



## Letter From The ADFC Chairman

On behalf of the American Down and Feather Council, allow me to introduce you to the first ever ADFC Newsletter! One of my goals upon being elected Chairman of the Council was to make a concerted effort to re-introduce our organization, not just to the Down and Feather industry, but to the Textile world at large and particularly to the HFFPA. This newsletter, which will be published bi-annually at a minimum, is a step in that direction. Each publication will share our ongoing work (often behind the scenes) to ensure labeling compliance, to further advocate on behalf of our industry, to be a resource to government agencies in policy direction and perhaps most important, to advocate on behalf of the American consumer.

The ADFC does amazing work to ensure that our members have the most up to date information on materials, sourcing issues, testing, and more to ensuring that not only participating companies but also all sellers of down and feather product are complying with US labeling standards. The ADFC works with the other industry organizations across the globe on standards and other issues that are endemic to our business and that can include everything from correcting misinformation on down and feather product to publishing the key traits to look for in a perfect down and feather filled pillow. Further, the council acts as a resource for our US government entities like the USDA and the FTC to better understand our business and issues that can impact the consumer such as trade and tariff updates.

This newsletter will highlight some of the activities and issues that we have been working on over the quarters in 2023. You'll see updates from our Standards and Testing Committee (the STC), our Public Relations Committee, and a calendar of some key dates that are upcoming including Council meetings and our annual attendance at the International Down and Feather Bureau Plenary Meeting. This year, to be hosted by the ADFC in the United States and welcoming industry organizations from around the world. I hope you find the information useful, interesting, and even entertaining at times! Thank you and have a wonderful Winter season!

Best,  
**Brett D. Rife**  
VP of Sales, Keeco, LLC  
Chairman, American Down and Feather Council

*Brett D Rife*



## Legal Counsel Update from Meeks, Sheppard, Leo & Pillsbury LLP

As we head to the end of the year, Members should keep in mind these issues that can affect your business:

- **Tariffs on China products continue.** There are exclusions for down and feather, as well as lotion pumps, however, these exclusions were only extended through December 31, 2023. The USTR is expected to release its four-year review report on the tariffs sometime “this fall” and may announce another formal exclusion process. Members would benefit from informing their local Congressional Representatives and Senators to support a new exclusion process and continuing the exclusions in 2024.
- **Forced Labor.** CBP and DHS have increased enforcement of suspected goods, especially textiles, made with Forced Labor. This has resulted in numerous detentions where importers have to “prove the negative” - that their supply chain does not have any Forced Labor at any point, whether sourced in China or other countries. An importer must be able to show CBP that their goods are free from Forced Labor from point of origin of the cotton, for example through processing, transportation, and warehousing/inventory, to the U.S. CBP has begun to use “isotope testing” on cotton to try and determine if it originates in a forced labor area, like the Uyghur region in China.
- **Proposition 65.** Attorneys in California are testing packaging, mostly, and then sending Notices of Violation to the retailer and supplier. These cases have not subsided and Members are urged to make sure their packaging and product are compliant.
- **Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAs).** Many states are expected to ban PFAs in textiles, including home fashion products, in the next two years. Members are aware that retailers are already informing suppliers about this issue and requiring suppliers to certify that no PFAs are used. It is also likely that “private enforcement,” like under Prop 65, will occur once the States’

regulations take effect.

- **FTC has increased enforcement of “Made In USA” claims.** The FTC is also expected to release an updated “Green Guides” on the labeling and advertising of “green” products (“sustainable,” “ecological,” “organic”) by year end.

If you have any questions regarding the above, feel free to contact Robert Leo, HFPA Legal Counsel, at [Robert.leo@mscustoms.com](mailto:Robert.leo@mscustoms.com)



## Standards and Testing Committee (STC) Updates

A major focus of the STC is our **Labeling Compliance Program (LCP)** and specifically on mislabeled products infiltrating the US markets. These products not only create an extremely uneven playing field for all of the vendors, but they also create consumer challenges with erroneous information and product that doesn't deliver as advertised.

The extensive mislabeling of down and feather product listings on Amazon.com was discussed during the ADFC board meeting held in September 2023. The board concluded that the issue must immediately be addressed with Amazon. Directly following the meeting, ADFC STC members and ADFC staff met with Amazon's merchant, legal, and compliance teams where extensive feather and down mislabeling examples were cited. Third party testing results demonstrating this egregious mislabeling resulted in Amazon agreeing to work with ADFC in developing a feather and down testing SOP to better protect the interests of American consumers.

Removal of offending product and developing a testing protocol is a critical first step in eliminating the mislabeling of feather and down products. ADFC is dedicated to this endeavor and will keep everyone informed of our progress with Amazon given the wide-ranging implications and multiple product categories that this could touch.

Please reach out to Ning He with any STC related questions:  
[ning.he@blueridgehome.com](mailto:ning.he@blueridgehome.com).

## Public Relations Committee Update

IDFB commissioned the update of the Animal Welfare Whitepaper titled “*Sustainable and Ethical Practices of the Down and Feather Industry*” which now provides the most recent data available. ADFC members can view and download the updated White Paper here: <https://bit.ly/3thNP9E>

IDFB has developed three new videos and infographic based on the Life Cycle Assessment report that highlights the key points of down’s lower environmental impact in these areas studied: Human Health, Ecosystems, and Climate Change. These resources can be used as marketing material by ADFC members and can be viewed on the ADFC website here: <https://bit.ly/41w7nDV>

Please reach out to Kevin Mendoza if you have any questions regarding the above resources: [kmendoza@kellencompany.com](mailto:kmendoza@kellencompany.com)



## Events Calendar

- **March 18, 2024** - ADFC Board Meeting - NYC, USA
- **June 17-19, 2024** - 70th IDFB Plenary Meeting 2024 - Miami, Florida, USA