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NEWS

NGFA voting window closes Feb. 29

NGFA is again this year conducting the election of officers and directors as well as the ratification of amendments to NGFA’s Bylaws, Trade Rules and Rail Arbitration Rules by an electronic ballot.

Complete information regarding the candidates and proposed amendments along with the ballots were **distributed to the primary contacts** designated in NGFA’s records for members eligible to vote (Active and Affiliated Association member companies) on Tuesday, Feb. 20.

The voting window closes on Thursday, Feb. 29 at 5 p.m. Central/6 p.m. Eastern.

Subject to election to NGFA’s Board of Directors and Officers are candidates recommended by NGFA’s Nominations Committee with the opportunity for voting members to submit write-in candidates. The proposed amendments to the Bylaws, Trade Rules and Rail Arbitration Rules were previously approved by the Board upon recommendation by counsel, the Trade Rules Committee and the Rail Arbitration Rules Committee, respectively.

Lawmakers introduce federal pet food labeling bill

House lawmakers on Feb. 15 introduced a bill supported by the Pet Food Institute that would provide the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with exclusive regulatory authority over the marketing and labeling of dog and cat food products.

The Pet Food Uniform Regulatory Reform Act of 2024 (H.R.7380), sponsored by Reps. Jake LaTurner, R-Kan.; Henry Cuellar, D-Texas; Sharice Davids, D-Kan.; Josh Harder, D-Calif.; and Steve Womack, R-Ark., would provide for centralized federal regulatory oversight by the FDA.

In a press release supporting the legislation, PFI said it would “eliminate inconsistent state interpretations and decisions impacting ingredient and pet food label approvals.”

The bill would preempt any state from establishing, maintaining, implementing, or enforcing any authority or requirement related to marketing or labeling of dog and cat food products. Under the new legislation, State Departments of Agriculture and other state officials would still engage in quality inspections and product registrations, PFI said, but label and ingredient approvals would be streamlined under the FDA.

Importantly, the bill text introduced this month does *not* require that pet food ingredients gain approval exclusively through the FDA animal food additive petition process. They would still have access to the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) feed ingredient process.

The Pet Food Institute publicly expressed its concerns with the current regulatory process overseen by state governments during the Petfood Forum 2023 in May. PFI President and CEO Dana Brooks said the current system provides a “patchwork” of state regulations resulting in interstate commerce disruptions. AAFCO, which consists of both FDA representatives and state feed regulatory officials currently involved in administering pet food regulations, then issued a response saying that a federal-led system would “significantly decrease the number of qualified inspectors in the marketplace” and reduce the regulatory oversight of pet food.

AAFCO acts as an intermediary between state, federal and international feed regulators to create ingredient definitions, label standards and laboratory standards. AAFCO’s annual Official Publication creates a listing generally recognized by states and other countries for ingredient definitions allowed on commercial feed labels. However, AAFCO’s definitions and standards are not legally binding, and individual states need to codify the AAFCO standards within their own state to make them a legal requirement.

Meanwhile, heads of state departments of agriculture unanimously voted to support AAFCO’s revised Model Regulations for Pet Food and Specialty Pet Food during a Feb. 7 meeting at the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) Winter Policy Conference.

The revised regulations were approved by AAFCO in July 2023, and set new suggested labeling guidelines around nutrition information, ingredient statements, and storage and handling instructions to ensure consistency and transparency on pet food labels. AAFCO also recommended a six-year enforcement discretion period to allow state regulatory programs time to incorporate the guidelines into their state laws and pet food manufacturers to make the necessary label and packaging updates to their products.

NGFA supports bill to nullify GHG emissions rule

NGFA supported legislation recently introduced in the House and Senate that would nullify the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rule imposing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions performance measures on state departments of transportation.

The [bill](#), introduced by Sens. Ted Cruz, R-Texas; Kevin Cramer, R-N.D.; and Ranking Member Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va.; and Rep. Rick Crawford, R-Ark., addresses an “unlawful regulation” that “pressures states with a burdensome and constricting mandate.”

The FHWA imposed a rule in November 2023 to create a GHG performance measure. However, the authority for the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish these rules was intentionally excluded from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) passed in 2021 due to a lack of congressional support.

In a letter to lawmakers sent earlier this month, the NGFA and several other agricultural groups said they would support any congressional efforts to block the GHG rule's implementation.

“Our organizations supported investments made in the IIJA, which include programs dedicated to carbon reduction and infrastructure resilience,” the letter stated. “However, regulatory overreach outside the bounds of the IIJA has the potential to limit improvements to our infrastructure.”

EVENTS

USDA and rail leaders confirmed for NGFA convention Register by Feb. 28 for hotel booking

Important Convention Deadline: Register for the [NGFA's 128th annual convention](#) by Feb. 28 to gain access to the discounted room block for the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate.

Foreign Agricultural Service **Administrator Daniel Whitley** (*pictured right*) is confirmed to join NGFA members in Orlando, Fla., during the closing general session on March 19.



The Transportation Open Forum on March 17 will include a presentation by **Anthony Peña**, government relations manager at the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association, on the circumstances surrounding the Lower Snake River Dams.

Previously confirmed speakers include Scoular CEO Paul Maass; Norfolk Southern CEO Alan Shaw; and Nathan Gonzales, the publisher and editor of Inside Elections; as well as a Class I Rail Panel during the Transportation Open Forum.

Hundreds of grain industry members will gather at the Omni Orlando Resort at Championsgate for NGFA's annual convention on March 17-19. View more information about the schedule and networking opportunities, including the [National Grain and Feed Foundation Golf Tournament](#), at ngfa.org/annual-convention.

SUPPLEMENTS

NGFA and People Spark member education and training – March 2024: Tools for HR Professionals

The deadline to register for the March 2024 leadership program hosted by People Spark Consulting is **today, Feb. 23**.

NGFA and People Spark Consulting have partnered to further the mission to provide 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. NGFA members receive a bonus private coaching session with their Leadership Transformation Program® registration. New cohorts begin monthly throughout 2024.



March '24: Tools for HR Professionals: HR wears many hats: customer service, payroll management, benefits expert, advisor, and counselor, profoundly influencing the organization's culture due to their extensive impact on employees. Over 70 percent of a company's culture strength hinges on the team leader's knowledge, skills, and talent. An HR leader, armed with the right tools and skills, can guide managers to positively influence your company's culture. In this HR-specific cohort, your HR leader will learn how to give more effective recognition, to provide constructive feedback, and most importantly – how to coach your leaders more effectively.

[Click here for information!](#)

Program Details:

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

Extra Supplements

NGFA in the news:

Potato Grower Magazine: [Rep. Newhouse To Biden Admin: 'You've Crossed The Line' Introduces DAMN Act to help protect Lower Snake River dams](#)

Other news:

Hagstrom Report: [EPA issues final decision on E15](#)

Successful Farming: [Ethanol for aviation will get tax credits, Vilsack assures industry](#)

Agri-Pulse: [USTR's McKalip aims to break down trade barriers for U.S. renewable fuels](#) (log in)

Reuters: [US exporters losing battle for domestic soybeans to expanding crush](#)

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