



Association of Food and Drug Officials

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AFDO Press Release

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PARTNERS WITH A COMMON PURPOSE

Industry & Regulatory Food Protection Professionals Engage in New Collaboration

Burlington, VT - June 19, 2018 –The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) 122nd Annual Education Conference recently wrapped up in South Burlington, Vt., serving as a spring-board for a new initiative, creating change through a shared vision with food industry representatives. Dubbed “Partners with a Common Purpose,” the initiative recognizes a common purpose embraced and supported by both government regulators and industry alike in improving public health and consumer services.

“To be a fully integrated in food safety, industry must be at the table. While more doors are opening between government regulators and industry, it’s not fully integrated yet,” said Mick Miklos, Program Director for the National Restaurant Association, who originally coined the phrase “partners with a common purpose” nearly a decade ago. “When industry attends AFDO and other similar regulatory events, we’re a ‘guest’ in their house; and vice versa at industry events. The goal of this is to create ‘our house,’ where all stakeholders are equal. The session we just fostered at AFDO is a step toward achieving this platform for joint discussion, collaboration, and problem solving.”

The concept of “Partners with a Common Purpose” extends beyond individual stakeholder interests; rather, it aims to drive successful collaboration and innovation by establishing equal partnership at meetings and forums to allow greater input and collaboration toward continuously improving the safety of the food supply and public health. The two-hour session was a preview to the kick-off of the 122nd AFDO Annual Education Conference, where nearly 500 food protection professionals from across the globe came together.

“We have done a good job with integration among local, state, tribal, territories and the federal regulators,” said Laurie Farmer, Director of the Office of State Cooperative Programs with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration. “This partnership meeting is an opportunity to engage in a safe space with industry. The session created a great momentum to support conversations of how we can get better through continuous improvement.”

The meeting opened with several examples of industry-regulatory collaboration to set the stage for the open discussions that followed. Topics covered both the benefits and obstacles to collaboration, and how to overcome some of the challenges. Session attendees were encouraged to speak openly in a safe-harbor environment and to examine



The “Partners with a Common Purpose” leadership and planning team for AFDO included (L to R) Tara Paster, President of Paster Training; Joe Corby, Executive Director, Association of Food and Drug Officials; Courtney Mickiewicz, Regional Manager, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS); Mick Miklos, Program Director, National Restaurant Association; Jessica Badour, Recall Outreach Specialist, Georgia Department of Agriculture; Dionne Crawford, Manager of US Restaurant Food Safety for McDonald’s; and (not pictured) Laurie Farmer, Director of Office of State Cooperative Programs with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration and Pamela Miles, Food Safety Program Supervisor, VDACS.



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individual and collective abilities to impact food safety control. Additionally, Miklos announced the future expansion of AFDO's Directory of State and Local Officials (DSLO) to include key industry food safety contacts.

The "Partners with a Common Purpose" leadership and planning team for AFDO included Miklos and Farmer along with Jessica Badour, Recall Outreach Specialist, Georgia Department of Agriculture; Dionne Crawford, Manager of US Restaurant Food Safety for McDonald's; Courtney Mickiewicz, Regional Manager, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS); Pamela Miles, Food Safety Program Supervisor, VDACS; Tara Paster, President of Paster Training; and support staff from the AFDO administrative team.

Since its inception in 1896, AFDO has recognized the importance of collaboration with innovation. AFDO Executive Director Joseph Corby reminded participants of the many ideas and innovative efforts that have come through AFDO, leading to greater coordination among regulatory officials. This includes AFDO's vision for a fully integrated national food safety system, which is now recognized in the requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). It is the hope that this initial "Partners with a Common Purpose" event during AFDO will be mirrored at future food protection events. Discussions are underway to include a similar platform at the 2019 Food Safety Summit and National Environmental Health Association conferences.

To become involved or learn more, please provide your contact information via this registration link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J7P63LN>

[View more pictures](#)

About the Association of Food and Drug Officials:

The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), established in 1896, successfully fosters uniformity in the adoption and enforcement of science-based food, drug, medical devices, cosmetics and product safety laws, rules, and regulations. AFDO and its six Regional Affiliates provide the mechanism and the forum where regional, national and international issues are deliberated and resolved to uniformly provide the best public health and consumer protection in the most expeditious and cost effective manner.

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