Foodborne Outbreak & Emergency Response Committee

*Chair: Alida Sorenson, RRT Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Chair: Brandon Sauceda, RRT Manager, Georgia Department of Agriculture
Chair: Karen Blankenship, Response Team 3 Lead, FDA CORE

Charge 1: Track efforts of NoroCORE, CIFOR, InFORM, FoodNet, and EHS-Net and report these efforts to the AFDO Board. Send topics of interest to AFDO members to the AFDO staff for inclusion in eNews.

Discussion: The Foodborne Outbreak & Emergency Response (FOER) Committee has identified a representative for each group identified in Charge 1 to provide updates to the committee. Each group representative has also been asked to write a short piece for AFDO eNews that includes, when applicable, some type of action the reader can take to participate or share information with colleagues. Each representative was given a timeline for their update. The update for InFORM, completed by Carrie Rigdon, has been submitted for inclusion a May issue of eNews.

- InFORM – Carrie Rigdon (by May 1, 2017)
- NoroCORE – Melanie Harris (by June 1, 2017)
- CIFOR – Lisa Hainstock (by July 1, 2017)
- FoodNet – Susan Lance (by August 1, 2017)
- EHS-Net – Susan Lance (by September 1, 2017)

Recommendations: This charge will still be relevant in the coming year. Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

Executive Committee Action:
Approval ☒ Disapproval ☐ Date 6/7/17

Charge 2: Advise the AFDO Board of the efforts of the “CDC Food Safety Centers of Excellence” established through FSMA.

Discussion: The committee has identified CDC’s Vince Radke as the representative from CDC CoEs to provide updates to the committee. The CoEs will also be represented during the 2017 FOER Committee Meeting.

Recommendations: This charge will still be relevant in the coming year. Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

Executive Committee Action:
Approval ☒ Disapproval ☐ Date 6/7/17

Charge 3: Provide examples by January 1, 2017 of successful integrated efforts during illness or emergency response efforts that can be illustrated at the Integration Forum May 8, 2017 at the Food Safety Summit. Identify potential speakers for this event.

Discussion: The committee experienced transition in leadership in late 2016 and was not actively meeting; therefore, we were unable to provide suggestions for speakers at the Food Safety Summit Integration Forum by the January 1 deadline. The committee has instead put together a short summary of integration examples over the past year identified and summarized by committee members (see page 4). We will continue to follow up on these and other integrated efforts in the 2017-2018 year.

*Responsible for submission of reports
2016-2017 AFDO FINAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Foodborne Outbreak & Emergency Response Committee
*Chair: Alida Sorenson, RRT Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Chair: Brandon Sauceda, RRT Manager, Georgia Department of Agriculture
Chair: Karen Blankenship, Response Team 3 Lead, FDA CORE

Charge 1: Track efforts of NoroCORE, CIFOR, InFORM, FoodNet, and EHS-Net and report these efforts to the AFDO Board. Send topics of interest to AFDO members to the AFDO staff for inclusion in eNews.

Discussion: The Foodborne Outbreak & Emergency Response (FOER) Committee has identified a representative for each group identified in Charge 1 to provide updates to the committee. Each group representative has also been asked to write a short piece for AFDO eNews that includes, when applicable, some type of action the reader can take to participate or share information with colleagues. Each representative was given a timeline for their update. The update for InFORM, completed by Carrie Rigdon, has been submitted for inclusion a May issue of eNews.
- InFORM – Carrie Rigdon (by May 1, 2017)
- NoroCORE – Melanie Harris (by June 1, 2017)
- CIFOR – Lisa Hainstock (by July 1, 2017)
- FoodNet – Susan Lance (by August 1, 2017)
- EHS-Net – Susan Lance (by September 1, 2017)

Recommendations: This charge will still be relevant in the coming year. Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

Executive Committee Action:
Approval ☐ Disapproval ☐ Date ____________________

Charge 2: Advise the AFDO Board of the efforts of the “CDC Food Safety Centers of Excellence” established through FSMA.

Discussion: The committee has identified CDC’s Vince Radke as the representative from CDC CoEs to provide updates to the committee. The CoEs will also be represented during the 2017 FOER Committee Meeting.

Recommendations: This charge will still be relevant in the coming year. Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

Executive Committee Action:
Approval ☐ Disapproval ☐ Date ____________________

Charge 3: Provide examples by January 1, 2017 of successful integrated efforts during illness or emergency response efforts that can be illustrated at the Integration Forum May 8, 2017 at the Food Safety Summit. Identify potential speakers for this event.

Discussion: The committee experienced transition in leadership in late 2016 and was not actively meeting; therefore, we were unable to provide suggestions for speakers at the Food Safety Summit Integration Forum by the January 1 deadline. The committee has instead put together a short summary of integration examples over the past year identified and summarized by committee members (see page 4). We will continue to follow up on these and other integrated efforts in the 2017-2018 year.

*Responsible for submission of reports
**2016-2017 AFDO FINAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Recommendations:** The committee will continue to follow up on these and other integrated efforts in the 2017-2018 committee year and would also be willing to recommend speakers for the 2018 Food Safety Summit Integration Forum, if applicable.

**Executive Committee Action:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval</th>
<th>Disapproval</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Charge 4:** During major multistate outbreaks look for opportunities to provide talking points to state and local program managers on the outbreak.

**Discussion:** The committee identified the following challenges and opportunities and plans to continue work of the charge:

1) Communication with *industry* management during and after outbreak investigations
   a. Industry often feels like information provided goes into a “black box” and would like more frequent communication during an investigation and a summary of outcomes after an investigation
   b. How do we do this? What is appropriate to share, who should share the information, and what is the best mechanism to share information?
2) Communication with neighboring states for situational awareness during an incident
   a. What is the threshold for communicating with neighboring state program management?
   b. What information can be shared and with whom (20.88 issues)?
3) Communication with media during an incident
   a. How do we vet talking points beyond CDC/FDA website postings?
4) Updating AFDO on major multistate outbreak and outcomes
   a. What is the AFDO Board’s preferred method of outbreak updates and outcomes?
   b. Should all multistate outbreaks be shared, or only outbreaks involving novel pathogens/food items, etc.?
   c. Who is responsible for sharing this information?

**Recommendations:** Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

**Executive Committee Action:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval</th>
<th>Disapproval</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Charge 5:** Track efforts of the Partnership for Food Protection Surveillance, Response and Post-Response workgroup.

**Discussion:** This charge was never provided to committee leadership. Only charges 1-4 were assigned.

**Recommendations:** Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

**Executive Committee Action:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval</th>
<th>Disapproval</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Charge 6:** Seek out ways to collaborate and share information across the many projects and groups working on foodborne illness investigation and prevention related projects including minimizing duplication between groups.

**Discussion:** This charge was never provided to committee leadership. Only charges 1-4 were assigned.

**Recommendations:** Recommend charge to be carried over to 2017-2018.

*Responsible for submission of reports*
2016-2017 AFDO FINAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Charge 3 – Successful Integration Efforts Summary:

*Listeria monocytogenes* Outbreak Linked to Frozen Vegetables – Non-RRT State Response
Prepared by: Karen Blickenstaff, FDA/CORE Response Team 3 Team Lead

In 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), along with state and local officials investigated a multi-state outbreak of listeriosis. Nine people with the outbreak strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* were reported from 4 different states from September 2013 to May 2016. As part of a routine product sampling program, the Ohio Department of Agriculture collected packages of frozen vegetable products from a retail location. *Listeria monocytogenes* was isolated from a frozen organic white sweet cut corn product and a frozen organic petite green peas product. Both products were produced by CRF Frozen Foods. Whole genome sequencing linked the *Listeria monocytogenes* isolates from the frozen products to the clinical isolates associated with the outbreak cluster. Based on the positive findings by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, on April 22, 2016, CRF Frozen Foods recalled 11 frozen vegetable products. On May 2, 2016, following a conversation between FDA, CDC, and the firm, CRF Frozen Foods expanded the recall to include all of its frozen organic and traditional fruit and vegetable products manufactured or processed since May 1, 2014. The recalled products were sold nationwide and in Canada. The collaboration and integration between state and federal agencies led to the successful recall of over 450 products.

Elevated Lead Levels in Dietary Supplements – Non-RRT State Response
Prepared by: Karen Blickenstaff, FDA/CORE Response Team 3 Team Lead

Beginning in August 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Illinois State Partners, Cook County Department of Public Health and the City of Chicago Department of Public Health investigated elevated lead levels in dietary supplement products. The investigation consisted of a cluster of 5 adverse events associated with Ton Shen Health/Life Rising Dietary supplement DHZC-2. Three of the events involved children with elevated blood lead levels. The initial adverse event was submitted by Cook County Health Dept. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) was not involved with this incident, so FDA’s Chicago District Office worked directly with state partners and several local health departments to obtain clinical information for the reported adverse events, all of which were in Illinois.

FDA sampling confirmed elevated lead levels in the product which led to an initial recall of one lot of product. The recall was later expanded to include all lots and additional products/component ingredients distributed by Ton Shen Health/Life Rising found to be of health concern for lead. In addition to FDA testing, the Florida FERN lab (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services) was leveraged to help test over 20 consumer samples obtained by the local health departments from the household of one of the reported adverse events. The integration efforts between federal, state, and local departments, including health departments, regulatory departments, and laboratories contributed to the successful investigation.

*Responsible for submission of reports*
Integrated food safety and the role of ISO accredited laboratories
Prepared by: Maria Ishida, Director, New York Department of Agriculture and Markets

In 2012 and 2015, FDA provided funding opportunities nationwide for food testing laboratories to obtain ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation or for ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accredited laboratory to expand their scope. A total of 41 laboratories were awarded with this cooperative agreement. In addition, these laboratories were responsible to provide support to the FDA Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFPRS) Standard #10 - Laboratory testing and to test different types of food commodities. As result of the surveillance testing, several food recalls were initiated, such as the 2015 South Caroline and Nebraska *Listeria monocytogenes* in ice cream recall, the 2015 Virginia *L. monocytogenes* in soybean sprout recall, and the 2016 Ohio *L. monocytogenes* frozen vegetables recall. In each of the cases, harmful products were removed from the food supplies avoiding increase of foodborne illness cases.

The laboratory ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation also allowed states to exchange testing results among them and with federal agencies for quick regulatory actions. Examples are (1) New York Food Laboratory tested raw milk from Massachusetts during *Campylobacter* outbreak in raw milk; (2) USDA used results from Colorado Agriculture Laboratory to recall breaded chicken nuggets containing staphylococcal toxins; and FDA used New York Food Laboratory data to expand recall to alfalfa sprouts containing *Salmonella*.

**Problems:** Despite of the success stories, the data sharing is not a routine common practice. There are still issues concerning the data acceptance of laboratory results when methodology is not used by FDA laboratories. In this case, samples might be re-test by a FDA laboratory in order to have a nationwide FDA regulatory action. Additionally, laboratories cannot have all their methods under the scope. This approach will require dedicated staff to work on Quality Assurance and financial resources to support activities required by the ISO/IEC 17025:2005 standards such as proficiency testing, training, and instrument maintenance.

**Solutions:** In 2014, the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) convened a Data Acceptance Work Group to further define and clarify the gaps that would need to be filled primarily by state and local public health laboratories. The Data Acceptance Work Group comprises members of APHL, the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). This workgroup focused on criteria that laboratories could use to have their data accepted by federal and other state regulatory programs, regardless of laboratory accreditation status. The white paper entitled “Best Practices for Submission of Actionable Food and Feed Testing Data Generated in State and Local Laboratories” (Data acceptance white paper) was released in November 2016.

FDA continue to support ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accreditation for food testing laboratories. Hopefully, federal support will encourage state regulatory programs to support ISO/IEC 17025:2005 laboratory accreditation in an event federal funds are not available.

States and FDA have initiated pilots programs (Mutual Reliance Pilots) in order to compare practices. New York State has a pilot for laboratory data acceptance and it going to generate a best practices document to compile lessons learned and tools to make data sharing easier among states and with federal agencies.

*Responsible for submission of reports*
Food Safety and Defense Taskforce Integration and Collaboration: Iowa and Minnesota
Prepared by: Alida Sorenson, MN Recall and Response Coordinator

Minnesota’s Food Safety and Defense Taskforce Communications Committee is working to develop best practices for committee communications with other taskforces and taskforce stakeholders. Minnesota plans to work with Iowa as a model of a successful, proactive taskforce. Taskforce leadership is looking to hold a face-to-face meeting in Fall 2017.

The goals of Minnesota’s FSDTF Communication Committee include:
- Promoting the development of strong, proactive taskforces nationwide through modeling and sharing of best practices
- Identifying ways taskforces can work together and mirror each other, with the understanding that “one size does not fit all”
- Developing best practices for committee communication to/with:
  o Other state taskforces
  o Government agencies
  o Industry
  o Academia
- Developing best practices for communications on:
  o Relevant trainings
  o Conferences or meetings
  o Taskforce goals and accomplishments
- Sharing best practices with states with existing taskforces, or states considering or working to develop a taskforce.

The Minnesota FSDTF will continue to develop website content, using Iowa and Georgia taskforce models. Minnesota has also been involved in the development of the first FDA Coalition of Food Protection Taskforces Steering Committee.
Update from the Georgia Food Safety Task Force and Georgia Rapid Response Team
Integration and Collaborations
Prepared by: Brandon Sauceda, GA RRT Program Manager

On April 11th the 2nd Annual Food Safety and Defense Conference was held jointly by the GA Food Safety Task Force and the GA Rapid Response Team. Over 170 individuals registered and attended the meeting, including representation from multiple state agencies, USDA, FDA, and industry.

This one day educational conference provided a unique platform for networking from manufacturers/processors, retailers, industry associations and their membership; wholesalers and distributors; regulators on the local, state and federal level; academia and other with a vested interest in food safety and defense here in Georgia, regionally and nationally. This conference was specifically designed for everyone; from the boots-on-the-ground level to leadership and upper management.

Important items discussed at the meeting included:
- Employee Health Research & Resources for Industry
- Water Interruptions (an Incapacitation or Inconvenience?)
- Responding to Natural Disasters in Georgia (Panel Discussion)
- IT Platforms for Information Sharing, Including the National Food Safety Data Exchange; USA Food Safety (an Inspection Platform and Reporting Tool for Recalls and Tracebacks); and FoodSHIELD for Emergency Events, Program Standards Work, and as a Tool for State Food Protection Task Forces
- An Update on the CDC's National Environmental Assessment Reporting System

In January 2017, the Georgia Department of Agriculture gave a presentation at the Vitual Food Safety Task Force Conference highlighting the integration efforts the GA RRT and GA FSTF have completed.

Attachments:
- 2nd Annual GA Food Safety and Defense Task Force Meeting Agenda

*Responsible for submission of reports*
2017 Food Safety & Defense Conference
Location: Cobb Performing Arts Centre, 2800 Cobb Galleria Pkwy, Atlanta, GA 30339
https://ga.foodprotectiontaskforce.com/
Date: Tues., April 11, 2017
Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

8:30-9:00 a.m. Registration
9:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductions
9:15 a.m. Water Interruption: Incapacitation or Inconvenience?
Galen Baxter, Food Service Program Director, GA Dept. of Public Health
Karen Bremer, CEO, Georgia Restaurant Association

9:45 a.m. Panel: Rapidly Responding to Natural Disasters in Georgia
Chris Carter, Retail Manager, Coastal District, GA Dept. of Agriculture
Eric Jens, Risk Communicator, GA Dept. of Public Health
Krissa Jones, Manufactured Food Program Manager, GA Dept. of Agriculture
Amy Rammo-Kuhs, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Environmental Specialist, GA Environmental Protection Division, Watershed Compliance Program
Chef John Syzmanski, Food Safety Director, The Kroger Company

10:45 a.m. Networking Break
11:00 a.m. Iowa FSPTF: Preventing Foodborne Illness One Click at a Time
Jenny Pierquet, Program Planner III, Iowa Dept. of Inspection and Appeals
11:30 a.m. Lunch Break (on your own)
12:30 p.m. IT Platforms – Enabling Collaboration Across Boundaries
Eric Hoffman, Technical Director, FoodSHIELD; President, Datastream Connexion
Andrew Polulak, Computer Aid

1:45 p.m. Networking Break
2:00 p.m. Measuring Compliance of Employee Health Policies: Research and Intervention
Shaun Bryant, Program Consultant, Env. Health Section, GA Dept. of Public Health
Ellen Steinberg, Food Safety Specialist, School Nutrition Div., GA Dept. of Education

3:00 p.m. Final Hour of Presentations Pending/TBD

4:00 p.m. Comments, Questions, Announcements & Wrap-Up Discussion

*Responsible for submission of reports