



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT of
AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

MIKE STRAIN, DVM *Commissioner*

LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 25, 2026, 9:30 A.M.
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
VETERANS' MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
5825 FLORDIA BOULEVARD
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70806

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Robert Hanks at 9:40 A.M.

II. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

LDAF staff, Cindy R. Abbott, called roll.

The following commission members were present:

Ryan Ellington
Ross Girtman
Robert Hanks
Garret Hebert
Stephen Logan
Tom Russell

With six (6) members present, a quorum was declared.

The following commission members were absent:

Ronald Petree
Larry Sayes
Kevin Webb

LDAF Staff Present

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain
Agro Consumer Services Assistant Commissioner: Kevin Finley;
Louisiana Agricultural Commodities Commission Director: Gene Cavalier;
LDAF Attorney: Bethany Gonzales;
LDAF Auditor: Jeff Fabre;
Administrative Coordinator IV: Cindy Abbott.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

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LDAF.LA.GOV

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Forestry
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**Management
& Finance**
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**Soil & Water
Conservation**
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IV. ADOPTION OF NOVEMBER 20, 2025 MINUTES

A motion was made by Tom Russell to approve the minutes from the May 29, 2025 meeting. Ryan Ellington seconded the motion. All members in favor. Motion carried.

V. GRAIN & COTTON INDEMNITY FUND AND SELF INSURANCE FUND

Director Gene Cavalier stated that as of February 25, 2026, the Grain and Cotton Indemnity Fund (GCIF) balance is \$3,350,185.73 and the Self Insurance Fund (SIF) balance is \$808,027.33.

GCIF- \$3,350,185.73

SIF- \$808,027.33

A. RS 3:3412- Self Insurance Fund (SIF)

B. RS 3:3412.1- Grain & Cotton Indemnity Fund (GCIF)

Commissioner Mike Strain advised the last farmer has priced, due to the Hansen-Mueller Bankruptcy, and the Department has paid out \$5,485,600.00, leaving an approximate GCIF balance of \$3,175,000.00.

Commissioner Mike Strain advised that during the 2026 Legislative Session two (2) LACC bills are being presented. The first requests the GCIF cap to be raised from \$12 million to \$25M. The second bill requests the rate of monthly assessments be doubled. Raising this assessment fee from 0.0004% to 0.0008%. This increase in fees would increase the LACC intake from \$500,000- \$700,00.00.

Commissioner Strain then explained his concerns with Grain Brokers versus Grain Elevators and introduced the idea of having a separate fund paid into by Grain Brokers only.

This concept was discussed at length, with Commission Members questioning the dividing of incoming assessment funds.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Bethany Gonzales stated the language revision for the Grain Prompt Payment Law, discussed during the November 20, 2025, meeting, was still ongoing and laws continue to be reviewed. The Commission discussed that because each situation differs based on time of year and type of contract, there would need to be some flexibility on time of payment.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Andy Brown, Policy Director for Louisiana Farm Bureau, recognized the LACC at a board meeting in Madison Parish, speaking highly of the work put in and education given to farmers and surrounding states. Communication from LACC and the Department of Ag helped keep farmers in the loop on issues involving the bankruptcy claims and when payments would be received. There was also a great deal of support from the Official Growers Groups.

The Advisory Committee from Louisiana Farm Bureau has put in place a policy to support the Commissioner's efforts in raising the cap of the GCIF and double monthly assessment fees. However, questions on whether these funds could accrue interest have been raised. Lastly, when considering the concept of separate Broker funds, Louisiana Farm Bureau

has seen significant consolidation of opportunities to market grain in Louisiana. If you make it too restrictive to be a Grain Dealer in this state, you're only exposing our farmers to more risks by having limited options to market their grain.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Hansen-Mueller Bankruptcy

Currently all Hansen-Mueller Indemnity Fund claims have been paid. Total amount paid by the Department was \$5,485,600.00.

B. CONSIDERATION OF NEW LICENSE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL: (2025-2026)

Pursuant to La. R.S. 42:16, R.S. 42:17(10), and R.S. 3: 3421, the commission members voted to enter Executive Session to discuss financial status and any possible issues with the applicants.

The motion to enter Executive Session was made by Stephen Logan; Tom Russell seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Ryan Ellington

Ross Girtman

Robert Hanks

Garret Hebert

Stephen Logan

Tom Russell

Six (6) members of the LACC were presented and voted to enter Executive Session. The meeting went into Executive Session at 10:51 A.M.

The meeting recording was turned back on at 11:37 A.M. Cindy Abbott called roll and the same six (6) members of the LACC, listed above, were present. Tom Russell made a motion to resume the regular meeting; Ryan Ellington seconded the motion. All members in favor and the LACC meeting resumed.

a. NEW WAREHOUSE & GRAIN DEALER LICENSE APPLICANT

1. Helena Agri-Enterprises, LLC

A motion was made by Tom Russell to approve the new Warehouse and Grain Dealer license request. The motion was seconded by Stephen Logan. All members in favor. Motion carried.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

X. DATE NEXT MEETING.

Friday, June 5, 2026

XI. ADJOURMENT

A motion was made by Stephen Logan to adjourn the meeting, and Ryan Ellington seconded the motion. All members in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 A.M.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Ellington", is written over a horizontal line.

LOUISIANA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES COMMISSION CHAIRMAN