

Lecture Hall

Session Abstracts

National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)
72nd Annual Educational Conference & Exhibition

Food Safety and Protection

Tuesday, June 24

8:00 – 8:50am

15 Years of Food Safety Management Strategies

David M. Theno, PhD, Senior Vice President of Quality and Logistics, Jack in the Box Inc., CA

The challenges ahead of us in food safety are in many ways vastly different than those we faced 15 years ago, but in some ways, these challenges haven't changed at all. This presentation will look at how we can adapt our "old" food safety management strategies and move into a new level of leadership in the "new" world of food safety.

9:30 – 10:20am

Overview of the Food Safety System in China

John W. Jones, PhD, Consultant, International Food Safety and Trade Issues, Food Safety Consulting Services International, LLC, MD

The sustained trade of foods between China and the United States is fundamental to the economic well being of both countries. Each country produces a wide variety of fresh and processed foods that are of the quality and safety demanded by Chinese and American consumers and which satisfy the laws and regulations of the two countries. In 2007, the total value of agricultural products traded between the countries—primarily foods and food/feed ingredients—exceeded RMB 74 billion (US\$9.5 billion). Certainly, the value of bilateral food trade will continue to increase rapidly, to the benefit of producers and consumers in both countries, provided that issues that arise periodically pertaining to food safety and animal and plant health (i.e., sanitary and phytosanitary issues—SPS) can be prevented or resolved through cooperation of all involved government and private sector entities.

The events of 2007 concerning the safety of foods for human consumption and pet foods produced in China demonstrated the extraordinary sensitivity and public concern in the United States over the issue of food and feed safety. These events brought into sharp focus the need for the two governments to work cooperatively to resolve emerging food safety issues, and for the food industries of China and the United States to redouble their efforts to ensure that only safe and high quality foods are introduced into bilateral trade channels. On December 11, 2007, China and the United States signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) aimed at ensuring that only safe foods and animal feeds are traded between the two countries. This MOA specifies that China's General Administration for Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) will put into place a registration and certification system for certain "designated covered products" exported from China to the United States -- certain categories of foods and pet foods which fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

This presentation will provide an overview of the food safety system of China, including a snapshot of China's agri-food sector and of the government regulatory and enforcement infrastructure that oversees food safety. It will also summarize FDA's ongoing efforts to establish in China the agency's first-ever permanent overseas presence.

11:00 – 11:50am

Options for Controlling Norovirus from Farm-to-Fork in Ready-to-Eat-Food

CAPT Wendy Fanaselle, MS, RS, DAAS, Risk Assessment Project Manager, USPHS, CFSAN/FDA, MD

Norovirus (NoV) is now recognized as the leading cause of foodborne illness in the United States and is estimated to cause 23 million illnesses each year in the U.S. Current estimates attribute at least 50% of all foodborne outbreaks of gastroenteritis in the U.S. to NoV. Additionally, recent publications suggest that NoV may be an emerging foodborne pathogen. Norovirus can be transmitted by air, oral-fecal, person-to-person, and can also be transmitted by consumption of contaminated RTE food and seafood. However, most NoV foodborne outbreaks result from an infected food handler that is handling ready-to-eat foods, directly before consumption. These issues, together with the ease in transmission from infected food workers to ready-to-eat foods, and the difficulty in controlling this virus through normal cleaning procedures increase the importance of achieving a better understanding of effective controls for preventing the transmission of NoV. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, (CFSAN) initiated a risk profile assessment as an initial step in managing risks associated with potential NoV foodborne illness. The risk profile summarizes the background information, the risks associated with transmission of the virus by food workers, and available risk management options in controlling NoV foodborne illness.

1:30 – 2:20pm

The Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR): Performance Indicators to Evaluate Foodborne Disease Surveillance and Control Programs

*Donald J. Sharp, MD, DTM&H, Associate Director of the Food Safety Office, CDC, GA
Brian Collins, MS, REHS, DAAS, Director of Health, City of Plano, TX*

The Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) is composed of representatives of public health and food regulatory agencies at federal, state and local levels. CIFOR seeks to improve the effectiveness of foodborne disease surveillance and control activities across the public health system.

The purpose of this project was to develop measurable indicators of effective surveillance for enteric foodborne diseases and for response to outbreaks of such diseases on the part of state and local public health officials. These indicators are intended to be used by state and local public health agencies to evaluate the performance of their foodborne disease surveillance and control programs. Specific indicators and sub-indicators have been identified to support the overall objectives of the foodborne disease surveillance program. Metrics have been developed to standardize the evaluation of the indicators. The use of standardized performance criteria and metrics serves several functions. They will promote a common understanding of the key elements of foodborne disease surveillance and control activities across local, state, and federal public health agencies; they will facilitate training of food program staff in the use and interpretation of the performance criteria; and they will allow for the aggregation of data at state, regional, or national levels to evaluate program effectiveness and identify specific needs for improvement and additional resource investment.

This session will present an overview of the development process, introduce the indicators, and solicit feedback on the indicators and the most effective way to promote their use among local health agencies.

3:00 – 3:50pm

Food Safety and Security at the World's Most Watched Event—Super Bowl XLII: Mega Special Event Challenges Revealed

David F. Ludwig, MPH, RS, Environmental Health Manager, Maricopa County Environmental Services, AZ

Jessica Reighard, Special Events Program Coordinator, Maricopa County Environmental Services, AZ

The Super Bowl is more than just a football game and a \$9.00 hot dog and \$10.00 beer. It is people, security, planning, more planning and table top exercises to make this world class day have a positive outcome. Find out the insight to how a local Environmental Health program grapples with ensuring the health and safety of hundreds of thousands of fans game day and the prior months events leading up to this mega event. Demonstrating Active Managerial Control for Food Challenges and become part of the solution can be easier said than done, but can this template work for you at your next large special event?

4:30 – 5:20pm

On the Borderline? How Much Do You Know About Ethnic Border Cuisine?

Jaime A. Viñarás, Special Programs Supervisor, Maricopa County Environmental Services, AZ

Americana faire is a result of a mix of cultures and individuals from distinct ethnic backgrounds. For example the hot dog and burrito are American interpretations of a cultural food, which are mainstream and identifiable. This presentation will use examples of various Mexican foods, which are culturally unique to Mexico but have found their way to mainstream America. We will address customary food preparation and some of the food safety challenges that can be presented with them.