

Hemp Feed Coalition Committed to Working with Association of Animal Feed Control Officials for Approval of Hemp Products in Animal Feeds

The Hemp Feed Coalition (HFC) is a non-profit organization lead by dedicated volunteers including hemp industry leaders, farmers and producers, veterinarians, food and feed processors, livestock and feed associations, and individuals who want to feed hemp products to their animals. The vision of the Hemp Feed Coalition is to grow hemp producers and processors and gain access to the billion-dollar animal feed and supplements market, completing a local supply chain from farmer to feeder. Our mission is to gain Federal approval for hemp and its byproducts as animal feed ingredients.

Our efforts over the past years have included working directly with federal and state regulators to create a path forward for gaining approval of hemp ingredients for inclusion in animal feeds for all species. HFC is committed to continuing to work closely with Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) and the FDA-CVM and has used some of the most experienced, technical, and scientific advisors in the industry, including many university researchers, to provide compelling and credible evidence that hemp and its by-products are safe and nutritious.

HFC has compiled the results of chemical analysis of US grown and US processed hemp products and has supported lengthy and expensive studies of specified hemp ingredients in target animal species. In February 2021, HFC submitted the first hemp feed ingredient definition, utilizing hemp seed cake as a feed ingredient for laying hens.

In a recent statement, AAFCO issued a call to action and defined a distinct position in which it urged the industry to maintain these pathways of approval. In AAFCO's statement they specifically cautioned states about providing an alternative legislative pathway for the hemp industry outside of AAFCO guidance. While we will continue to work closely with AAFCO and respect their position on evaluating the many technical concerns about using hemp as a feed product, we also appreciate the needs of farmers and ranchers who are not only looking to create more value for their crops but are also anxious for feed alternatives in this time of record-breaking feed costs, shortages, and other critical supply chain issues.

HFC will continue to partner with AAFCO in providing the additional hard work and science that supports the numerous feed applications such as we have for the laying hens. HFC is looking forward to a continued collaborative effort with AAFCO and are confident they will continue to urge regulators to evaluate hemp ingredients on a level playing field like any other animal feed ingredient.

Hemp is a diverse crop and, when it is grown for grain, its nutritional properties are similar to other traditional oilseed commodities such as flax and canola. Hemp is a source of unsaturated fatty acid with a favorable omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acid ratio and it contains proteins that contain all the essential amino acids. These properties make people across multiple industries excited about the potential of hemp ingredients in animal food and feeds sourced from a domestic supply chain. In fact, in 2018, FDA reviewed three generally recognized as safe (GRAS) notices for hemp seed-derived ingredients. These ingredients included hulled hemp seed (GRN765), hemp seed protein powder (GRN771), and hemp seed oil (GRN778) and identified no concerns about these ingredients being introduced into the human diet.

We appreciate AAFCO's position and will continue to chip away at the mountain of time and resources required to create a path to market for our farmers and other small business owners. If federal and state regulators want to encourage the industry to maintain the established pathways for approval, then more funding and research opportunities are needed along with timely review of the information submitted when following the established approval pathways.

If you have interest in seeing hemp and its ingredients approved for animal feed, please consider being a part of the HFC and getting involved! Get involved [here](#).