

LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY AND SEED COMMISSION
MINUTES
February 15, 2017
9:00 a.m.

Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry Building
Executive Conference Room
5825 Florida Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Mr. Fred Bass, Confidential Assistant to Commissioner Mike Strain.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Mrs. Tina Ficklin.

The following commission members or their Designees were present: Mr. Fred Bass, Designee for Commissioner Mike Strain; Dr. Philip Elzer, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station; Dr. Eric Webster, designee for Dr. Steve Linscombe, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service; Mr. Kyle McCann, designee for Mr. Ronnie Anderson, Louisiana Farm Bureau Association and Mr. Michael Hensgens, Seed Industry. A quorum was declared.

Absent from the meeting: Mr. Don Phillely, Fertilizer Industry, LAIA; Mr. Ed O'Neal, Feed Industry, LAIA.

Others Present: Todd Parker, Assistant Commissioner of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; Lester Cannon, Assistant Director LDAF Seed Programs Division; David Johnston, Program Coordinator, LDAF Seed Programs; Tina Ficklin, LDAF Seed Programs Division; and Mrs. Lindsey Hunter, LDAF Legal Counsel.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

NEW BUSINESS

Emergency Rule for Suspension of Minimum Certified Seed Rice Germination Standards
Lester Cannon updated the Commission on the issue of Certified Rice varieties from the 2016 crop year that are consistently testing below the required 80% germination standard required for certified rice.

Due to historic flooding in the rice production area of Louisiana in 2016 during seed harvest and processing, seed rice quality has been significantly negatively impacted. As a result, the department's seed testing laboratory has analyzed numerous rice seed samples and has confirmed that much of the seed rice available to producers for the 2017 planting season does not meet the current minimum certified seed germination standards established by the Agricultural Chemistry and Seed Commission. Therefore, there is a severe shortage of rice seed that meets current minimum germination standards established by current rules. The last time an emergency rule for lowering certified rice germination was adopted was in 2007 when the Liberty Link issue was found.

All certified rice varieties are PVP or Title V protected and therefore cannot be sold as non-certified seed. The proposed emergency rule will allow the 80% germination percentage to be temporarily suspended and lowered to 60% for a total of 120 days beginning February 17, 2017, with a one-time renewal, if needed, to cover the entire 2017 rice planting season. Also, the words "substandard germination" will be printed on the certified tags for seed rice found to be substandard.

Michael Hensgens, representing the seed industry, stated the seed rice industry would absorb the impact by reducing the cost of the seed so the farmer would not be negatively impacted.

Motion to authorize the proposed rule change and to accept a Resolution of Adoption for the Temporary Suspension of Certified Rice Seed Minimum Germination Standards and to allow a 120 day period of renewal, if required was made by Mr. Michael Hensgens and seconded by Mr. Kyle McCann. Passed without opposition.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Michael Hensgens and seconded by Dr. Philip Elzer. Motion passed unanimously.