



North Carolina Food Safety and Defense Task Force

Established 2003

Meeting Notes

September 14, 2011

PA Conference Room, Disaster Recovery Operations Center

1830-B Tillery Place, Raleigh, NC 27609

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

- I. Opening remarks – **Don DeLozier**
 - Commissioner's Food Safety Forum
 - Audrey thanked the participants of the Commissioner's Food Safety Forum on behalf of Dan Ragan; Eric Eaddy of Wal-Mart was introduced to the NCFSD Task Force via the Commissioner's Forum; Eric is now a member;
 - Don reminded members that the TF was represented on a panel discussion on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery
 - New FSIS Sampling: FSIS will now start to test for other strains of E. coli (in addition to 0157:H7) in Meat & Poultry regulated plants; FSIS will cease E. coli 0157:H7 testing in RTE products (e.g. dried & semi-dried meats and pre-cooked meat patties)
 - Meeting Notes from last meeting were approved

 - II. Agenda:
 - New Members Recognition-Don DeLozier
 - Larrio Spruill (Student, NC A&T)
 - Marcelo Cheek (Student, NC A&T)
 - Eric Eaddy (Compliance Manager, Wal-Mart)
 - Hurricane Irene Response-TF Membership Discussion
 - Discussion on various agency Hurricane Irene activities in preparation, response, and recovery;
 - Meat & Poultry:
 - Food & Drug: Set up ICS via Emergency programs; employed 13 people in eastern NC and many others communicated called manufacturers; 568 checks via visits/calls; embargoed products at 5 locations
 - Steve Tracy: 300 stores w/o power, most were restored quickly; stores on outer banks hit hard; Food Lion compensated for shortages in hardest hit stores with efforts from other stores; identify needs of local stores and communities
 - NCEM: implemented mass feeding operations within 36 hours (served 250,000 meals); 5 fixed feeding sites in Eastern NC, meals prepared at these locations and delivered by Red Cross;
 - DPI representatives sent generators to local schools to compensate for electricity loss; however, some units were not successful and full food storage units were lost (e.g. Beaufort County school lost \$250,000 in food); some schools in impacted areas were flooded-significant mitigation issues; others damages by wind damage
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- DHHS: coordinated activities within local health department environmental health programs; addressed food contamination issues due to damages & electrical outages; integrated with DHHS's Public Health Preparedness and Response
 - NC Cooperative Extension: developed informational fact sheets for counties (e.g. time/temperature for food); concentrated on social media outlets (144 tweets 8/23-8/29 to 92,000 users); conducted 60 media interviews via state and local agents in NC and other affected states; some local Cooperative Extension offices were damaged and re-located
 - Discussion on various means of expanding the message of food safety and defense to consumers
- Foodborne Illness Outbreak(s) Update-David Sweat, DHHS
 - Hepatitis A exposures in Cumberland County (wait staff member in Olive Garden); media releases to consumers regarding possible exposures; consumers offered post-exposure prophylaxis (2700 people in Cumberland; Fort Bragg vaccinated military families; surrounding counties also vaccinated possible exposures); discussion ensued regarding Hep A epidemiology, responsibilities of informing the public, details on Cumberland incident
 - Stanly County foodborne illness outbreak (Palermo's in Albemarle): investigation details; Enterotoxigenic E. coli identified by CDC analysis; salad appeared to be the exposure vehicle;
 - Expanded recall (28,000 lbs.) related to Salmonella heidelberg outbreak in Cargill ground turkey; illnesses led to original recall; second recall due to positive follow-up samples of identical pathogen issues arise due to consumer expectations vs. reality of inherently-contaminated poultry (e.g. salmonella in ground turkey is not considered an adulterant); discussion ensued regarding consumer education on proper cooking (e.g. revised labeling, not using microwave)

III. Business:

- Committee reports:
 - Executive Committee – **Cris Harrelson**
 - The Executive Order must be changed to reflect the reorganization of Environmental Health to DHHS; while revising, the duties of the Order will be reviewed by a new Subcommittee chaired by David Sweat and Larry Michael; duties should reflect roles and responsibilities of TF membership; Strategic planning will reflect new duties
 - Strategic planning will take place during the next Executive Committee mtg. (October); Committee Chairs are invited to attend and participate; new Executive Order duties and strategic plans will be presented at next Task Force meeting (November)
 - Dairy Security Committee - **Kay Sigmon**
 - Raw milk/campylobacter investigation is ongoing; members of committees will be meeting with national Safe Milk Working Group on NC's accomplishments that may be used nationally; discussion on the federal laws prohibiting the inter-state transport of raw milk
 - Recall Enhancement Committee – **Annette Dunlap/Harry Wilson**
 - Have had two meetings; working with Emergency Programs on food establishment database; will review and identify gaps in the database; will use on-line response tool
 - also looking at initiatives to prevent food recalls; will conduct two recall seminars for industry in the coming year (1st will be January 31 in Union County, 2nd will be determined soon)
 - discussion on new talks in DC regarding possible compensation for industry for recalls that were of no fault of their own; several members have been approached by GAO regarding input on new rules; suggestion to ask John Hoffman to give a presentation on upcoming federal initiatives

- Crop/Produce (including NC Fresh Produce Safety Task Force) – **Trevor Phister**
 - Committee has been monitoring two national outbreaks (strawberries and cantaloupe)
- Conference Planning Committee- **Cris Harrelson**
 - The first meeting of the Conference Planning Committee will be scheduled for October; a possible theme for the 2012 conference is examining the many changes occurring within the food safety field (including NC's adoption of the Food Code in 2012)
 - Anyone who would like to participate in the committee is welcome
- Outreach and Communication Committee - **Ben Chapman**
 - Website is in the process of being updated
 - Promotional material on Task Force will be developed
- Education and Exercise Committee – **Annette Dunlap**
 - May coordinate with Outreach Committee for future efforts
 - Request from DPI on
 - Salam Ibrahim of NC A&T has joined committee
 - Seeking ways in which to incorporate food safety curriculum in public schools
 - Discussed the possibility of using a PSA program (with material available from CDC) to promote in-home food safety;
 - Exploring ways in which to use grant funds provided by NCDA&CS's Emergency Programs to reach food service establishments with recall prevention education
- Other reports:
 - Academic Reports
 - No report
 - Industry Reports
 - No report
 - Agency Reports
 - NCDA&CS laboratory:
 - The FDPD microbiology lab has several grants and collaborative studies active in food safety and defense. The lab has started a produce safety surveillance assignment in conjunction with FDA ORA and USDA AMS. USDA AMS runs a produce safety surveillance program and tests thousands of samples annually throughout the nation. The FDA has recently partnered with AMS and has added 15 testing laboratories to the program. Initially, FDPD will be surveying for Salmonella, but other organisms may come online in future years.
 - We are also working on increasing our capabilities for testing bioterror agents. We will be adding or expanding capabilities for Staphylococcal enterotoxins, Clostridium botulinum toxin, and non-O157 Shiga toxin producing E. coli. This work is being funded by USDA FSIS FERN.
 - Through a collaborative study with FDA CFSAN, our lab acquired a PLEX-ID Biosensor which merges PCR with MS technologies to give serotype level identification for bacterial, viral, and fungal pathogens. We are currently working on developing a foodborne bacteria plate with FDA that screens for multiple GI pathogens in a single test. We are in preliminary talks with USDA FSIS and NCSU to expand testing to other matrices, and in the case of NCSU, to potentially test for norovirus in foods.

- IV. Agenda items for next meeting(s) and meeting date and time
- Next meeting date is November 9 in Room 224 of 2728 Capital Blvd., Raleigh
 - Suggestion to have strategic planning update at next meeting
 - Suggestion to ask John Hoffman to update the TF on trends within national food safety laws

- V. **Presentation: The NCFOODSAFE Project**
Noel Greis and Monica Noriega, UNC-Chapel Hill

Summary:

The NCFOODSAFE project bridges existing gaps in current North Carolina food safety systems by developing a new informatics tool, the *North Carolina Foodborne Events Data Integration and Analysis* (NCFEDA) tool, that provides situational awareness and intelligence about an intrinsically complex and dynamic process— the detection of and response to a foodborne disease outbreak. The project is informed by an understanding of the information sharing and communication structures among government agencies and other personnel responsible for regulating and overseeing the state’s food safety system.

NCFEDA was built to demonstrate the potential of situational awareness—created through real-time data fusion, analytics, visualization and real-time communication—to reduce latency of response to foodborne disease outbreaks by North Carolina public health personnel. The capabilities of NCFEDA were demonstrated using a typical example; a cluster of unspecified illness cases is reported with symptoms of gastrointestinal distress that may indicate a possible foodborne disease outbreak. This project is a first step toward the eventual integration of new capabilities within current North Carolina food safety systems. NCFEDA has been designed to align with current national strategic plans for food safety, and its results can serve as model for similar efforts in other states.

- VI. Adjournment