

**MN FOOD SAFETY AND DEFENSE TASK FORCE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 7, 2017**

Ruth Petran called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm.

Members present included: Michael Dutcher, Ruth Petran, Annalisa Hultberg, Courtney Bidney, Cecilia Coulter, Lorrene (Lolly) Occhino

Visitors present included: Erika Nelson, Judy Fadden, Dave Read, Joe Scimeca, Kirsten Knopff, Deb Freedman, Lillian Otieno, Ben Miller, Katie Swanson, Heidi Kassenburg, Lisa Wetzell, Gwynn Datsko, Alison Larsson, Jennifer van de Ligt, Brian Yager, Jane Jewett, Rima Kapadia, Kumar Mallikarjunan, Lacy Levine

**1. Dates and links**

- The next Food Safety and Defense Task Force Meeting: Tuesday January 16, 2018 at the Freeman Building, Room B-144, from 1:45-4:45 pm
- MDA Produce Safety Program, Grower Trainings: January 17, 2018 in St. Cloud and March 20, 2017 in Monticello
- The Food Protection & Defense Institute will have online Adulteration Rule Compliance Awareness training available in January 2018.

**2. The minutes from the September 19, 2017 meeting were approved with some editorial changes that will be incorporated.**

**3. Member and Visitor Updates:**

In the room (phone line unavailable for this meeting):

**Lacy Levine (Minnesota Department of Agriculture, MDA):** Please note that there is a slight change in meeting time for the January 16, 2018 meeting. The meeting will be from 1:45 – 4:45 PM at the Freeman Building's Room B-144. The Animal Feed Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) Training will be held November 28-30 in Mankato. This course is full with a 40 person cap and also has a waitlist of about 10 people. The Human Food PCQI Training will be held November 14-16 in St. Louis Park. This course has 23 people registered and we're hoping to fill it.

**Kirsten Knopff (MDA):** The Business Quality Management Unit has been working on updating systems for preventive controls (PC).

**Lillian Otieno (MDA):** The Produce Safety Program (PSP) will be hosting Grower Trainings on January 17, 2018 in St. Cloud and March 20, 2017 in Monticello. PSP has posted positions for student workers to help with farm inventories and data collection, Lillian requested help in spreading the word about the postings. PSP will be posting a position for an Outreach Analyst soon and inspection staff in the future. The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) provided a list for eight water testing methodologies (previously only 1 was accepted) and rolled back inspection dates for farms to January 2019 (previously 2018). PSP has been working on a farm inventory and surveys. Verified data is needed by the FDA in March 2018.

**Jennifer van de Ligt (Food Protection & Defense Institute, FPDI):** Offered to help post student positions for PSP on their website. Food defense preparedness exercises have been held recently and one is being held today in Texas. The Food Systems Leadership graduate program is under development at the University of Minnesota (U of M). An adulteration rule compliance awareness training will be available online in January for employees that need to take it.

**Dave Read (International Food Protection Training Institute):** Met with a group of industry stakeholders to develop competencies for industry and a survey is now out to gather additional input. The Coordination Center for Produce Safety is developing trainings for produce and several universities are creating trainings for farmers and processors. Working on developing a leadership component to trainings.

**Alison Larson (Market Fresh):** Interested in becoming a process authority in Minnesota. Alison has been working with Lolly Occhino at AURI to explore this possibility.

**Heidi Kassenburg (Kassenburg Consulting):** Heidi is a PCQI instructor and has been working on completing training for biomedical and food safety.

**Deb Freedman (FPDI):** No announcements.

**Gwen Datsko (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service, FSIS):** No announcements.

**Jane Jewett (Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, MISA):** Working on packaging various food regulations and information for different audiences such as small grocery stores, commercial kitchens, food system advocates, and farm to school groups.

**Cecilia Coulter (MISA):** Recently took a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) training and she is hoping that some of the vendors that she works with will take the training soon. She is working on governance documents for the Food Innovation Team (FIT) concept.

**Annalisa Hultberg (U of M Extension):** Helping PSP roll out the Produce Safety trainings by crafting language to make sure it is useful for food system advocates, growers, etc. She will be hosting a Train the Trainer training for the Produce Safety Alliance that is already sold out. She is also working with the North Central Training Center in Iowa to do some videos that will be translated to different languages (like Hmong) on produce safety.

**Lisa Wetzel (MDA):** Finishing up annual self-assessment and sending staff members to the upcoming Human Food PCQI training.

**Lolly Occhino (Agricultural Utilization Research Institute, AURI):** There is a need for a process authority in Minnesota for food manufacturing and production, especially for acidified foods. She has been working with Dr. Mallikarjunan at the U of M on potentially serving as a process authority. She has been working with MDA, MISA, and other stakeholders on creating a "Starting a Food Business Roadmap" resource for food businesses. Eventually she would like to see a Better Process Control School at the U of M.

**Brian Yager (Land O' Lakes / Purina):** The Veterinary Feed Directive is now in place so the company is now working on education all the way to the farm level. MDA has come into their facility with interns to learn about the processes they have in place. He has been working on PC implementation. The company has staff who have already taken the training and will continue to send people to the training.

**Rima Kapadia (SuperValu):** On the retail side, SuperValu is in the process of remodeling many stores and is working with MDA on the introduction of new areas like fresh juice bars and others areas.

**Judy Fadden (Fadden Analytical Security):** Helping Shaun Kennedy with PCQI training next week.

**Michael Dutcher (FDA):** Will provide a presentation of updates later on the agenda.

**Ben Miller (MDA):** One the Food & Feed Safety Division interns is researching recreational marijuana use in food. There is an industrial hemp program in Minnesota but it is not currently allowed in food.

**Katie Swanson (KMJ Swanson Food Safety Inc.):** Finished contract with the Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) on developing human food curriculum. She also helped write curriculum for sprout safety. She will be helping with the PCQI training next week.

**Joe Scemica (Cargill):** Went to China last week for the China Food Safety Conference, where a Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) update was provided by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA). The Intentional adulteration rule is still under discussion and industry provided feedback on the rule for improvements. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) also provided an update on their programs. The Chinese government is looking at implementing allergen controls for the first time and thresholds are also under discussion for implementation.

**Courtney Bidney (General Mills):** There is a push from industry and retail groups to reduce food waste associated with date codes on food (for example, "best if used by" versus "freeze by," etc.). Language is being created based on either safety or quality and will include a consumer education campaign. She also recently went to the Association of Food and Drug Officials Conference, where the Industry Association Committee was asked to update a contact list so that states can have good points of contact during emergencies. She is looking for ideas on how to gather those names so that at least one contact per company is on the list. She will also be helping with the PCQI training next week.

**Ruth Petran (Ecolab):** Antimicrobial resistance has been a recurring topic in the last few weeks from the FDA, various university groups, the Global Food Safety Initiative, and others. Research has been completed that shows that if products are used correctly, resistance should not be a problem. There is a need for consistent and accurate messaging on the difference between anti-microbial and anti-bacterial. She will be in Dubai for their International Food Safety Conference next week.

#### 4. Presentations

##### **FDA & FSMA Update, Michael Dutcher (FDA)**

- FDA Alignment

- In May, FDA was restructured. FDA was previously geographically organized and is now re-organized by commodity areas (such as food, drugs, tobacco, etc.)
- FDA's staff is the same but the reporting structure has changed. The five regional offices now report into commodity offices. The rest of FDA has been working under commodity structure for a long time and it allows correlation between field staff and subject matter experts. Import districts have their own reporting structure.
- Challenges
  - A challenge that has come with the restructuring is that it occurred mid-way into the fiscal year, so the budget was organized under the previous structure. The budget is now aligned with new structure and things are going smoother.
  - A challenge of re-alignment has been administrative in terms of reporting structure. Inspections haven't really changed but staff supervisors have.
  - Another challenge has been that re-structure is going on at the same time that a new administration has come in and a hiring freeze was in place (which was just recently lifted).
- Question from Joe: How will the import program work if it is regional but everything else is programmatic?
  - Answer: There is a hand off. Ideally, all the inspections would be completed at the same time but can be very difficult to coordinate. However, there is cross communication constantly between all areas
- FSMA Update
  - Inspections
    - Last year in fiscal year (FY) 2017, 240 PC inspections and 60 foreign PC inspections were completed nationally; 15 of the 240 were in this district.
      - FDA is anticipating 400 PC inspections and 100 foreign supplier inspections nationally for FY 2018; 40 are expected in the Minneapolis district.
    - In FY 2017, 450 modernized cGMP inspections were completed nationwide; 57 in Minneapolis district.
      - No specific projections for assignments for 2018 are available yet.
    - In FY 2017, 250 animal food current good manufacturing practices (cGMP) inspections were completed nationwide; 18 were in the Minneapolis District.
      - In FY 2018, 304 of these inspections are being planned nationwide; 40 in Minnesota or Wisconsin.
    - The Center for Veterinary Medicine is postponing animal PC inspections until fall of 2018.
      - None of these inspection are scheduled until fall 2018 but regulated entities are supposed to be compliance already.
    - The Import Program will be completing the foreign supplier inspections.
      - In FY 2018, 2,300 are expected.
    - Sanitary transport inspections will begin in 2019 but FDA will start ramping up in 2018 to get a handle on where industry is in terms of getting ready for these.
    - Produce safety inspections are also being postponed to 2019
    - Many of these inspections are completed by state partner agencies.
  - Training

- All staff has gone through alliance training and are starting to go through regulatory training.
  - State staff are also going through these trainings.
  - Regulatory training is being assigned because there is a high need and demand.
  - Regulator training for produce safety is not ready yet.
- Question from Courtney: Is industry ready from the standpoint of “educate before you regulate?”
  - Answer: Yes, things are going well – most companies and regulated entities were ready. There have been some documentation issues but the overall feedback has been positive for the Minneapolis District.
  - One point of feedback was from a facility that had not been inspected before and fell under several business types. FDA is encouraging companies to call their office to see what establishment category companies should fall under.
- Question from Joe: Has there been any feedback on the Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP)?
  - Answer: Nothing yet since it is so new.
- Question from Courtney: Will state partner agencies be doing PC inspections in FY 18?
  - Answer: Yes, it is about a 90-10 mix of state and FDA inspections.
- Question from Courtney: Are shadow audits still required?
  - Answer: Yes, it will remain the same
- Question from Lolly: What is meant by “received” for inspections?
  - Answer: The term “received” means an assignment of firms that need to be inspected to each district.
- As new inspections get further along, resources will be created like “common things to avoid” for various inspection types
- FDA is also in the process of transitioning to electronic inspections.

### **Website Capabilities Overview, Lacy Levine (MDA)**

- The Food Safety and Defense Task Force uses the Food Shield website interface. The “behind the scenes” website has a number of tools that may be beneficial to the Task Force at large and for smaller work groups. Namely, there is a capability on the website to have “groups” and/or “teams” for work groups to share information and plan projects. Both options can be equipped with a variety of applications such as calendars, secure send (which enables users to email huge digital files), document storage and creation, forums, blogs, etc.
- For the Food Innovation Team concept, a number of the apps would be useful in the “group” interface as the group gets started. Lacy recommends that the group think about what capabilities on the website would be most useful and a group can be created for them.
- Jennifer van de Ligt offered to have someone from the Food Protection and Defense Institute give a more detailed presentation on the Task Force website capabilities and to show examples of what other states are doing with their websites.

### **5. Subcommittee Work**

Courtney Bidney requested that the two subcommittees work on creating a list of action items they would like to accomplish between now and May 2018. The subcommittees broke off into their discussions and reported back to the group at large afterwards.

- **Training Subcommittee** (Report out after subcommittee meeting)
  - A number of training opportunities and options were discussed. However, the main items that the subcommittee would like to accomplish between now and next May are:
    - Providing an opportunity for people who have completed the online PCQI training to participate in the “Part 2 – In Person” component of the training. Katie Swanson has volunteered to be an instructor and can help guide Lacy in organizing the training.
    - Provide another Animal Feed PCQI training opportunity since so many people and companies have expressed an interest. Lacy will work with the Animal Feed Program staff to organize the event after the November 28-30 trainings are finished.
    - The training subcommittee will help other entities in getting the word out about training opportunities. This will include trainings available to small food businesses, Good Manufacturing Processes trainings, the Food Defense Industry trainings, and others as needed. “Getting the word out” will include posting information to the Task Force website, sending out email notifications, and connecting people to the appropriate entities that are providing trainings.
  
- **Communications Subcommittee** (Report out after subcommittee meeting)
  - A number of ideas for improving communications for the Task Force were discussed. However, the main items that the subcommittee would like to accomplish between now and next May are:
    - Task Force Website
      - Adding additional tabs for information resources at the top of the website.
      - Adding an option to sign up to be on the e-mail list.
      - Making some decisions on what information should be public versus private using the “behind the scenes” capabilities of the website.
      - Adding the Minnesota Statute language for the Task Force to the website along with the Terms of Reference and other helpful information.
  - The Subcommittee also has a list of ideas that they would like to implement after the ideas above are completed after May of next year.

## 6. Agenda Items for Next Time

- FIT Concept governance report by Cecilia Coulter
- Wrap up discussion for the two November 2017 PCQI trainings by Shaun Kennedy and an instructor from the Animal Feed PCQI training (Lacy will ask for a volunteer)
- Recap on the Grower Train the Trainer and Produce Safety Alliance trainings by Annalisa Hultberg
- Overview of the online Food Defense Awareness Training by Jennifer van de Ligt