Louisiana Shrimp Task Force Meeting

Monday, February 15, 2021, 10am

VIA Webinar

**I.** Pledge of Allegiance

**II.** Roll Call

**Voting Members Present:**

George Barisich

Acy Cooper

Lance Nacio

Rodney Olander

Kristen Baumer

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

Craig Authement

**Voting Members Absent:**

Steven Sode

Non-Voting Members Present:

Peyton Cagle

Jack Isaacs

Gene Cavalier

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Meg Bankston

Justin Gremillion

Brian Marie

**III.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**IV.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the February 15, 2021 meeting agenda as presented, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

**V.** Financial Report

Remaining Fund Balance- $648,272

Remaining Budget Balance- $60,029

Rodney Olander motioned to approve the financial report as presented, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

**VI.** New Business

1. The task force discussed providing written comment regarding the FDA’s proposed rule, “Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods”

Peyton Cagle provided the task force with some information on the proposed rule. The comment period on this rule ends February 22, 2021. The FDA has proposed a rule that would change and add additional traceability requirements on certain food products, it so happens that shrimp falls on this list. You will need to track back the product to the first receiver, it already lists boats as an exemption so you would not need to trace back to the boat but the first receiver would be the dock. So you would have to trace the product back to the dock. This is done through a lot code, do not have a defined definition other than what the lot is actually for, but they do not say it has to be per truck, per dock, or per day they may allow this to be considered by the processor. This is where input is going to be needed from the industry to where any additional requirements for traceability is not going to put more of a burden on the industry. The end user would need to be able to trace the product back to the dock. Also shrimp is not sold as a product in its final stage, so since it has to be transformed further and cooked why is it being included in the list? This new rules does apply to imports as well.

Rodney Olander stated that he agrees that additional requirements will put more burden on the industry, see it as an additional cost to the industry at a time when the industry is already hurting

Andrew Blanchard stated that in the past trip tickets have been accepted by the FDA for traceability for tracing products all the way back to the boat. Able to trace what product was received from that vessel. Also the industry is already under HACCP and SQF certified the HACCP program should be sufficient enough for FDA unless they come back and tell us more specifics on what is needed. Everybody that is in seafood has to have HACCP the only ones exempt is the dock owners, dock owners do not have to apply to HACCP, they instead abide by LDH regulation. Between the trip tickets, HACCP, SQF and USDA programs there should be enough information for whatever the FDA is looking for

Alan Gibson concern with it being used against the industry again, in the US it’s going to be an issue for us, it will be a major problem for processors and distributers and will fall back on the processors. Personally do not see a need for it as the industry is already abiding by HACCP, SQF, and date codes. This will become a burden on processors. These added processes will not make the product any safer. The industry is already battling pricing, very difficult when the industry is already at a disadvantage economically. Need further clarification from the FDA.

Kristen Baumer stated that he agrees and it would be impossible to lot the product back to the dock and run a plant half way efficiently. Even if it was able to be done, not sure it gets the industry anywhere if there was a problem. Would rather keep it like it is, one up, one down as it’s hard enough as it is to document. The shrimp industry may fall under one of two exemptions the FDA is considering, produce that is rarely consumed raw, shrimp is not defined as a product in its final condition and if it has to be transformed does this exemption apply? The other is a partial exemption for comingling, once all this shrimp is comingled on the boats and on the docks it really does no good to trace it back because the product was comingled. Would like to follow up with ASPA on their comment on this topic

Kristen Baumer motioned that the Shrimp Task Force submit official comment to the FDA to oppose the proposed traceability rule; appointed Alan Gibson, Kristen Baumer as representatives to review and approve the letter before being sent out, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

1. The task force considered writing a letter of opposition of the TEDs rule, which would require skimmer vessels 40ft and above to install turtle excluder devices (TED)

Rodney Olander motioned to write a letter of opposition to the Governor’s Office regarding the TEDs rule which would require skimmer vessels 40ft and above to install turtle excluder devices, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**VII.** Public Comment- no public comment

**VIII.** Next meeting was set for Wednesday, March 31, 2021 for 10am at LDWF headquarters in Baton Rouge

**IX.** Andrew Blanchard motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Rodney Olander. Motion carries.