through work in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Dr. Jones stated that the Division is working closely with the Department of Public Health for updates and recommended protocols. Dr. Jones advised SEAC members to contact their local health agencies to receive recommendations on protecting employees at the workplace.

(13) PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Gemperle and Ms. Murdock presented Mr. Herrera an award to thank him for his contributions to SEAC and the development of the Egg Safety and Quality Management Program. Mr. Herrera expressed his gratitude to SEAC and his staff for their support. He is proud to have been a part of the Program's journey and hopes for the continued growth and success of the Program.

(14) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Budget Sub-Committee Report
- OSOF Project Update
 - o Invite Dr. Maurice Pitesky
- Prop 12

(15) **UPCOMING SEAC MEETING DATES**

The next SEAC meeting will be on May 6, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. It will be held in Sacramento, at the Gateway Oaks location in Room 267.

(16) **ADJOURN**

Chair Gemperle asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion #2: Mr. Mahrt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Will seconded the motion. All members agreed with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Holly Chang