



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT of
AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

MIKE STRAIN, DVM *Commissioner*

LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 8, 2024, 9:30 AM
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
5825 FLORIDA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LA 70806

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Robert Hanks at 9:30 AM.

II. ROLL CALL AND DECARATION OF QUORUM

LDAF staff, Cindy Abbott, called roll. The following commission members were present:

Robert Hanks
Ronald Petree
Ross Girtman
Tom Russell
Stephen Logan
Kevin Webb
Garret Hebert

With seven (7) members present, a quorum was declared. The following commission members were absent:

Ryan Ellington
Larry Sayes

LDAF Staff Present

Agro-Consumer Services Assistant Commissioner: Kevin Finley
Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission Director: Gene Cavalier
LDAF Agricultural Specialist, Grain Program Manager: Chad Price
LDAF Auditor: Jeff Fabre
LDAF Attorney: Bethany Gonzales
LDAF Administrative Coordinator IV: Cindy Abbott

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

IV. ADOPTION OF JUNE 27, 2024 MINUTES

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Environmental
Sciences**
Suite 3000
(225) 925-3770
Fax: 925-3760

**Agro-Consumer
Services**
Suite 5000
(225) 925-3780
Fax: 923-4877

**Animal Health
& Food Safety**
Suite 4000
(225) 925-3962
Fax: 923-4900

Forestry
Suite 6000
(225) 925-4500
Fax: 922-1356

**Management
& Finance**
Suite 1000
(225) 952-8143

**Soil & Water
Conservation**
Suite 7000
(225) 922-1269

A motion was made by Ronald Petree to approve and adopt the minutes of the June 27, 2024, meeting. Tom Russell seconded the motion. All members in favor. Motion carried.

V. GRAIN & COTTON INDEMNITY FUND AND SELF INSURANCE FUND

Director Gene Cavalier stated, as of November 7, 2024, the GCIF balance is \$7,721,992.51 and the SIF balance is \$752,760.33.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. 2024 HARVEST SEASON REPORT

Mr. Chad Price: Agricultural Specialist and Grain Program Manager reported on the 2024 grain season. Harvest season, for the Grain Division, started in July and has now tapered and slowed down. There is a lot of corn being held that will be loaded after the first of the year, 2025. As of now, for our division, we have completed 3,791 inspections during the four-month period of harvest season, which usually kicks off in August.

There were some minor setbacks in the soybean crop this harvest season. They started out rough, with anywhere between 5 to 12 percent damage straight out of the field. They cleaned up for a few weeks, before the rainy weather and overcast conditions made for another 2022 crop year, which yielded a 9% drop from previous years. However, it did clean up to a degree and overall was a good crop year for our Division.

We are in the process of increasing our fees for our elevator facilities. This increase will help with the increase in staff and expense costs. It has become much more expensive to run this Division, and we have not had a fee increase in twenty years. All information has been sent to the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) to approve or disapprove, based on different elevators' view of the fee increase. In general, this increase would go toward general expenses and vehicle and equipment maintenance. Equipment costs are limited because only certain types of equipment can be used, and they are expensive because they're made specifically for this industry. Overall, it would help to better service the Louisiana Farmers and the elevator facilities.

Mr. Tom Russell and Mr. Price discussed the possibility of adding more Grain inspection offices in the Tallulah and Lake Providence areas. There are a lot of people needing service and so much transport of grain samples for inspection from these areas that the added Grain offices are not only needed, but the expenses justified. The volume of soybeans in this area alone is enough to generate an office at this location and to keep it busy. The increase in grain inspection fees could help increase the Grain Division's staff, allowing for an increase in Grain inspection offices.

Mr. Gene Cavalier advised he and Mr. Kevin Finley discussed some opportunities for more employment through the increase in fees. We've been working with the Civil Service on that. As you all know, WAEs versus a permanent position is more lucrative, so those are things that need adjusting. Funding was also discussed; the state only gives you so many of those positions. We're trying to do the best we can. If you have any information to help justify something like that, we will work with you on that.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. FEDERAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICE (FGIS) FEE RULE UPDATE

Bethany Gonzales, LDAF staff attorney, explained that Chad Price is working on the FGIS side of the fee update, and she is working on the state regulation side of the fee update. This board approved the new rule in June 2024, the notice of intent was submitted in September 2024, and no public comment was received. The summary report was then submitted to the Legislature yesterday, November 7, 2024, and if there are no objections for the Legislature, she will file for final rule in December. It will then be published December 20, 2024 and go into effect January 1, 2025.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements at this time.

X. DATES FOR NEXT MEETING

Bethany Gonzales proposed the following 2025 dates for LACC meetings:

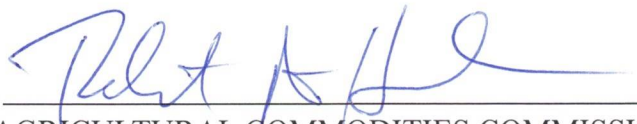
May 29, 2025

June 26, 2025

November 6, 2025

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ronald Petree to adjourn the meeting and Stephen Logan seconded the motion. All members in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 A.M.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ronald Petree", is written over a horizontal line.

LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION CHAIRMAN