



INFORMER

NCAFD Informer

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Spring Edition

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Resolutions - Jasmine Linicome, Michigan Department of Agriculture

Training and Education - Shelley Watkins, Illinois Depart. of Health &
Tyra Wisecup, FDA, Minneapolis District

Message from the President

It's beginning to look like winter is finally coming to an end. Here in Michigan we have actually seen the sun for a few days, so things are beginning to look up! NCAFD is springing into action by hosting this years AFDO Conference in the Chicago-Oak Brook, IL area June 6-10, 2009.

Suzanne Kidder is chair of the local events committee and will be requesting assistance from everyone with silent auction activities and other tasks that may arise. I strongly encourage as many NCAFD members as possible to attend. The agenda and registration materials are available on the AFDO website.

Another exciting event on the horizon is a Drug GMP Workshop being planned by Andy Bonanno (formerly with the FDA and now Divisional Vice President for Abbott Quality and Regulator, Abbott Laboratories). NCAFD is slated to be a sponsor for this event scheduled to take place in the Chicago area in October of 2009. Andy is finding quite a bit of support for the workshop and is hoping that it evolves into a yearly event.

Last but not least we are looking forward to our NCAFD Annual Educational Conference currently in the planning stages for October in Fargo, North Dakota. Kenan Bullinger is the chair of the planning committee. Please feel free

to contact Kenan (kbulling@nd.gov) with any topics that might be of interest. We will be teaming up with FDA Central Region Retail Food Protection Seminar again this year and are also working on a possible lab workshop, so it looks like it will be a very educational conference.

Remember this is your association. If NCAFDO is not fulfilling your needs, please contact me or any Board or Committee Chair member as we welcome your input. NCAFDO can only be as strong as its membership. I am confident that we are the best AFDO affiliate but we are always looking for ways to make the best better.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Sue Brace
 NCAFDO President
 Michigan Dept. of Agriculture
 616-356-0600
braces@michigan.gov

From NCAFDO 2008 Annual Conference



Wendy Fanaselle
 Consumer Safety Officer,
 CFSAN
 Controlling Norovirus



Bill Chirdon,
 Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
 Raw Milk-A Consumer's Right?

Update from Illinois

Food, Drugs & Dairies

- After 35 years of service, Marlena Bordson, Chief of the Division of Food, Drugs & Dairies retired in Nov. 2008.
- Food Service Sanitation Managers Certification Program (FSSMC) provided 8 training sessions throughout Illinois to over 650 instructors who teach food sanitation to over 30,000 food service managers and employees annually.
- Divisions of Food Drugs & Dairies, Infectious Diseases and Public Health Laboratories provided three Food Emergency Response Investigation Trainings to over 200 local health departments and IDPH staff throughout the state.
- The 2008 Illinois Food Safety Symposium provided a forum for the discussion of food safety in the fields of public health, agriculture, dairy, education, food service and others interested in promoting food safety and reducing the incidence of food borne illness.
- Interstate Shellfish Shipper Certification Program was favorably reviewed by the FDA and all 41 of the Illinois firms were recertified.
- Illinois joined those states who report electronically to FDA using Electronic State Access to FACTS.
- Promulgated rules to implement the Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishment Registration Act [410 ILCS 54].

Division of Environmental Health

- Online renewals for swimming facility licenses was implemented. (30% utilized this system in its inaugural year)
- Adopted revisions to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Code to encompass the 2006 amendments to the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act adding new reporting regulations regarding the inspection results

conducted by Lead Inspectors and Lead Risk Assessors in dwellings built prior to 1978.

- Reauthorization of the Structural Pest Control Act after it was sunset January 1, 2008. Staff worked with Division of Governmental Affairs, Division of Legal Services, pest control industry and U.S. EPA and got the law reauthorized.
- At the Governor's direction, in spring 2008, Illinois EPA tested drinking water sources as a proactive step to assess the scope of the presence of Pharmaceutical and Personal Care Products (PPCPs) in Illinois waterways to ensure that our drinking water supplies are adequately protected.
- Illinois screened for 56 chemicals typically found in drugs and personal care products. Illinois EPA detected low concentrations of 17 of these chemicals. Illinois EPA asked IDPH to assist with establishing health-based guidelines for PPCPs in source waters in the state, because no federal standards have been established for these substances.
- IDPH used the best available risk assessment methods and then adjusted them to a level 3.5 times more protective to ensure even greater public health safety. Illinois EPA compared these protective thresholds to the chemical concentrations found in the water samples to determine if any of the chemicals posed a public health hazard.
- After review of the data, Illinois EPA completed its report summarizing the findings of unregulated PPCPs from samples taken in Chicago and four water supplies that rely on river water as their source.
- The report indicates that Illinois' drinking water continues to be safe, and Illinois EPA sees no cause for immediate concern; however, low levels of several

PPCPs were found in Illinois drinking water.

- With funding from the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), staff evaluated human exposure to hazardous substances at 40 hazardous waste sites. ATSDR published 20 documents that shared the IDPH conclusions and recommendations for these sites. As a result, of the quality, quantity, and innovation IDPH demonstrates, ATSDR recognizes the Department as a national leader in the public health assessment of hazardous waste sites.
- During summer 2008, the flooding along the Rock, Illinois, Wabash and Mississippi rivers produced concerns about increased West Nile virus activity in the flood zones. Awarded \$2,500,000 in grant funds to 82 local health departments to promote prevention of West Nile virus (WNV).

Division of Public Health Laboratories

- IDPH Laboratories have expanded their response capabilities to bio-terrorism and infectious disease outbreaks by adding new Bio-Safety Level 3 (BSL-3) laboratories in each of its three locations.
- DPH Laboratories have developed a new test for HIV detection that detects the virus weeks earlier than previous tests. This new test allows for earlier intervention and treatment, helping to reduce the spread of HIV.

Update from Wisconsin

The year 2008 was one of transition for the Division of Food Safety with the retirement of our long-time administrator Steve Steinhoff in June, and the welcoming of our new leader, Dr. Steve Ingham, in December. So if you ask anyone of us if "Steve" is still there, the answer is sure to be yes!

Prior to Steve Steinhoff's departure, the Division was involved in a year-long audit by the state's Legislative Audit Bureau. The audit focussed on inspection timeliness, sampling and testing, enforcement practices, response to food emergencies, and our oversight of local health departments under contract for licensing and inspection of retail food establishments. While the results of the audit were largely positive, it did cite some areas for improvement that we are currently addressing.

Mr. Steinhoff also initiated the Division's participation as a pilot state for FDA's Manufactured Foods Regulatory Program Standards. Over a fourteen month period, teams of employees conducted an initial assessment for each of the 10 standards and improvement plans were formulated. Elizabeth Kohl and Sandy Cleveland did a great job of putting the various pieces together into one cohesive report. FDA personnel were on-hand to evaluate our progress in early November. We had productive discussions with FDA at the conclusion of their visit and we eagerly await their formal report.

Entering into the new year, Governor Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota and Governor Jim Doyle of Wisconsin have signed an agreement to explore shared services between our counterpart state agencies that could possibly lead to greater efficiencies in state government. We look forward to working with our NCAFDO neighbours to the west!

Update from Lab Committee

The Laboratory Services Committee is proceeding with plans for a day long technical program as part of the 2009 NCAFDO Fall conference. Equipment and laboratory testing supply vendors are being contacted. A call for speakers and presentations will be made in March through various portals and organizations. The proposed theme for the conference is "Results Before Yesterday" - Rapid Methods for Emergency Response. If you would like to serve

as a member of the committee or if there is a particular topic of interest you would like to see included in the program please contact: Mark Stenske, Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, 1615 S. Harrison Rd. East Lansing, MI 48823; Ph: 517-203-1385; Fax: 517-337-5094; email: stenskem@michigan.gov

NCAFDO People

NCAFDO Lifetime (the first) Member

Jasmine Lincicome, NCAFDO Resolutions Committee Chair and Food Protection Trainer with the Michigan Department of Agriculture - Food and Dairy Division, became the first Lifetime member of NCAFDO during the 1990s.

When asked why she chose to become a Lifetime Member, she said at the time she joined, the MDA Food Division Director, Dr. E.C. Heffron, was deeply involved with both NCAFDO and AFDO and Jasmine wanted to support him and his participation. Plus it was expedient to just pay once and never to have to worry about membership dues again!

Jasmine is a native of the Big Island of Hawaii. She came to Michigan State University (MSU) because of the quality and reputation of the university's mathematics department. Jasmine has undergraduate degrees from MSU in microbiology and zoology. She has worked as a research assistant at MSU focussing on paraquat and PBB effects on newborn mice. Later she was a lab tech at Difco Laboratories – now known as Becton Dickinson-in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1989 she joined Michigan Department of Agriculture as a Field Food Inspector in Detroit. With her current position, Jasmine splits her time between the Lansing and Detroit MDA offices.

Jasmine met her husband, David, through mutual friends while working at Difco Laboratories. Dave and Jasmine own a German Shorthair Pointer and when not spending time with nieces and nephews,

she enjoys reading, travelling whenever possible, and studying alternative energies.

Jasmine is well known for her generosity both at work and at home. She always is upbeat and has a smile on her face. Whenever she returns from trips to visit her family in Hawaii, she always comes back with wonderful treats to share with her work associates. Her cousin's home was on the beach and she recanted stories of seeing Tom Selleck (Magnum PI) jogging on the beach.

She volunteers with the Salvation Army and the Empty Stocking Fund which provides gifts for needy kids. At NCAFDO conferences, Jasmine can often be found behind her camera taking pictures of the events.

Jasmine is one who truly enjoys meeting and helping people, and she is a tremendous ambassador for NCAFDO. If you would like to get to know her better (and who wouldn't like to have a friend with a Hawaii connection) just pick up the phone at 5157-335-3238 or send her an e-mail: lincicomej@michigan.gov

Elizabeth (Shelley) Watkins

Anyone who has joined NCAFDO in the last two years, will have no idea who I am. I have however, attended every other NCAFDO meeting since 1990. It is very difficult to gain travel approval for travel outside the state, even at no cost. I am there in spirit so I wanted to share a personal accomplishment.

In 1996, I applied to become a foster parent. It took much longer than I expected. When things did happen, I ended up a single parent to 4 siblings 4 and under in less than 3 months. Talk about life-changing experience. I even brought my little troop with me to a NCAFDO meeting once. I'm sure it was quite comical to watch my stir of chaos enter the room.

I often amuse my friends and family with the antics I witness. People always say I should write

a book. Things happen quickly and time flies when you have any child so that remains to be seen.

I did manage, with the help of a dear friend, to capture a glimpse of my first bonding experience with my 6 week old son for a *Chicken Soup for the Adopted Soul* book that was published in 2008. There were over three thousand entries so I am honored to have our story **3:00 A.M. Feeding** chosen. My children each have a copy of the book and I hope they will someday read the rest of the story. For now, I am content that they know, I think they are special.

Elizabeth M. Watkins, B.S., L.E.H.P.
Food Processing Program Manager
Division of Food, Drugs and Dairies
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 W Jefferson Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62761

Article of Interest

Donating hunter-harvested deer in Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, has a program that allows Minnesota deer hunters to donate deer carcasses to food shelves and feeding programs. This program provides an excellent source of protein to people in need while helping reduce local deer populations.

Minnesota hunters can donate deer carcasses for use in food shelves and feeding programs. To participate in the program, a hunter must have their deer processed at a Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture registered meat processing plant. Only entire carcasses can be donated - cut and wrapped meat will **not** be accepted. To participate in the donation program, hunters and processors must adhere to specific standards designed to prevent food-borne illness.

However, the discovery of lead fragments in packages of donated venison has led to much discussion. Only after extensive debate, discussion and consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were any decisions made. While these decisions were difficult to make, they took into account the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) food safety regulatory responsibilities along with the noble goal of providing a protein source to needy Minnesota families.

Why is the MDA involved in the Venison Donation Program?

MDA has state and federal statutory obligations to ensure that food and meat products comply with state and federal food safety regulations. It is important to note that MDA has no responsibility or authority in the processing of a deer that an individual harvests and processes for his or her own use.

What prompted Minnesota to start testing venison?

In March 2008, the North Dakota Department of Health announced the finding of lead fragments in packages of donated venison. In response, the MDA conducted their own testing of venison donated to Minnesota charitable organizations. As expected, lead fragments were found in both ground (24%) and whole muscle cuts (2%).

Why did Minnesota recall donated venison?

Several factors entered into MDA's decision to recall the donated venison. First, lead is an adulterant. State and Federal laws and statutes prohibit adulterated product to enter commerce. Second, lead consumption is a health hazard for young children and pregnant women. The Minnesota Department of Health determined that there is considerable risk to children under six and pregnant mothers who consume venison with lead fragments. Third, MDA has to hold State of Minnesota to the same standard that we hold private business. Tax money was used to pay for

venison processing therefore, once the deer carcass has been accepted by the processor for donation the State of Minnesota became the owner of the venison. We cannot hold ourselves to a different standard when it comes to food safety as we hold private businesses. Our credibility as regulators would be decreased if government was allowed to distribute lead contaminated product but hold private businesses to a higher standard. MDA would not allow a private business to sell or donate food adulterated with lead. It is difficult to defend a different standard for product owned by the state. Fourth, is the risk of establishing a double standard for food offered for sale and food donated to charitable organizations. State and federal food safety laws and statutes apply to food in grocery stores as well as food distributed by charitable organizations. Venison adulterated with lead would not be allowed to be sold in a grocery store. It is difficult to defend a different standard for product distributed by a charitable organization.

What changes were made to the program in 2008-2009?

MDA, DNR and MDH formed a task force to determine whether controls could be put into place in order for the Venison Donation Program to continue for the 2008-2009 season. This task force determined that the program could continue with the following modifications designed to mitigate the chances of lead contamination of processed venison. Processors enrolled in the program had to attend a mandatory training session. Donations were restricted to whole muscle cuts because of considerable contamination rates between ground product (26%) versus whole muscle cuts (2%). A random sample of venison would be tested prior to a processors product being released to a food shelf.

Were these changes effective?

Unfortunately, random testing revealed that 5% of venison packages had lead fragments. This is a higher rate than last year.

What happened to the venison donated in the 2008-2009 season?

In response to the random testing results, all donated venison was collected and tested for lead prior to release to food shelves.

Does this mean that the processors aren't trimming enough meat and tissue away from around the wound channel in order to remove the lead fragments?

This does not appear to be a processor issue. DNR has released a study that found that certain types of bullets result in fragments lodging up to 18 inches away from the wound channel. The study concluded that it may be impossible to recommend just how much meat and tissue to remove around the bullet wound channel because of the distances that some of the fragments travel. This study can be found at:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/hunting/lead/index.html>

What are the problems with putting a warning label on the venison packages?

Warning labels are often ignored. A good example of this is a recent outbreak of Salmonella associated with individually packaged, breaded, Chicken Kiev products. These packages contain a clear warning label to cook the product in the oven, not the microwave. Microwave cooking is uneven and temperatures do not get high enough in spots to kill potentially dangerous organisms like Salmonella. Despite these warnings, most of these cases in this outbreak reported cooking these products in the microwave.

What is the future of the program?

The MDA along with the other agencies will continue to implement the Venison Donation Program with the current and potential additional safeguards in place. Under current state and federal statutes MDA cannot allow this product to be distributed via food shelves without testing it prior to distribution.

Dr. Heidi Kassenborg, DVM, Director
Dairy and Food Inspection Division, MN
Department of Agriculture

Upcoming Training/Events**International Food Protection Training Institute**

Battle Creek is the site of some new and exciting activity as efforts are underway to create a National Food Protection Center. Through a grant from the William K. Kellogg Foundation, AFDO has stepped forward to help create one of the 3 parts of the Center – the International Food Protection Training Institute. The other two parts are a food testing center and a food protection technology accelerator. The Training Institute will start with a focus on training for State and local food regulatory officials. Emphasis will be placed on providing training that supports Standard 2 of both the Retail and Manufactured Foods Regulatory Program Standards. Once this foundation is built, the Institute will expand into training throughout the food protection community by providing advanced and leadership training programs to professionals at all levels of government. Industry partnerships will be sought to provide unique training programs utilizing food manufacturing sites. The Training Institute operational goal is to use sustainable, long-term funding to support travel and training for State and local officials. Courses are being scheduled to start in the second half of 2009 and new course development will begin this year as well. For more information about the Training Institute, contact AFDO.

Managing Retail Food Safety (FD215)

NCAFDO, in cooperation with AFDO and the Michigan Department of Agriculture, will sponsor for federal, state, and local regulators the FDA course, Managing Retail Food Safety (FD215) in Battle Creek, Michigan on July 14-16, 2009. The course will be conducted by one of FDA's most popular trainers, Allen Gelfius, Consumer Safety/ Training Officer.

This course is designed to allow participants an opportunity to explore the various ways that risk-based inspections can be applied in retail and food service establishments. Topics will include the "process approach" to HACCP, application of HACCP principles in routine inspection work, and assessing active managerial control of risk factors by operators through HACCP system or other established food safety systems.

The "process approach" is new to many regulators, but it is better designed for use in retail and food service settings than traditional HACCP approaches because it eliminates lengthy flow charting and hazard analysis for every type of food product.

For more information, please contact Suzanne Kidder, MI Dept. of Agriculture, kidders@michigan.gov or phone 616-356-0600.

AFDO 2009 Annual Conference

The theme for the annual conference is *Education is the Foundation of Tomorrow* and will take place June 6-10, 2009 in Chicago-Oak Brook, Illinois. <http://www.afdo.org/>

Chicago Area Drug Workshop Fall 2009

Plans are underway to develop a Chicago Area Drug Workshop in the Fall of 2009. Details will be sent out to all members as they become available.

NCAFDO 2009 Annual Conference

Plan ahead to attend the NCAFDO Annual Conference from **October 26-29, 2009** at the Doublewood Inn in Fargo, ND.

Watch for our Next Newsletter in Fall 2009!!

If you have any comments or suggestions on the newsletter, please contact Alexis_Grolla@hc-sc.gc.ca

