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NEWS

Canadian rail strike could begin Aug. 22

The Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) recently cleared the way for a potential rail strike that could begin as soon as Aug. 22 if the Canadian railways fail to reach an agreement with unions.

The CIRB ruled that a work stoppage on the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railways would not cause an immediate threat to public health and safety. The agency had put a potential strike on hold while it evaluated whether certain commodities must keep moving during a strike or lockout.

NGFA has urged the Canadian government to prevent a rail strike or lockout as it would lead to shutdowns of rail-dependent facilities, “resulting in harmful consequences for Canadian and American agricultural producers, the industry, and both domestic and global food security.”

The livestock industry depends on rail for the timely delivery of feed grains and ingredients, while many facilities, such as biofuels operations, flour mills and other grain processors, require uninterrupted rail service.

While Aug. 22 is the first potential official start date of a strike or lockout, railroads have already begun altering their operations and halting shipments of many products to ensure people or trains are not stranded once a strike begins.

NGFA will continue to work with U.S. officials to communicate that the Canadian government should step in if needed to prevent a rail stoppage. Additionally, the Association will send a letter from the Agricultural Transportation Working Group to Canadian Prime Minister

Justin Trudeau next week, urging him to intervene to keep railways operating.

Earlier this month, NGFA sent a letter to Canadian officials to take action to prevent a potential rail strike or lockout that would lead to shutdowns or slowdowns of rail-dependent facilities. In a [letter sent on Aug. 2](#) to the chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food in the Canadian House of Commons, NGFA noted that a potential strike by the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference would cause a significant disruption to the entire North American supply chain. After Canadian rail labor unions voted to strike in May, NGFA expressed these concerns in a similar [letter](#) to CIRB sent on May 21.

NGFA submits statement on FDA medicated feed labeling

NGFA submitted a [statement](#) to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Aug. 9 concerning the agency's proposed rule for labeling requirements for approved or conditionally approved new animal drugs.

While the proposed rule would create new requirements for labeling animal drug products, it also would significantly expand the required content for final printed labels of Type B and Type C medicated feeds.

Among other things, NGFA within the statement recommended that FDA:

- Not establish requirements for guaranteed analysis and ingredient listings on medicated customer-formula feed labels that would be inconsistent with state feed laws.
- Expressly state that proposed general formatting requirements for animal drug labels do not apply to final printed medicated feed labels.
- Eliminate the proposed requirement that FDA contact information be provided on every medicated feed label.
- Clarify that required lot numbers may be applied to the label, package, invoice or shipping document, as allowed by FDA's current good manufacturing regulations for medicated feed.
- Not require final printed medicated feed labels to include the revision date of the associated representative labeling created by the drug sponsor.
- If the agency wishes to proceed with rulemaking that would significantly impact the content and format of final printed medicated feed labeling, further engage with medicated feed manufacturers and other stakeholders to ensure that any new requirements produce benefits that are commensurate to the cost.

In addition, NGFA's statement included an economic impact analysis that highlighted the significant cost that commercial feed manufacturers would incur to comply with the proposed requirements.

Please contact [NGFA Senior Vice President of Feed David Fairfield](#) with any questions.

AAFCO annual meeting focuses on feed ingredient approval process

By David Fairfield, Senior Vice President, Feed

The ingredient definition process for animal feed and pet food ingredients was a major discussion topic at the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) Annual Meeting conducted Aug. 7-9 in San Antonio, Texas.

In follow-up to announcements made on Aug. 2 that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and AAFCO that currently facilitates AAFCO feed ingredient definitions and outlines the two organizations' responsibilities within the process will not be renewed when it expires on Oct. 1, 2024, officials from FDA and AAFCO provided perspectives on transitions that will occur and how new animal food ingredients will be able to gain regulatory approval in the future.

During remarks at the meeting, Dr. Tim Schell, director of FDA's Office of Surveillance and Compliance, acknowledged the decades-long success of the AAFCO ingredient definition process, but said FDA's decision to not renew the current MOU was an outcome of the agency's ongoing evaluation of its pre-market approval activities for animal food. Schell highlighted the agency's commitment to ensuring that FDA's departure from the current AAFCO process will not cause disruptions within the industry, and noted several outreach activities that FDA will conduct to receive stakeholder feedback regarding the agency's future pre-market approval of feed ingredients. Among these activities will be opportunities to provide comment during agency listening sessions and on FDA's new draft guidances for Animal Food Ingredient Consultation and the FDA Enforcement Policy for Association of American Feed Control Officials-Defined Animal Feed Ingredients.

Austin Therrell, executive director of AAFCO, noted the expiration of the MOU will provide opportunities for AAFCO to consider and potentially develop a new ingredient definition process whereby ingredients could gain regulatory approval through adoption into state feed laws. If such a program were developed, Therrell said the scientific review of ingredients could potentially be completed by one or more land-grant universities with the appropriate scientific expertise. He noted that AAFCO would work to advance the concept of developing a new ingredient definition process and share additional details at its next meeting in January 2025.

AAFCO members during the meeting approved two resolutions related to future recognition of feed ingredients. The first resolution established that AAFCO may review ingredients recommended by FDA through its new Animal Food Ingredient Consultation Program for inclusion into the AAFCO Official Publication. The second resolution established that AAFCO may recognize an alternate (non-FDA) expert panel for the scientific review of new feed ingredients for acceptance, and further may review ingredients approved by other authorities, such as the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and European Food Safety Authority. The approval of the resolutions by state feed regulatory officials was not unanimous, but indicated general support for AAFCO to further explore the topics and make further recommendations that would be subject to additional votes of approval.

Under federal law, feed ingredients may gain approval through FDA's animal food additive petition process or a determination of Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) status. In contrast, the long-standing AAFCO feed ingredient definition process has been characterized as an "informal review sanctioned" pathway whereby feed ingredients may be informally recognized by FDA as acceptable for use and gain approved legal status by adoption into state feed laws.

AAFCO is the professional organization of federal and state feed regulatory officials. NGFA interacts extensively with AAFCO, and NGFA feed industry members and staff serve as non-voting advisers to AAFCO committees. More than 425 industry representatives and regulatory officials participated in the San Antonio meeting.

Other Issues: Among the other issues addressed during the AAFCO meeting were:

- **Lot Identifiers:** The Feed Labeling Committee voted to approve proposed model regulations that would establish requirements to include a "lot identifier" on the labels, invoices or other

documents accompanying commercial feeds in distribution and maintain associated records to facilitate recalls and accurate tracing of the manufacturing and distribution history of the product. The proposed regulations will next be considered by the AAFCO Model Bills and Regulations Committee.

- **Copper Claims for Dog Food:** During the AAFCO Pet Food Committee meeting a recap was provided regarding AAFCO activities associated with establishing model pet food regulations to address voluntary “controlled” copper claims on dog food labels. The committee previously held a virtual meeting on May 30 and voted to not proceed in creating the model regulations. At that time, the committee work group created to evaluate the topic also was disbanded.
- **Poultry Feed Label Requirements:** The Model Bills and Regulations Committee considered proposed revisions to model regulations for poultry feed labels to expand the number of animal classes and establish corresponding definitions. However, concerns were raised about the accuracy of the proposed definitions and a work group was established to further review the topic.
- **Inspection Guidance:** A work group within the Inspection and Sampling Committee is working on guidance on conducting inspections for compliance with the FDA rule for Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Food for Animals. The work group likely will provide a report during the committee’s next meeting in January.
- **Enforcement Issues:** An open meeting of AAFCO’s Enforcement Issues Committee was conducted to discuss:
 - **FDA’s regulatory discretion towards Bovaer.** FDA previously [announced](#) that it does not intend to object to marketing of Bovaer, even though Bovaer is currently classified as an unapproved animal drug intended to reduce methane gas production in lactating dairy cows. FDA officials stated that feed mills utilizing Bovaer may handle and use the product as a feed ingredient, not as an animal drug. Representatives from Elanco, which markets Bovaer, stated that not all states at this time have accepted registration of Bovaer as a feed ingredient within their state.
 - **State licensing and registration/tonnage fees and schedules.** Lack of uniformity among states regarding feed licensing, registration and tonnage processes and fees was addressed, and ways in which AAFCO potentially could facilitate more uniformity.

The open meeting was conducted to support harmonization of policies among states on regulatory issues.

- **Feed Ingredients:** Among other actions taken related to feed ingredients were:
 - **Hempseed Meal:** AAFCO membership voted to approve a new tentative definition for Hemp Seed Meal, Mechanical Extracted for use in diets of laying hens as a source of protein and fat at an inclusion of no more than 20 percent of the diet. The ingredient is to contain no more than 20 parts per million (ppm) of total cannabidiol and no more than 2 ppm of total tetrahydrocannabinol. The vote represents the first approval of a hemp-derived feed ingredient by AAFCO.

- **Spent Bleaching Clay:** The Ingredient Definition Committee approved a work group report that contained recommendations to add spent bleaching clay to the Technical Additives Table of the AAFCO Official Publication and revise several current oilseed meal definitions to accommodate the addition of spent bleaching clay at no more than 0.2 percent.
- **FDA/AAFCO MOU:** Given the upcoming expiration of the MOU, the Ingredient Definition Committee established a work group to begin evaluating changes that may be needed to Chapter 6 of the AAFCO Official Publication to accommodate ingredients that emanate from FDA’s new Animal Food Consultation Program.
- **As-Fed/As-Is Terminology:** A work group established by the Ingredient Definition Committee is still working on recommendations related to defining and differentiating between the terms “as-fed” and “as-is” that are used by regulatory officials within ingredient definition specifications and nutrient guarantee requirements.

USDA seeks nominations for carbon credit advisory council

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [announced](#) it is seeking nominations for membership within the [Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Program](#) Advisory Council. The new Council is authorized by the NGFA-supported Growing Climate Solutions Act signed into law in 2023.

The purpose of the Council is to support the Greenhouse Gas Technical Assistance Provider and Third-Party Verifier Program, currently being developed by USDA, by making it easier for farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners to participate in voluntary environmental credit markets.

Key activities of the Council will include:

- Periodically reviewing and recommending changes to:
 - The list of protocols recognized by the program for generating [high-integrity voluntary carbon credits](#).
 - The required qualifications for entities that provide technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, and landowners.
 - The activities for which technical assistance providers and third-party verifiers may register to provide services under the Program.
- Advising the Secretary of Agriculture on:
 - Current methods used in voluntary environmental credit markets to quantify and verify the prevention, reduction, or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Ways to reduce the barriers to entry and transaction costs associated with such markets.

The Secretary of Agriculture will appoint 32 members to the Council. The membership will represent USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), farmers, ranchers, private forest landowners, relevant scientific research communities, experts in voluntary environmental credit markets and verification requirements, nongovernmental and civil society organizations, and private sector businesses and organizations that participate in voluntary environmental credit markets. Council members will normally serve two-year terms; however, the first slate of appointees will serve staggered terms of one to three years. The Council will meet at least once per year.

Individuals interested in the Council may refer to the [Federal Register notice](#) for detailed information on candidate qualifications and requirements. Nominations and comments regarding the Council will be

accepted through Oct. 15, 2024. Nomination packages may be submitted by email to Sasha.Strohm@usda.gov.

EVENTS

Register for Harvest Safety Week webinar on Aug. 20

Register for the “[Best Practices in Onboarding New Employees](#)” webinar during NGFA’s fifth annual Harvest Safety Week on Aug. 19-23!

Each year at the end of August, NGFA dedicates a week to sharing safety resources particularly relevant to the busy harvest season. This year’s theme encourages members to “Participate, Prepare, Protect,” by participating in sharing Harvest Safety Week resources, preparing for hazards during the harvest season, and protecting the employees that “transform America’s harvest” into food, fuel and fiber. One of the new resources available is a live webinar on Aug. 20 with **People Spark Consulting**.

Title: Best Practices in Onboarding New Employees

Date: Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024, at noon CST (1 p.m. EST)

[Link to Register](#)

Description: “Did you know that organizations with a standard onboarding process experience 50 percent greater new-hire productivity? And a good onboarding experience improves long-term job satisfaction by more than 2.6 times. We know that the key to business success is having productive and engaged employees – and having a good onboarding experience creates that foundation. This session will share and discuss best practices for onboarding new employees. As this session aligns with Harvest Safety Week, we will also discuss how these best practices apply to onboarding new employees to safety expectations and processes.”

* A recording of the webinar will be shared with everyone who registers.



Harvest Safety Week billboards: NGFA and the [National Grain and Feed Foundation](#) make Harvest Safety Week possible. Thanks to the support of the Foundation, billboards and radio ads highlighting Harvest Safety Week 2024 are displayed in several regions.

Members and non-members can sign up to receive NGFA's Harvest Safety Week emails [here](#). Those already receiving NGFA emails will also receive Harvest Safety Week materials.

CEC 2024 trade show registration is filling up

Companies interested in exhibiting at NGFA's 53rd annual Country Elevator Conference and Trade Show (CEC) on Dec. 10-12 in Kansas City, Mo., can register at ngfa.org/cec. More than half of available trade show spots are taken!

NGFA is also offering the following opportunities at CEC:

- NGFA is accepting **sponsors** for CEC. Contact NGFA Vice President, Marketing and Member Services, [Rebecca Grubbs](#), for more information.
- NGFA is holding an **open call for speakers** from NGFA-member companies to headline CEC breakouts and general sessions. Contact NGFA Vice President, Marketing and Member Services, [Rebecca Grubbs](#), for more information.

NGFA's flagship meeting for grain merchants, elevator operators, feed manufacturers, processors, and grain industry suppliers attracts several hundred industry members each year for networking, education and the supplier trade show. Programming at CEC is designed to prepare, teach and inspire attendees.

SUPPLEMENTS

Contribute to the Foundation during Harvest Safety Week

In just three days NGFA and the National Grain and Feed Foundation kick off Harvest Safety Week, a week dedicated to sharing safety resources particularly relevant to the busy harvest season.

A message from Foundation Trustees Chair Brian Schouvieller, senior vice president of global grain marketing at CHS Inc., is below:

Thank you to all those NGFA members and member companies who have already contributed to the Foundation for Harvest Safety Week. Your generosity propels the Foundation's safety, education, and research efforts and ensures the viability of the agricultural industry for generations to come. Your early support means so much! Don't want to wait until next week? [Give now](#) through NGFF's website.

Register for next People Spark leadership training by Aug. 23

The deadline to register for the September 2024 leadership program hosted by People Spark Consulting is Aug. 23.

NGFA members receive a **bonus private coaching session** with their Leadership Transformation Program® registration. New cohorts begin monthly throughout 2024. [Click here for information!](#)

The investment for the 12-month People Spark Leadership Transformation Program® is \$2,500. Use reference code: NGFA

NGFA and People Spark Consulting have partnered to further the mission of providing education and training to members at all levels in the agriculture industry. The [People Spark Leadership Transformation Program®](#) is a year-long course that focuses on practical application of leadership skills and tools. It starts with an 8-week intensive training, followed by 10 months of ongoing support to reinforce and sustain the learned skills.

Extra Supplements

NGFA in the news:

Inside US Trade: [Agriculture groups: U.S.-Mexico trade growing faster than Mexican rail can handle](#) *(log in)*

AgriNews: [Targeting broken locks and dams](#)

Southern Farm Network: [Harvest Safety Week is August 19-23](#)

Other news:

Journal of Commerce: [ILA unmoved by latest ‘industry-leading’ wage offer from USMX](#) *(log in)*

DTN: [Senators, USDA Offer Different Takes on Modernizing Foreign Land Ownership Reports](#)

Agri-Pulse: [Vance: ‘Fire the agriculture secretary’](#) *(log in)*

Reuters: [US to expand bird-flu testing of beef in slaughterhouses](#)

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