ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN FEED CONTROL OFFICIALS (AAFCO)
1800 SOUTH OAK STREET, SUITE 100
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

MINUTES OF THE ENFORCEMENT ISSUES COMMITTEE (EIC) MEETING HELD AT THE NEW ORLEANS MARRIOTT HOTEL 555 EAST CANAL STREET NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA JANUARY 21, 2026, 3:45 P.M. CT

MEMBERS:

Blake Pickett (AL)	Co-Chair
Shannon Campbell (MN)	Co-Chair (via teleconference)
Ernie Berkeley (SC)	Vice Chair
Bailey Whiten (GA)	Board Liaison
Ashlee-Rose Ferguson (WA)	
Ben Jones (TX)	
Courtney Foote (LA)	
Dan King (MN)	
Ely Walker (KS)	
Isaac Carney (FDA CVM)	
Jo Lynn Otero (NM)	
Josh Arbaugh (WV)	
Justin Hill (NC)	
Laura Scott (CAN)	
Maghan Lage (MO)	
Rick Manthei (MN, via teleconference)	
Scott Ziehr (CO)	
Timothy Tyson (FDA)	

GUESTS:

Austin Therrell	AAFCO, Executive Director
Shannon Jordre	FDA, Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM)
Jocelyn Levine	Recording Secretary, Minutes Solutions (via teleconference)

ABSENT:

Sherrie Krolznyk (FDA) , Stan Cook (LM), Shaness Thomas (FL)

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 3:42 p.m.

2. GUEST SPEAKER

There was no guest speaker presentation.

3. FDA UPDATE ON HPAI AND NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

3.1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Update

Isaac Carney (FDA CVM) provided an update on the FDA's HPAI surveillance, noting relatively low activity with only a handful of recent cases. The FDA's compliance strategy remains unchanged – facilities are charged to evaluate HPAI as a known or reasonably foreseeable hazard and issuing 483s for non-evaluation. The agency is primary concern is removing products from the marketplace via recalls. There has been enhanced analytical capabilities in PCR testing as discussion on a previous FDA quarterly call by Mark Babbitt, though there is no viral isolation capability.

States should contact FDA's Division of Food Compliance immediately if interstate HPAI cases are suspected ASAP.

3.2 New World Screwworm (NWS) Emergency Update

3.2.1 NWS Detection and Spread Prevention

Shannon Jordre (FDA CVM) reported that NWS was detected 50 miles from the USA border after Christmas. He presented an overview of the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) program for dosage form drugs, noting that authorization is a separate, expedited process from approval, to permit limited usage for emergencies. Currently, two to three dosage form drugs are already authorized or approved, to some extent, for emergency use.

Shannon Jordre shared that NWS is managed around the world with dosage form drugs and sterile flies, as there is currently no scientific evidence to support medicated feed use even though there is a lot of interest and research on going. Domestically, the USDA has responded to date with sterile fly releases and extensive trapping. While its sterile fly supply has been limited, another supply is expected in 2026 as more facilities come online. He encouraged stakeholders to visit the USDA website for more detailed information.

3.2.2 FDA Compliance Strategy for NWS

Isaac Carney noted that NWS spread is almost certain and requires proactive preparation from all regulatory partners. He added that, in anticipation of screwworm challenges, his team has adopted a proactive, two-prong approach to compliance, including ensuring facilities adhere to EUA-defined conditions for medicated feed and a renewed emphasis on the drug residue program, as tick and residues are anticipated with the Class 2 drug.

Shannon Jordre noted that the likelihood of required food safety planning to prevent feed-related NWS spread is low, as spread risk would primarily be for operations making raw food, and even so, the larvae and eggs would likely be digested. However, planning requirements are possible if the parasite becomes more prevalent but currently wait and see approach.

He noted caution around the proactive, blanket use of drugs like ivermectin, as parasites develop drug resistance rapidly.

Isaac Carney encouraged attendees to connect with Shannon Jordre or Justin Henson for any additional questions regarding the FDA's response to NWS.

4. NETWORK OF LABORATORIES TO PERFORM ANALYTICAL WORK ACROSS STATES

Josh Arbaugh reported that the group issued a large survey to state labs to ask about accreditation and methodologies. The group has received some responses and feedback, and

will take time to compile and synthesize findings. The goal is to use the information to create a restricted-access, searchable list of labs by capabilities and location. The list would likely be housed in Base Camp or a regulator-only portion of the website.

5. ENFORCEMENT FINDINGS WORKSHEET

5.1 Overview Presentation by Blake Pickett

Blake Pickett presented a draft of the Enforcement Findings Worksheet, which is intended to serve as an interstate repository of compliance issues. All state regulators would access the shared spreadsheet, published in Listserv, and log each noncompliance finding, including the date, corporation, and noncompliance reason code. The spreadsheets would then be aggregated at regular intervals and republished to all states, to share common findings and identify noncompliance trends across states.

5.2 Open Discussion

Blake Pickett requested feedback from committee members on the Enforcement Findings Worksheet's usefulness, its proposed structure, and stakeholders' likeliness to engage, noting that if too few decide to participate, then the worksheet may not be worth pursuing.

5.2.1 Feedback on the Proposed Process

Katie Simpson (IN) and others commented that the proposed process would be challenging, noting that individual logs could amount to thousands of findings, and that logging each finding would be too time- and labor-intensive. They did not anticipate having the capacity to participate in the process as proposed and suggested exploring more streamlined or automated options.

5.2.2 Feedback on Worksheet Utility and Value

Nathan Price (ID) questioned the value of reviewing other states' noncompliance findings, noting that sampling protocol must be random in his state, otherwise it could be considered targeting, and that violations in other states cannot determine regulatory action in his own. Blake Pickett clarified that the worksheet's purpose is to provide a tool for insight sharing across states, as compliance issues found in one state are likely to occur in another. He added that it is primarily intended to capture issues that should have relative standard parameters across states, such as unregistered products, and label ingredient claims. Sampling adulteration and other non-compliance fields were included for showing all possibilities and may not fit all respondents or be desired moving forward.

Jordyn Johnston (WI) noted that the worksheet containing enforcement action taken would be useful to her in assessing how her state's enforcement actions compare with other states to assess consistency in action taken. Courtney Foote (LA) commented that her state would find the worksheet useful as well, but noted that submission every six months may not be practical due to the lengthy certified notice process. She added that it may be more valuable to capture findings for national corporations, as local small businesses are less likely to operate across states.

5.2.3 Legal Risks and Considerations

Falina Hutchinson (MT) advised caution from a legal standpoint, noting that her state legally prohibits regulators from sharing sample analysis results or any enforcement actions and results. As such, she cannot participate in the worksheet and advised all states interested in participating to consult their legal team. Cody Walls (OK) echoed these legal concerns, noting

that he is in favor of interstate data sharing but would not be able to participate either, due to his state's statutes requiring public inquiries for sample analysis, enforcement action, and other regulatory information. Several other state officials expressed interest but noted that they must consult their leadership to determine whether they can participate.

Laura Scott (CAN) suggested establishing MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) between states to resolve legal concerns around data sharing. Blake Pickett added that even if a state is unable or unwilling to participate, it could still receive the compiled report and potentially benefit from reviewing the aggregated findings.

5.2.4 Next Steps

Blake Pickett thanked attendees for their feedback and noted that he will table further discussion for now. He invited those interested in piloting the worksheet to contact him after the meeting. Nathan Price (ID) also suggested that the Committee consider resurrecting the Animal Feed Network, which served a similar function.

6. CGMP/507 VIOLATIONS FOR ADULTERATION AND STOP SALE

Blake Pickett reported that, instead of sending a listserv request for enforcement letters as previously planned, he has designed the following phased approach for letter collection:

- Phase 1: License and permit renewals and operate without license warnings
- Phase 2 and 3 (combined): Products not registered or licensed stop sales for license and registrations
- Phase 4: Products mislabeled for misbranding, labeling violations, and adulteration due to ingredients, marketing claims, and human grade claims
- Phase 5: Adulteration violations including aflatoxin, salmonella/listeria/ecoli, copper, mineral, medicated fees, rodent activity
- Phase 6: Delinquent tonnage, sampling penalty, and product violation letters
- Phase 7: CGMP letters, if applicable

Blake Pickett clarified that the Committee is seeking letter templates, not actual samples, to respect privacy and avoid redaction requirements. The phased approach is designed to give states time to collect and submit templates, but states are welcome to upload all templates at once, in the respective folders, if they have them available.

7. PFLM IMPLEMENTATION AND OTHER LABEL-RELATED ISSUES

7.1 PURR Act Response and PFLM Implementation Challenges

No states reported labeling pushback in response to the PURR Act.

Related to label enforcement, Austin Therrell shared that AAFCO received a report from an Industry representative stating that a large pet food supplier is tracking each time a state regulator has contacted them regarding label claim compliance. The company is reportedly seeking approval to share the information with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture ("NASDA") to highlight states that are taking more action on label claims than others. It is believed that the company likely started tracking enforcement actions after the PURR Act discussions, as the company believed there was a potentially retaliatory increase in action.

Members noted that the company's alleged claims may not be substantiable if it does not have adequate pre-PURR Act trend data and added that staggered PFLM implementation may explain any reportedly uneven increases in enforcement.

7.2 Ocean Fish Term Usage in Ingredients

Justin Hill (NC) reported that “fish” is a defined term, but “ocean fish” remains widely used in the marketplace and has been accepted by states for years. The PFLM specifies that companies can either use “fish” without any additional specification or use an acceptable market name that is on the FDA seafood list. Ocean fish is not listed but a now-revoked compliance policy guide previously stated that use of the term did not represent misbranding but rather enabled some day-to-day supply variation in fish ingredients. Industry’s justification for the term is to differentiate fish from the ocean versus the lake.

Justin Hill noted that he typically addresses “ocean fish” by advising the company on acceptable label term options based on the product’s specifications sheet and the FDA seafood list, but he has received pushback from companies that insist on using “ocean fish.” He asked attendees for feedback on whether they have experienced similar feedback.

Katie Simpson (IN) reported frequently seeing “ocean fish,” but no attendees objected to the term or advocated for formal definition through the Ingredients Definition Committee (IDC). Blake Pickett encouraged regulators to monitor term prevalence to determine whether additional action is required.

7.3 Fraudulent Ingredients – Salmon Meal Blend

Erin Bubb (PA) reported that an Industry representative recommended an EIC discussion of fraudulent ingredients, as Industry is concerned about the use of feather meal to bulk up salmon meal. They claim that the global salmon population could not reasonably supply the amount of salmon meal seen in the USA and suspect some bad actors may be disrupting the ingredient supply chain.

Austin Therrell affirmed that this practice was prevalent within South Carolina in the past when he was previously with South Carolina Dept of Ag. He described that some renderers that produced a natural flavor product would take advantage of flavor rule loopholes by using a poultry blender that blended with 51% fish meal and 49% chicken byproduct meal and then list the product as salmon meal for provision to a major pet food supplier. He clarified that the concern is economic fraud, not food safety. Ben Jones (TX) shared similar experiences and noted that he observed fraud more commonly in protein blending than rendering. Ben welcomed people to reach out for more information as proving the fraud can be proved in multiple ways. Noted that one indicator may be large volume of feather meal incoming but none going out.

Laura Scott (CAN) and another participant added that fish fraud has been a major issue in human food as well, and noted potential consumer protection and safety actions. Laura Scott reported that, in Canada, they created mixed meal definitions to accommodate the prevalent blending of mammalian, poultry, and fish, and differentiated between combined and individual rendering. She added that the IDC’s Animal Protein Products work group is considering similar definition changes, but the EIC could focus on the fraud aspect.

Other attendees noted that inspectors could mitigate fraud through feed sampling and microscopy, where available, and through use of AAFCO’s online Ingredient Verification Tool. Austin Therrell advised that state departments interested in pursuing the issue would require a robust, strategic approach as other agencies like the FBI could quickly become involved.

Isaac Carney (FDA) noted that the agency takes allegations of economic fraud seriously and accepts formal, anonymous complaints. However, in the absence of harm, substantial

evidence and a focused approach is required for sufficient resource allocation to address the issue. Blake Pickett concluded that the EIC will continue monitoring and discuss further.

8. ADULTERATION IN EXEMPT ANIMAL FEED

8.1 Case Overview and Feedback Request

Blake Pickett reported that Alabama had two instances of hay containing either a noxious weed or botulism in the past year. In both cases, the suspected source was exempt animal feed that could have been adulterated.

He noted that review arose from consumer complaints of dead or ill livestock where the autopsy and veterinary report suggested noxious weed consumption and botulism, respectively. He noted sampling challenges due to hay isolation difficulty. The onus ultimately fell on the complainant to file complaint in Tennessee, where the hay was sold, and present a lab report demonstrating botulism in the hay bale before the State would initiate sampling, due Alabama state law that exempts hay from commercial feed regulation.

Blake Pickett asked attendees to think about what action could be taken in such cases and whether a stop-sale would be appropriate based on single unit (e.g., hay bale) detection.

8.2 Feedback on Potential Actions

Multiple attendees commented that it is a seed law issue and not a concern of commercial feed regulators. One attendee noted that some noxious weeds, like quick grass, do not present safety concerns, so the scope would need to be more narrowly defined. Shannon Jorde recommended polling state regulators to determine whether noxious weeds are included in their feed laws and begin defining actionable safety concern categories.

8.3 Feedback on Appropriateness of Stop-Sale Action Based on One Unit Sample

Ben Jones (TX) commented that in similar cases of corn adulteration with aflatoxin, it is not uncommon for Texas state to sample a truckload and, if adulteration is found, seize the bin or even the entire elevator, depending on the one sample's ingredient composition and separation levels.

Jessica Gore (NC) reported that North Carolina state law states that hay is an exempt product unless it is adulterated. She noted that hay adulteration, particularly with blister beetles, is a common issue and the state has issued many stop-sales. In some stop-sale cases, the product was explicitly contaminated and in others, there was sufficient likelihood of contamination because the hay was part of a heavily contaminated shipment. She also shared a scenario when the state issued a stop-sale pending investigation and then released it once sampling revealed no adulteration.

9. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was not scheduled.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made duly made and carried, it was resolved to close the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director	Director
Date	Date