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CEC 2023

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NGFA

NEWS

NGFA announces changes to its committee structure

NGFA President and CEO Mike Seyfert sent the following message to all members on Nov. 15 announcing changes to the structure of NGFA committees.

Dear NGFA Members:

We write this letter to National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) members to thank you for your contributions to the Association and to let you know the NGFA Board of Directors has unanimously approved changes to the NGFA committee structure.

The following recommendations were developed by the NGFA Committee Structure Task Force and approved by the NGFA Board of Directors to align with the feedback from members during the five-year Long-Range Planning (LRP) exercise recently completed and approved by the Board of Directors. The formation of new committees and changes to current committees will occur over the next several months. Following the formation of new committees, NGFA will implement additional recommended changes to enhance the operation and function of all committees.

In April 2023, the NGFA initiated a process to evaluate and make recommendations to its Board of Directors for the Association's committee structure at the direction of NGFA Chairman Greg Beck, chief administrative officer and senior vice president at CGB Enterprises, Inc. A Committee Structure Task Force of 10 industry leaders was convened, chaired by Eric Wilkey, president of Arizona Grain Inc., and supported by

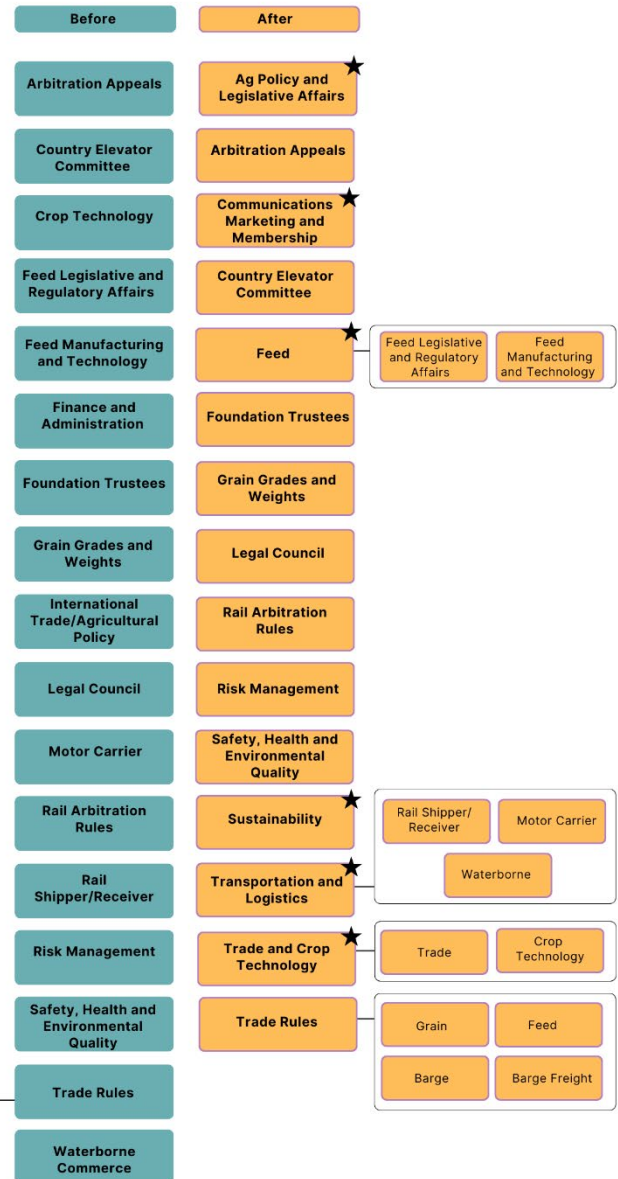
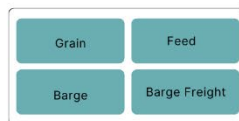
Jess McCluer as the NGFA staff lead. Roots and Legacies Consulting, a third-party firm, was contracted to facilitate stakeholder engagement and guide the task force in the development of recommendations. After the task force completed a member-wide survey and several rounds of proposals and modifications, the Board of Directors approved the final recommendations during the Board meeting in September 2023.

With the restructuring of the committees, NGFA member companies will be allowed to have multiple representatives serving on a committee; yet only one company representative will have a formal vote. For example, if a committee has multiple subcommittees, one company can have a representative on each subcommittee. However, the company will have to designate who will serve as the voting member on the full committee.

View the full document – [NGFA Committee Structure Task Force Recommendations](#).



New Committees ★
Subcommittees



Click image to view larger.

Committee recommendations:

To fulfill the recommendations of the Committee Structure Task Force, NGFA will maintain the following committees:

- Trade Rules
- Arbitration and Appeals
- Grain Grades and Weights
- Foundation Trustees
- Legal Council
- Rail Arbitration
- Risk Management
- Safety, Health and Environmental

NGFA will rename the **Country Elevator Committee** to reflect the current scope and breadth better.

NGFA will retire the **Finance and Administration Committee**.

NGFA will establish the following committees:

- **Sustainability**
- **Feed** (This committee will include a Feed Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Subcommittee and a Feed Manufacturing and Technology Subcommittee).
- **Trade and Crop Technology** (This committee will include subcommittees for Crop Technology and Trade).
- **Ag Policy and Legislative Affairs**
- **Transportation and Logistics** (This committee will include subcommittees for Rail Shipper/Receiver, Motor Carrier, and Waterborne).
- **Communications, Marketing and Membership** (This new committee will serve as a voice for members; support ongoing, high-quality marketing of the NGFA to members and other stakeholders; provide input on strategies to effectively refine the NGFA brand and promote member benefits, programs, and services using diverse communications channels; encourage a growing membership base by identifying prospective members and recommending recruitment strategies; and advise on the development of education and outreach programs and other member engagement initiatives).

To support the new committee structure and enhance the operation of NGFA committees, NGFA will also:

- Clarify the purpose of each committee.
- Develop guidance documents for committee chairs, staff liaisons, and committee members.
- Reinforce the concept of continuous improvement with annual self-evaluation reports for each committee.
- Create a communications and marketing plan for NGFA committees.
- Encourage increased outreach to Feed industry representatives for participation in all committees.
- Review and enhance the Committee Apprentice Program (CAP) application process.
- Formalize more frequent review and approval of committee appointments by the Board Chair.
- Implement a simple, but robust committee membership application process.
- Clarify associate member participation in committees, as appropriate.

NGFA's committees are the backbone of the Association, and we are grateful for the service of our committee members. The time and expertise our committee members volunteer are invaluable to NGFA's operation and priorities. Do not hesitate to reach out to NGFA staff with any questions. Please contact NGFA Vice President Safety and Regulatory Affairs Jess McCluer at <mailto:jmcccluer@ngfa.org> or NGFA President and CEO Mike Seyfert at <mailto:mseyfert@ngfa.org>.



Mike Seyfert
NGFA President and CEO

NGFA announces new staff roles

NGFA recently hired a new addition to its staff as well as made title changes for current staff members. They include:

Trent Baker has been hired to fill the newly created role of **Manager, Systems and Office Operations**. He most recently worked at the Food Processing Suppliers Association. In this new role, Baker is responsible for all data input and management, overseeing the invoicing of dues, serving as the lead contact for meeting registrations and conferences, and for all administrative activities for the office. He will also serve to provide additional administrative support to the arbitration program. This new role will report to the Vice President, Systems and Office Operations.

Mary Hitchcock has assumed the title **Vice President, Systems and Office Operations**. She will maintain her responsibilities with both the arbitration program and National Grain and Feed Digital Solutions. She will continue leading the project transitioning NGFA to a new database and systems operating platform that will tie the internal database, marketing, IT and accounting processes into one system. Moving forward she will be responsible for oversight of the database, the new platform and all office operating systems. She will also oversee HR and benefits.

Rebecca Grubbs has assumed the title **Vice President, Marketing and Member Services**. She will maintain all current responsibilities associated with marketing, meetings and the National Grain and Feed Foundation. She will assume oversight of membership activities to more closely coordinate with marketing and sponsorships.

NGFA opposes OSHA proposal on third-party access to inspections

In [comments](#) submitted Nov. 13 to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the NGFA joined a coalition of agriculture and business groups to urge OSHA to withdraw a proposal that would expand access for third parties to participate as employee representatives in OSHA inspections.

“In several ways, the proposal significantly expands the scope of individuals who can be designated as third-party authorized representatives, creating unworkable practical challenges for employers,” noted the Employers Walkaround Representative Rulemaking Coalition led by Conn Maciel Carey LLP. They said the proposal represents “a significant change to the OSHA’s longstanding approach to physical inspections of American workplaces and raises novel and complex issues of law.”

OSHA issued the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for a “Worker Walkaround Representative Designation” rule on Aug. 30. Among other issues, the proposed rule would open the door to union representatives at non-union workplaces if an OSHA Compliance Safety and Health Officer (CSHO) determined the third party would positively impact the inspection. However, the NPRM includes no guidance on how CHSOs should determine who qualifies as the “authorized representative” of the employees, or what to do when competing third parties claim interests in an inspection.

In its comments, the coalition noted that the proposal would violate several laws, including the OSH Act, the National Labor Relations Act, and the Fourth Amendment.

“These changes leave room for a litany of third parties not expert in the employer’s operations and who may never even have been to the subject workplace to ‘participate’ in the inspection,” stated the comments.

Changes resulting from the proposal “would create a system in which otherwise unauthorized third parties can gain access to employers’ private workplaces and their workforces,” potentially including disgruntled former employees, workers on strike against the company, or individuals who pose security, cybersecurity and proprietary risks, the groups noted.

In addition to increasing costs for employers, the change “will undoubtedly” result in contention between employers and OSHA.

“The Coalition urges the Agency to reconsider this ill-advised rulemaking,” the comments conclude. “It is neither necessary nor prudent and will serve only to create confusion and contention around the important issue of workplace safety.”

The NPRM includes this specific proposed new regulatory text for [29 C.F.R. § 1903.8\(c\)](#):

*The representative(s) authorized by employees **may be an employee of the employer or a third party**. When the representative(s) authorized by employees is not an employee of the employer, they may accompany the Compliance Safety and Health Officer during the inspection if, in the judgment of the Compliance Safety and Health Officer, good cause has been shown why their participation is reasonably necessary to the conduct of an effective and thorough physical inspection of the workplace (e.g., because of their relevant knowledge, skills, or experience with hazards or conditions in the workplace or similar workplaces, or language skills).*

“At a minimum, the Agency must establish the existence of a problem, support it with evidence and then show that its proposed solution will address the identified problem,” the comments noted. “The proposal falls far short of this basic standard.”

According to the proposal, a CSHO would determine if any potential “third-party representatives” would be qualified to participate in the inspection, including:

- Union representatives
- Plaintiffs’ attorneys
- Attorneys and consultants “experienced in interacting with government officials,” or “with relevant cultural competencies”
- Worker advocacy organizations
- Technical experts with more expertise than OSHA has in-house
- Competitors accessing proprietary information
- Former employees
- Customers
- Media

USDA announces 2024 trade missions

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Nov. 16 announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) planned trade missions for 2024 and the opening of a public comment period for the new Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP).

Trade missions: USDA said it will lead trade missions to the following markets in 2024:

- Seoul, Korea – Week of March 25, 2024

- New Delhi, India – Week of April 22, 2024
- Vancouver, Canada – Week of June 17, 2024
- Bogota, Colombia – Week of July 29, 2024
- Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (with buyers from Thailand) – Week of Sept. 9, 2024
- Casablanca, Morocco (with buyers from Senegal and Francophone West Africa) – Week of Dec. 2, 2024

RAPP: In October, Vilsack **announced** that USDA will use \$1.3 billion from the Commodity Credit Corporation funds to establish RAPP, “to bolster and diversify U.S. agricultural export opportunities, and strengthen support for specialty crop industries.” USDA will publish regulations for RAPP on Nov. 17 to be open for public comment for 30 days.

EVENTS

Ken Eriksen to provide ag transportation outlook at CEC

Transportation consultant Ken Eriksen will cover “new and notable” issues for agricultural transportation during the NGFA’s 52nd annual Country Elevator Conference and Trade Show (CEC) on Dec. 3-5. Eriksen, the managing director of Polaris Analytics and Consulting, will provide a multi-modal overview of the U.S. transportation system with a focus on supply chain and infrastructure issues that may affect how businesses make transportation decisions in 2024.

Eriksen was formerly a strategic advisor in the Industry Executive Advisory group of the Fuels, Chemicals and Resource Solutions group, the head of the S&P Global Commodity Insights Client Advisory and Development group, and a senior vice president at Agri Supply Chain. He regularly speaks on commodity markets and flows, supply chain, transportation and infrastructure issues and developments, and is an expert witness in transportation, logistics and supply-chain matters.



CEC takes place Dec. 3-5 at the Omni Louisville in Louisville, Ky. NGFA’s flagship conference for grain merchants, elevator operators, feed manufacturers, processors, and grain industry suppliers will include sessions on agricultural policy, insurance and labor issues affecting grain handling companies, artificial intelligence, and more.

Review the full agenda and speaker list at ngfa.org/cec.

Registration: NGFA members receive a 20 percent discount on registration. [Register now.](#)

Submit your entries to the 2023 Grain and Feed Photo Contest

NGFA is accepting entries for its [annual photo contest](#). Winners of \$500, \$300 and \$200 are announced during the Country Elevator Conference and Trade Show in December.

Deadline for entries is **Nov. 21, 2023**.

The contest theme is “**A Day in the Life.**” (What's happening day-to-day at your NGFA member location? What daily tasks help “transform America's harvest” into food, fuel and fiber? NOTE: The best photo will clearly depict aspects of the grain handling industry.)

One photo per participant will be accepted. Email photos as an attachment to sgonzalez@ngfa.org. The body of the email must include the photographer's name and contact information.

Full rules are available [here](#).

SUPPLEMENTS

Foundation Fundraising: Join me in supporting NGFF!



Dear NGFA Members,

For the past five years, I have watched the [National Grain and Feed Foundation \(NGFF\)](#) make a lasting impact on the industry. I have seen members become well-equipped in safety practices and hazard prevention through our interactive training modules. I have seen how the Foundation's research in engulfment prevention and grain dust emissions has changed the practices and standards of the industry. I have witnessed the presentation of scholarships to future leaders in the field, empowering them as they pursue degrees at the top agriculture business programs in the nation.

I hope you will join me in making a special gift to NGFF this year-end so we can continue to elevate what matters most!

[Click Here To Donate](#)

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Schouvieller".

Brian Schouvieller
Chairman
National Grain and Feed Foundation
Board of Trustees



Extra Supplements

NGFA in the news:

Progressive Railroad: [Rail News - Rail industry, customers provide input on STB's reciprocal-switching rule. For Railroad Career Professionals](#)

Other news:

Railway Age: [STB's Oberman Announces Departure](#)

Feed & Grain: [US House passes Farm Bill extension](#)

Reuters: [US Senate passes stopgap funding bill to avert government shutdown](#)

Agri-Pulse: [Extension in hand, ag groups press Congress to finish new farm bill](#) (log in)

Feed & Grain: [Report: Grain storage improves for US elevators, bushels remain elusive](#)

ABC News: [Biden promises a better economic relationship with Asia, but he's specifically avoiding a trade deal](#)

Associated Press: [Egg, poultry prices recover, but Bird flu outbreak isn't over](#)

Politico: [The steaks are high: Florida Republican wants to ban lab-grown meat](#)

Roll Call: [Senators embrace AI on the farm, eye provisions in farm bill](#)

NGFA | 1400 Crystal Drive | Suite 260 | Arlington | VA | 22202