

New Mexico Food Protection Alliance Meeting 2nd Annual

NOVEMBER 8-9
2011

ALBUQUERQUE
NEW MEXICO

<p>WELCOME 11/08/11</p>	<p>Dr. Bruce Hinrichs, Associate Dean of the New Mexico State University College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and the Associate Director County Extension Service welcomed the 2nd Annual Food Protection Alliance Conferees to Albuquerque.</p>
<p>JEFF WITTE SECRETARY NMDA</p>	<p>Three more years of the FDA grant for future meetings and trainings such as this one.</p>
	<p>Innovative Food Defense Program (grant); upgrade food defense plan for the State of New Mexico; create a template for others.</p>
<p>MICHAEL DUVAL SECRETARY DHSEM</p>	<p>NMDA/HS are partners; NM excellent reputation throughout the U.S.; FEMA Region 6 exercises are also on the horizon.</p>
	<p>Public/private sector involvement; importance of pre event relationship for good health and safe food.</p>
<p>BILLY DICTSON SWBFSDC</p>	<p>The center dates back to 2003; more exercise and training than any other state in the U.S.</p>
	<p>Reach out to industry to a greater extent; private sector is the key to food safety and a strong infrastructure.</p>
<p>CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication and collaboration between the public and private sectors. • Identify specific response roles in a food borne outbreak. <p>IDENTIFIED GUIDELINES and TARGET CAPABILITIES FOR THIS CONFERENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Issue Area = <i>Guideline</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communications = <i>TCL</i> ○ Planning = <i>TCL</i> • Protect Mission Area = <i>Guideline</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Epidemiological Surveillance and Investigation = <i>TCL</i> • Respond Mission Area = <i>Guideline</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental Health = <i>TCL</i> 	



"If you see something, say something!"



Agenda Topics

10:15-11:30

WHAT IS INDUSTRY'S ROLE IN FOOD SAFETY?

DISCUSSION	<i>Brad Slater – Quality Assurance Director – Southwest Cheese (SWC)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWC is the largest cheese plant in the world: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 400 million pounds of cheese annually. ○ 22 million pounds of whey annually. ○ 225 employees. ○ Began operation in 2006. ○ 400,000 square feet of space. ○ Product shipped globally. ● Customers largely drive the need for food safety and defense plans; recognize that and communicate. ● <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> is one of the major food pathogens affecting the milk industry. ● Partner with our milk producers to provide a quality product. ● Importance of GMP and HACCP; training of employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Segregating the plant into high and low pathogens risk zones. ○ Create traffic patterns to avoid cross contamination. ○ Sanitation of personnel, attire and utensils. ○ Infrastructure design. ○ HVAC design and operation ○ Cleaning and maintenance records must be complete and accurate. ● FDA swabs onsite; good for industry and give validity to our internal food safety programs; environmental swabbing in the last month was over 500 in the facility. ● Borrowed many of our food safety principles from the American Meat Institute. ● Food safety can be an algebraic equation consisting of the following (Big 5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic Patterns. ○ Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). ○ Infrastructure. ○ Equipment Design. ○ Sanitation. ● Zoning is an important part of classification for swabbing. ● A bacterium just doesn't appear; it has to hitchhike to an area. ● Master sanitation schedule. ● Mitigation of weaker areas. ● Encourage customers to reject any product that does not look proper. ● Indicator organisms; but do not do pathogen testing in our lab; rapid testing. ● A vendor bringing new or repaired equipment on site is a concern. 	
DISCUSSION	<i>Julie Anderson – Food Sourcing Liaison – Roadrunner Food Bank</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Food banks in New Mexico are vital to many residents who struggle with food security; ensuring a safe product is paramount. ● Obtain food from several entities; solicit food from many entities around the state. ● "Feeding America" is the national association; conducts audits. ● Distributed to 501c3s; all operate under the same guidelines. ● Will begin third party audits starting in April 2012: Donors are requiring it. ● Must have temperature control on the Roadrunner Fleet as required by certain donors: Wal- 	

- Mart, Cargill, others.
- Receive in bulk (2000 pounds for example) and repack.
- Survive (accomplish the tasks) through the use of volunteers (16,000).
- Some staff is SAFE certified.
- Better be safe than sorry; will throw away if there is any inclination of compromise or damage; "if in doubt, throw it out."
- Everything must be labeled; vigilant about ingredients.
- Food drives and the mixing of those donations can be concerning.
- Online food safety training and certification is required for partner agencies.
- Close adherence and monitoring of recall items.
- Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act – 1996 – Good faith exemption.
- 26 million pounds of food distributed July 2010 thru June 2011.
- 1/6 of New Mexico residents are hungry.
- Experiencing a downturn in donations due to economy.

DISCUSSION	<i>Martin Sanchez – New Mexico Organic Growers – Inspector/Certifier NMDA</i>
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- Ensure producers provide a quality, safe product through organic certification.
- Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs).
- Good Health Practices (GHPs).
- Manure rule (Increased virulence in bacterium strains today):
 - Composting rules in place and adhered to strictly.
- Documentation requirements are thorough; log book and checklists.
- Safe handling of food and sanitation practices.
- Third party certification seems to be the way the industry is moving.
- NMDA certified around 180 organic producers in New Mexico this year.
- Ill workers handling organic foods are a concern.

CONCLUSIONS	
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As known, but reinforced in the previous presentations, industry and regulators must be diligent in working together for food security, safety and protection.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Consider a exercise in 2012 that more fully integrates the food industry in New Mexico with regulatory personnel	SWBFSDFC	06/30/12

11:30-11:45 **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM SAFETY**

DISCUSSION	<i>Douglas Conwell – Emergency Management Specialist Santa Fe Public Schools</i>
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- Chosen to try new table top exercise; 4 hours; action items; not in this alone.
- How schools are currently viewing food protection:
 - Food Safety = Unintentional.
 - Food Defense = Intentional adulteration.
- 30 million lunches – National School Lunch Program per day.
- 9 million breakfasts – National School Lunch Program per day.
- Public schools are not prepared for an intentional adulteration act (food protection issue).
- 54% use central kitchens.

- Vulnerable population due to age of students.
- Food safety has a good track record in our public schools.
- Involved in HACCP.
- Exercise the policies, procedures and plans.
- Key element identified from the table top was communication.

CONCLUSIONS

Conference attendees can attend an upcoming tabletop exercise in 2012 that the school district in Santa Fe will be conducting.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Participation in the aforementioned exercise by other food protection individuals would be beneficial	SWBFSDC	06/30/11

NOON-13:30

FOOD SAFETY ACT AND FDA UPDATES

DISCUSSION *Mario Seminara – Regional Food Specialist, FDA*

- New information coming out weekly at fds.gov on FSMA.
- 1/6 get sick from a food borne illness annually:
 - 48 million.
 - 128,000 hospitalized.
 - 3,000 die.
 - "We lose a small community every year."
- Immune-compromised individuals are more susceptible.
- Foodborne illness can cause life-long chronic disease; arthritis, kidney failure.
- 15% of U.S. food supply is imported.
- Emerging pathogens are always concerning.
- Shifting demographics – growing population (30%) of individual are at risk for foodborne illness:
 - Aging society.
- New Mexico is doing what is in FSMA; many producers now have food safety plans:
 - Need to reach the private sector that is not doing food safety plans yet.
- Cornerstones:
 - Prevention:
 - FDA has explicit authority to use the prevention control tools for food facilities.
 - Produce safety standards.
 - Intentional adulteration standards.
 - Inspection, compliance and response:
 - Mandated inspection frequency.
 - New Tools for FDA including greater recall authority.
 - Import Safety:
 - If FDA investigators are denied access to a foreign plant, U.S.A. won't allow the import.
- Enhanced partnerships:
 - Reliance on inspection between agencies.
 - State, local and international capacity building.

- Improved surveillance.
- National Ag and Food defense strategy.
- Consortium of laboratory networks.
- Easier to find recall information.
- HACCP type practices used.
- FSMA is a transparent process.
- Engage stakeholders; something we are doing a better job of doing.
- Food Code; Supplement 2009:
 - CFPM – Certified Food Protection Manager requirement.
 - Retail Food Safety Initiative – Farm to table food safety strategy.
 - FDA Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Interactive Resource Disk – Employee Health Interactive tool.
 - FDA Trend Analysis Report; 10 year study; 800 retail food establishments; determine compliance in five risk factors.
 - FREE - B = Food Related Emergency Exercise - Box.
 - Food irradiation – Yes; Florida establishment set up and good to go; public acceptance may be slow in coming though.
 - FDA Food Code is a model code; states do not have to adopt it but it is strongly encouraged.
- "We never know what we don't know."
- Standard of "identify" PLUS basic food safety in the foreign plant.

CONCLUSIONS

FSMA, the Food Safety Modernization Act, has the potential to make major changes in food safety. Additionally, FDA is working to insure that imported food product is safe for our nation.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
This afternoon, this gathering will conduct a FREE – B food related exercise entitle Wilted Woes.	Dictson	11/8/11
	Hamilton	11/8/11

13:30 – 16:45

**FOOD RELATED EMERGENCY EXERCISE
WILTED WOES: FREE-B; FDA**

DISCUSSION	Comments in <i>"italics"</i> are those made by members of the group. Comments not in italics are those made in general discussion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group #1 - Clinical Practitioners/Epidemiological Investigators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>While there are a specific number presenting, there is probably a larger group that doesn't report; remind clinicians to test.</i> ○ <i>Confirm what is going on before widespread communication.</i> ○ <i>Remind clinicians to do testing;" if they don't test, we never know what trends are going on in the populations" (identifying clusters in the population).</i> ○ <i>Long delay in the identification process: Eat, get sick, percentage tested, laboratory, state laboratory (not a great deal that can be done during this time frame).</i> ○ Identify other jurisdictions that the contact is for those jurisdictions. ○ How do we coordinate and ensure collection of specimens in local jurisdictions? ○ Coordination with CDC and other states. ○ Resource allocation and redistribution. ○ Standardization of testing organizations in the private sector. 	

- Barcoding for trace back to the source would be helpful.
- The epidemiological investigation might not have any real impacts on the outbreak itself because of the time delay; however it might prevent a second outbreak.
- **Group #2 - Food Industry**
 - *Suppliers, growers, distribution and packagers are just some involved.*
 - *What mechanisms available for information dissemination?*
 - *Associations.*
 - *Representatives.*
 - *How quickly can industry respond with information?*
 - *Within hours as long as there is good communication from regulatory and investigative personnel about specific information needed.*
 - *Public warning about implicated foods?*
 - *Suppliers should be notified as soon as information is received.*
 - *Value of these types of conferences is to meet someone new so that when something does happen, you have a basic idea of who you need to work with on the matter.*
 - *Size of industry might determine to an extent the effectiveness of their internal communication and recall.*
 - *Industry does not always wait for regulatory action, they often times move faster with their internal plans.*
 - *Verbal, electronic, spokesperson for media, relationship building between entities.*
 - *Industry has trace-forward and trace-back protocols through supplier communication; this can be helpful for regulatory and investigative personnel.*
- **Group #3 - Regulatory Agencies**
 - *Indian Health Services (IHS) is an organization that many might not always coordinate and communicate with, consistently.*
 - *Our discussions indicate that everyone is still doing their own things. One state office says one thing, one says another.*
 - *Department of Health SAT (Situational Analysis Team).*
 - *Need response teams.*
 - *Need more response planning for most.*
 - *Who is the lead agency in this exercise? Environment Department?*
 - *Protect public versus saving the industry; many want clear evidence, but have we defined and do we know what evidence really looks like?*
 - *Communication to high risk populations is vital.*
 - *Lacking formalized protocols for communications and information dissemination.*
 - *Add NMDA to the recall list.*
- **Group #4 - County Food Protection Alliances**
 - *Do what an extension service does best: Educate!*
 - *Department of Health already has an extensive questionnaire.*
 - *Activate our EOC.*
 - *Follow protocol; follow things in order.*
 - *Get factual information to the media.*
 - *Keep local government informed.*
 - *Share information between counties.*
 - *County alliances can be a one stop shop for information dissemination.*
 - *Have we included ICS and NIMS training for the county alliances?*
 - *Liaison to the growers.*
 - *Be cautious reporting causes to the media; be factual not speculative.*

- After the outbreak, cabins, recreational vehicles, and the food products stored in them for extended period of times, can create new cases.
- Field calls from the public and liaison with the industry.
- There are a number of other entities for distribution of information:
 - Senior centers.
 - Phone trees.
 - Social media such as Facebook and Twitter.
 - Meals on Wheels.
- "When in doubt, throw it out!"
- Need to communicate with regulatory agencies to ensure when it is safe to eat the product and disseminate that information.
 - We often times do the hype at the beginning, but we often times don't follow thru at the end of a recall.
- Unified command necessary between food alliance and others.
- Food Protection Alliances will have ICS training in spring of 2012.
- "Where you stand depends on where you sit!" When do you go public and with how much information?

CONCLUSIONS

#1. County Alliances (coalitions) are being formed in New Mexico; the only state in the nation doing this at this time; getting information and education out to the county level; recall process included as well is a challenge.

#2. A need exists for accurate information dissemination at and between all levels of government and to industry.

#3. Little mention was made by participants in this exercise regarding the implementation of ICS and other coordination and communication tools.

#4. Another table top exercise would be beneficial to more closely align industry, regulatory and investigative personnel in New Mexico.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Schedule another exercise, possibly in the spring of 2012 to work on the above issues.	SWBFSDC	01/31/11

1645 – 1730

AGENCY REPORTS

DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State Environmental – Reduced money; 18% vacancy rate; in the process of working on the food code at a state level. ● State Health – N/A (Secretary Torres will have opening remarks tomorrow). ● Extension – National conference end of September; completed fair season; farm safety program has completed and is in 90 of the public schools on the eastern side; 25% reduction in funding over the past few years; working with different production associations; 65,000 youth involved in 4-H; donation of beef has to be federally inspected, but the website does not really indicate that and would be helpful if that was fixed. ● Indian Health Services (IHS) – Providing technical assistance, training, emergency management to all tribal health, schools etc. Recall lists would be helpful to share with IHS. ● NMDA – Thirty eight laws on the books that we have to administer, do we need them all? Most of those are outdated and do not necessarily reflect with industry needs; who to call,

when to call and why to call.		
CONCLUSIONS		
Communication between all is vital to an effective system for food safety.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Ensure that IHS is involved to a greater degree and is on the recall list.	All	Continuous
Beef donation information on website needs to be complete	Extension	Continuous
WELCOME 11/09/2011	Secretary Martin, New Mexico Department of the Environment, welcomed the participants to Tuesday's session. Secretary Martin grew up in the family restaurant business and is very familiar with food safety and the importance of it as it relates to retail establishments.	
CATHERINE TORRES SECRETARY NMDH	"The New Mexico Department of Health has a vested interest in protecting the health of New Mexico residents through the promotion of safe and wholesome food." "This conference will provide information and encourage discussion on a variety of food safety topics including a food borne outbreak investigation." As a medical practitioner, Dr. Torres also expressed her interest in precautionary efforts as well as monitoring the number of patients seeking medical treatment as a way of monitoring the occurrence of illness.	

0815 - 0945

MULTISTATE OUTBREAK OF LISTERIOSIS LINKED TO WHOLE CANTALoupES: INVESTIGATION UPDATE

DISCUSSION	Dr. Paul Ettestad, DVM, MS – New Mexico Public Health Veterinarian
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long incubation period up to 70 days (average 3 weeks); still occurring for those that consumed cantaloupe. • See four to five cases per year; saw three in one week; reportable disease: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9/2/11 – Seven cases over a two week period reported by the Colorado Department of Public Health. ○ 9/6/11 – Three cases reported to NMDH. ○ 9/10/11 – Producer brokers halted distribution and began a voluntary recall. ○ 9/16/11 – Cantaloupes still found in retail stores. • To date, 139 cases from 28 states. • Median age for ill persons is 77. • 99% of cases were hospitalized. • 29 fatalities to date with a median age of 81. • In New Mexico, 15 cases with patient ages ranging from 43 to 96 with a median age of 78. • 100% of New Mexico cases have been hospitalized. • Five fatalities in New Mexico to date. • Do not do PFGE in New Mexico on Listeriosis; send to CDC. • CDC PulseNet important in information sharing and comparison; identification of cantaloupe was quick. • Epi curve would have been much higher had it not of been for the recall. • New Mexico had the highest rate of any other state; all cases had other underlying fragile 	

medical concerns.

- Particularly virulent strain; people are always exposed to *Listeria*.
- Cantaloupes were still being found on the shelf after the recall.
- Multi strains (four strains) off of one cantaloupe.
- Packing facility test positive for *Listeria*; low level sporadic contamination in cold storage and packing facility.
- Cross contamination from truck; pooling of water, packing equipment was not easily cleaned and equipment was previously used for processing potatoes.
- Rollers and certain other pieces of equipment had bio film; cattle feces from truck used to haul cantaloupe to feedlot.
- Cantaloupe not properly pre-cooled.
- First whole cantaloupe/melon associated *Listeria* outbreak.
- 4 different PFGE strains; all at once or independently?
- Rough texture of cantaloupe is a great texture and home for *Listeria*.
- Surveillance:
 - Active, and
 - Passive.
- Typically hear about one case out of 36 for Salmonella, as an example for the need more consistent reporting
- Delays in reporting; this one was unique however with a long incubation period.
- PulseNet shines particularly on the cases where states may have only one case.
 - Must have a commissioned officer to receive the distribution list.
- Cantaloupe from other producers mixed with Jensen Farm Cantaloupe in grocery bins.
- What about non labeled cantaloupe; are they from Jensen Farms? Jensen Farms were not labeling them all in some cases or just those on the top of the packing box.
- People eating cantaloupe that did not go through the processing facility were not getting sick.
- If there was negligence after the recall on the parts of grocers etc, could manslaughter charges be brought in a case with conditions such as this one?
- Should all produce be labeled for trace back thru transportation to the farm of origin?
- Should produce, water, equipment etc. be required to be tested for specific pathogens before the product is shipped?
- Should all grocery stores, distribution centers etc. be included on a statewide alert network so that recalls can be initiated rapidly?
- How do we protect the public and protect producers at the same time?
 - Improved surveillance.
 - Trace back.
 - Food safety education:
 - Food safety auditors gave a score of 96/100 for Jensen Farms; should auditors be certified?
 - Certified retail food managers?
- Trade secrets = How many cantaloupe were actually distributed and where geographically?
- Up to date information at www.fda.gov.

CONCLUSIONS

There is a vast amount of information to be learned from this unfortunate incident as it highlights both the incredible strengths of the investigation and actions that could have been taken by the private sector and third party audit that may have prevented the incident.

- This program has allowed coordination and empowered folks to find what services are available in the community.
- Fundraising events; are those personnel trained properly when using the school certified kitchens?
- Organizations such as the ELKS have volunteer cooks; are they trained?
- It appears that state protocols may not be getting to the right people in the county.
 - Would a website for the local alliances help with information dissemination?
- Call to action – Local food protection alliances:
 - People helping people.
- Building upon existing relationships; even brand inspectors.
- American Red Cross.
- Continue broadening local alliances and look at regional alliances.
- Creating templates, procedures.
- Increasing communication at the local and county levels.

CONCLUSIONS

With increased coordination, New Mexico's County Food Protection Alliances can be a very valuable entity in local coordination and information dissemination.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Create a website, for greater communication between all involved in the County Food Protection Alliances.	SWBFSDC	06/30/12

1030 – 1115

TERRORISM AND THE FOOD SUPPLY

DISCUSSION

David Raymond – WMD Coordinator, FBI

- Identify, detect, deter and disrupt terrorist operations before they occur:
 - Paradigm shift after 2001; proactive now, not so much reactive.
 - Stop, rather than let it happen and prosecute.
- Investigate, apprehend and bring to prosecution those responsible for acts of terrorism.
- WMD 18 USC, Section 921.
- FBI definition of Agroterrorism is: "The deliberate introduction, use, or threatened use, of a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive agent against one or more components of the food or agriculture sectors with the goal of causing mortality and morbidity, generating fear, inducing economic losses or undermining sector stability and confidence in government."
- Why target food:
 - Very easy to accomplish.
- Classification will not get in the way of protecting you; may have to read and sign a non-disclosure agreement.
- No imminent threat; but something that is possible.
- Agroterrorism threat may grow – dead leaders no longer calling shots – Al Awaki and Bin Laden liked big splashes; however many terrorist organizations are now disjointed and looking at smaller plots:
 - Low cost, little technical expertise.
 - Many foreign animal diseases are endemic to these regions.
 - Easy to disseminate.

- Soft targets.
- Agents readily available.
- Old wine in a new bottle.
- ALF and ELF are always out there in some form or another. Both groups are not centralized and very difficult to predict what they will do next.
- Insider threats; disgruntled workers; the people who have the greatest access in an organization need to be looked at the closest!
- Terrorism groups are as good as we are at recruiting folks with money problems etc. as spies for example.
- Synthetic biology is an emerging threat:
 - Modification of genetic organisms in your basement; entertainment and fun.
 - On-line gene sequences available.
 - Garage bio-laboratories are occurring and concerning.
 - International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) – MIT.
 - Communities and industry are going to have to police themselves; don't want to stand in the way of scientific progress.
- Indicators that something may be in the works:
 - Interest in a specific topic or process.
 - Information seeking.
 - Searches.
 - Behaviors.
 - Theft of equipment, etc.
- Know everyone in your business.
- Create, adopt and adhere to best practices.

CONCLUSIONS

Agent Raymond stressed the importance of keeping the FBI in the loop, even if it is a simple phone call about something earlier, rather than later.

CONFERENCE ACTION ITEMS FOR 2011	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Communication plans at all levels could be enhanced.	All	2012
Participation for conferences such as this may be enhanced if it was held in the spring, rather than the fall.		
Response plans, both in government and industry could be enhanced and made more consistent through the general concept of food protection incorporating the components of food security, food safety and food defense.	All	2012
Involve more industry folks in future meetings such as this one.	SWBFSDC	2012
Involve more association organizations in future meetings such as this one.	SWBFSDC	2012

2012 Update – The SWBFSDC will be hosting the New Mexico Food Protection Alliance meeting on March 14th of 2012 at Road Runner Food in Albuquerque. A majority of the entire one day meeting will be dedicated to a table top food exercise.