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FDA’s New Era of Smarter Food Safety

Comments submitted from AFDO: A New Era of Smarter Food Safety; Public Meeting,
Comments to help shape an FDA Blueprint for a New Era of Smarter Food Safety were due Thursday night, December 5. On behalf of ADFO and its members, AFDO Executive Director Steven Mandernach submitted comments. You can read them here.

The FDA intends for the strategic plan to outline how this new approach will address public health challenges, including being able to trace sources of contaminated foods and using new predictive analytics tools like artificial intelligence to assess risks and prioritize the agency’s work and resources. This effort is focused on getting the best ideas from inside & outside the boundaries of FDA.

If you would like to learn more about the New Era of Smarter Food Safety, please listen to our podcast with Frank Yiannas, Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response at the FDA about this undertaking. The podcast and webcast are available here or through the AFDO app.

### Alternative Proteins Could Be a "Bug" Opportunity

Plant-based proteins are making headlines -- but work is being done to find
Virginia Tech, about the work being done and what regulators will need to know in the future.

You can access the AFDO podcast catalog at the following links. Videos can be found at https://afdo.podbean.com/ and audio podcasts at https://afdoaudio.podbean.com/. Or download the AFDO app (IT'S FREE) so you can listen or watch on the go. The app is available for iPhone and Android.

Outbreak Investigation of Hepatitis A Potentially Linked to Fresh Conventional Blackberries from Fresh Thyme Farmers Market, Fall 2019

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local partners, are investigating a multistate outbreak of hepatitis A illnesses in Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wisconsin potentially linked to fresh conventional (non-organic) blackberries from the grocery store, Fresh Thyme Farmers Market.

On December 3, 2019, CDC updated their case counts to 16 illnesses, with the most recent illness onset date on November 15, 2019.

Based on the epidemiological information collected in the investigation thus far, ill patients reported consuming fresh conventional blackberries from Fresh Thyme Farmers Market stores in six states: Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wisconsin.

However, traceback information to date shows that these berries came from a distribution center that ships fresh berries to Fresh Thyme Farmers Market stores in 11 states: IA, IL, IN, KY, MI, MO, MN, NE, OH, PA, and WI. As this investigation continues, the FDA will work with our federal and state partners to obtain additional information during the traceback investigation and will update this advisory as more information becomes available.
The FDA is urging consumers to not eat any fresh conventional blackberries if purchased between September 9 and September 30, 2019, from Fresh Thyme Farmers Market stores in the 11 states mentioned above. People who purchased the fresh blackberries and then froze those berries for later consumption should not eat these berries. They should be thrown away.

If consumers purchased fresh conventional blackberries from Fresh Thyme Farmers Market stores in the 11 states listed above between September 9-30, ate those berries in the last two weeks, and have not been vaccinated for the hepatitis A virus (HAV), they should consult with their healthcare professional to determine whether post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is indicated. PEP is recommended for unvaccinated people who have been exposed to HAV in the last two weeks. Those with evidence of previous hepatitis A vaccination or previous hepatitis A infection do not require PEP.

Contact your healthcare provider if you think you may have become ill from eating these blackberries, or if you believe that you have eaten these berries in the last two weeks.

Outbreak Investigation of *Salmonella* Potentially Linked to Tailor Cut Produce Fruit Mix, Winter 2019

*Food service companies and institutions in Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey should not serve cut fruit from Tailor Cut Produce*

**Recommendation**

FDA and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) are investigating an outbreak of illnesses caused by *Salmonella* Javiana in Pennsylvania. Epidemiologic and traceback evidence indicate that fruit mix with cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, and grapes from Tailor Cut Produce of North Brunswick, New Jersey, are a potential source of this outbreak.

Food service and institutional food operators should not sell or serve the fruit mix with cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, and grapes prepared by Tailor Cut Produce.
in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

Because this fruit mix may have been distributed to nursing homes, schools, hospitals and other facilities that cater to vulnerable populations, it is important that these facilities do not sell or serve this fruit medley. Please consult with your distributor to confirm the source of the fruit mix used in your operation.

**Background**

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) reports that it is investigating 31 laboratory-confirmed illnesses of *Salmonella* at four healthcare facilities in southeast Pennsylvania. *Salmonella* Javiana has been identified among cases at three of four facilities. According to the Pennsylvania DOH the epidemiologic evidence collected thus far indicates that this fruit mix is a potential source of the illnesses. The state’s review of invoices shows that a common food eaten by many case patients was the fruit mix with cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, and grapes from Tailor Cut Produce.

FDA has activated a team to coordinate its outbreak investigation. On December 6, 2019, the FDA and the Pennsylvania DOH shared the results of the investigation thus far with the firm, and the firm’s leadership stated that they would work with FDA to implement a recall of this product.

Read full article

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**Conference for Food Protection - Issue Submission Now Open!**

Do you have a burning retail food protection issue that you want the Conference for Food Protection to address? Do you wonder if you're the only one?

AFDO is here to help. Submit your idea for an issue to the AFDO Retail Food Committee. We will compile all the ideas and facilitate a coordinated issue submission on consensus issues.

You may submit your issues directly to AFDO afdo@afdo.org
Over 300 Years of Experience Together for a Thanksgiving Lunch

Over 300 years of food safety experience was represented from previous Florida Department of Agriculture Food Safety employees and AFDO members at a Thanksgiving celebration lunch hosted by Peggy Hsieh. Attending included George Fong, Martha Roberts, Grace Hall, Joanne Brown, Brenda Morris, Peggy Hsieh and John Fruin.

2020 Crumbine Award Application Is Open

The Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award is a prestigious award given annually to local environmental health jurisdictions that demonstrate unsurpassed achievement in providing outstanding food protection services to their communities. The purpose of the award is to encourage innovative programs and methods that reduce or eliminate the occurrence of foodborne illnesses, recognize the importance of food protection at the local level and stimulate public interest in foodservice sanitation. Often, winning programs offer
IAFP Travel Awards - Apply Now!

Be recognized for your work in food safety!

Apply Now to Attend IAFP 2020!

Cleveland, Ohio • August 2–5, 2020

Applications are being accepted for the following:

- Travel Award: for State or Provincial Health or Agricultural Department Employees (North America only)
- Travel Award for Food Safety Professionals in a Country with a Developing Economy

Deadline: February 18, 2020

More information or to apply

Now Accepting Applications for the 2020 Seafood HACCP and SCP Train-the-Trainer Course

The AFDO/SHA 2020 Seafood HACCP Train-the-Trainer Course is now open and we are accepting applications. For more information pertaining to the Course and/or to download an application, please visit our website, http://www.afdo.org/page-1856559.

The 2020 Course is scheduled for February 25-27, 2020 in New York, New
York at the Hyatt Centric Times Square New York, 135 West 45th Street, New York, NY  10036.  The registration fee is $975 which covers all training materials, meeting facilities and instruction. Deadline to apply is February 3, 2020. The Course will be filled on a first come basis.

If you have any questions about the Course, please contact Alena King at aking@afdo.org or call (717) 757-2888.

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It's time to start thinking about AFDO Awards...

Do you know of someone that deserves recognition? AFDO's awards are presented annually at the Annual Educational Conference during the Wiley Award banquet. The awards are administered by the Awards Committee Chair, with subcommittees for the Wiley and Associate Member that are chaired by the immediate past recipient.

Here's a list of each AFDO Award:

- **Achievement**
- **Industry Associate Member**
- **Elliot O. Grosvenor**
- **Scholarship**

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FDA News
Derived Products, Including Cannabidiol (CBD)

There is a significant interest in the development of therapies and other consumer products derived from cannabis and its components, including cannabidiol (CBD). FDA recognizes the potential opportunities that cannabis or cannabis-derived compounds may offer and acknowledges the significant interest in these possibilities. However, FDA is aware that some companies are marketing products containing cannabis and cannabis-derived compounds in ways that violate the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) and that may put the health and safety of consumers at risk. The agency is committed to protecting the public health while also taking steps to improve the efficiency of regulatory pathways for the lawful marketing of appropriate cannabis and cannabis-derived products. FDA has a number of resources available that address cannabis and cannabis-derived products, such as CBD, and the agency wants to ensure that consumers and other stakeholders have access to these resources in a centralized location. Read more...

FDA In Brief: Readout of Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response Frank Yiannas’s visit to the Yuma produce growing region

“As the food system continues to evolve, the FDA is committed to ensuring innovative food safety approaches that build on past accomplishments and leverage new technologies and analytical tools. Our goal is to create a digital, traceable and smarter food system that streamlines processes while mining a greater amount of information.

This week, I had the pleasure of visiting Yuma, Arizona, an important growing region in the U.S. and one that exemplifies our ever changing and complex food system. As we continue to implement the Produce Safety Rule established by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), it is vital to discuss critical food safety issues with leaders and stakeholders, including growers, to ensure the safety of produce in general, and more specifically, fresh leafy greens. Read more...
FDA Provides Flexibility for Start of Routine Inspections on Small Farms

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is providing flexibility for when states may begin conducting routine inspections of small farms, other than sprouts operations, under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

Routine inspections of small farms, other than sprouts operations, subject to the Produce Safety Rule, will generally begin in Spring 2020; however, the FDA is clarifying that states receiving competition A/B funding as part of the State Produce Implementation Cooperative Agreement Program (CAP) may begin routine inspections as early as January 1, 2020. This clarification is being made after several requests from states to have greater flexibility to align routine inspections with the winter growing season where applicable. Individual states will make final decisions on whether to initiate their first routine inspections of small farms at the earlier date in January 2020. States that want to begin routine inspections of small farms, other than sprouts operations, on January 1, 2020, should prioritize completing their planned inspections of large farms subject to the rule before conducting routine inspections of those small farms. More information....

Other Training Opportunities

Preventive Controls for Human Foods and Foreign Supplier Verification Programs
Preventive Controls for Human Foods Course (PCQI)
Course Information

Foreign Supplier Verification Programs Course (FSVP)
EAS Consulting Group Training

Dietary Supplements and FSMA Compliance – Fallacy or Fact?
December 4, 2019
Tips to Streamlining the Drug Master File Process
December 13, 2019
Dietary Supplement Labeling Compliance Seminar
April 14 - 15, 2020 - Long Island, NY
Food Labeling Compliance Seminar
April 16 - 17, 2020 - Long Island, NY

The Food Safety Doctor LLC
Promoting Public Health and Food Safety through Training and FSMA Awareness

FSPCA Intentional Adulteration Vulnerability Assessments Qualified Individual (IAVA-QI) Training

- January 29, 2020: Tampa, Florida
- March 17, 2020: Singapore, Singapore
- April 1, 2020: New Orleans Louisiana

Register here

FSPCA Preventive Controls For Human Foods Qualified Individuals (PCQI)

- January 14-16, 2020: Online training; no travel required

Laws and Regulations Committee Updates

Laws and Regulations Committee Update
A collection of current food, drug, device, and consumer product regulatory issues and news

November 22 - 25, 2019
November 26, 2019
November 27 - 29, 2019
December 2 - 4, 2019
December 5 - 6, 2019
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