FDA's Frank Yiannas Keynotes AFDO Recognition of World Food Safety Day
Sunday, June 7 marks the second annual World Food Safety Day, a day that draws attention to the importance of safe food, and inspires action to help prevent, detect, and manage foodborne risks worldwide. But mark your calendars and set your phone alarms to join AFDO at NOON EDT on Friday, June 5 to attend a webinar with Frank Yiannas, FDA's Deputy Commissioner, Food Policy & Response. The deputy commissioner will give an update about food safety as part of the Smarter Era initiative and challenges in light of COVID-19. He will share his perspective as we continue moving forward in this unprecedented time and talk about the importance of food safety professionals in that effort. This will be a highly-attended event so register now here.

AFDO Announces Virtual Annual Education Conference

COVID-19 may have canceled the in person meeting of the AFDO Annual Education Conference but you won't to miss the virtual meeting of the Association the afternoon of Monday, June 29, 2020. Mark you calendar now and watch your inbox for details next week. Speakers will include leadership from the FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs. We hope you will save the date and join us.

How Artificial Intelligence Can Improve Food Safety
Under the new regulations, which will come into effect in June 2020 in Japan, food businesses are required to implement stronger measures to ensure hygiene in accordance with international food safety standards.

This has created an urgent need for a non-invasive approach to quickly and accurately confirm that handwashing is carried out in a proper manner. Fujitsu’s model builds on its existing behavioural analytics capabilities, which can already recognise a variety of subtle and complex human movements using deep learning techniques without relying on large amounts of training data. Read more..

FDA Extends Comment Period for Third Installment of the Draft Guidance for the Intentional Adulteration Rule

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is extending the comment period for the third installment of the draft guidance designed to support compliance with the Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration (IA) rule under the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

The Agency released the third installment of the draft guidance in February 2020. Since that time, FDA has received a request for extension to allow stakeholders sufficient time to provide comprehensive feedback. The comment period will be extended until August 14, 2020.

This last installment of the IA rule draft guidance adds to the previously published revised draft guidance. Chapters in the last installment cover topics focusing on food defense corrective actions,
a small or very small business under the rule.

Comments can be submitted electronically via Regulations.gov to docket FDA-2018-D-1398

For More Information

- Draft Guidance for Industry: Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration
- Supplemental Draft Guidance for Industry: Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration
- Food Defense Plan Builder (Version 2.0)

Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) Training Materials and Courses

**AFDO Releases Best Practices For Inspections During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Conducting inspections during the COVID-19 pandemic requires personnel to modify their normal routine and increase their level of safety to protect themselves and the employees of the operation they are inspecting. AFDO has developed and released best practices for those who will be doing inspections as establishments begin to open up nationally. Inspectors should consider these tips when preparing for and conducting an establishment inspection. Download the complete guidance here.

**CDC Updates New Guidance on Transmission of COVID-19 From Surfaces**
Recent guidance issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sheds new light on how coronavirus spreads through surfaces.

Though there is the possibility that coronavirus could be transmitted by touching a surface — and then your nose, mouth or eyes — the likelihood of that is lower than person-to-person contact, which is believed to be the primary way coronavirus is transmitted. Read the story here. See the complete updated guidance here.

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**FSIS Posts After-Action Review Report for Foodborne Listeria Monocytogenes Outbreak**

FSIS has posted on its website an after-action review report for the investigation of a 2017–2018 outbreak of *Listeria monocytogenes* illnesses associated with ready-to-eat, country-cured ham. During April–November 2018, public health officials from Virginia, North Carolina, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and FSIS investigated an outbreak of four reported *L. monocytogenes* illnesses linked to ready-to-eat country-cured ham manufactured at an FSIS-regulated establishment.

This was the first reported multistate outbreak of listeriosis associated with an FSIS-regulated product since 2005. Whole genome sequencing (WGS) was instrumental in detecting this outbreak and determining its source. The investigation revealed that production practices may have led to cross-contamination and that the cooking of the product may have been insufficient to address *L. monocytogenes*. 
In response to this outbreak, FSIS plans to update Directive 10,240.4, Verification Activities for the *Listeria monocytogenes* Regulation and the Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Sampling Program. Additionally, FSIS added a related study to its Food Safety Research Priorities on the FSIS website and plans to update its “Appendix A” cooking guidance in 2020.


The purpose of FSIS after-action review reports is to share lessons learned with industry and public health partners from outbreak investigations to help prevent illness and improve response. To view additional reports and learn more about outcomes of FSIS outbreak investigations, please visit https://www.fsis.usda.gov/OutbreakOutcomes.

### IAFP explores food safety culture in series of webinars with expert panels

Anyone interested in the culture of food safety is invited to attend a series of free webinars with panels of international presenters and organized by the International Association for Food Protection.

The non-profit group has thousands of members worldwide, including government leaders and employees, academics, industry representatives and others interested in food safety.

The free webinar sessions are free and open to the public, but registration is required.

The series begins May 26 and wraps up on July 22. Check out all of the webinars in the series

**AFDOSS Mary Logan Scholarship**
The AFDOSS Board regrets to announce the cancellation of the 2020 Fall Conference scheduled for September in Gatlinburg. Some of the affiliate's annual activities will continue as planned (see below about the Mary Logan scholarship), while others will be on hold until next year. Please mark your calendars now for the AFDOSS AEC 2021 in Asheville, North Carolina (Sept. 12-15, 2021; the Crowne Plaza in Asheville is booked!), and there is a contract to return to the Park Vista Doubletree in Gatlinburg in Sept. 2022.

As of this month, AFDOSS has opened the 2020-2021 Mary Logan Scholarship Application process, with applications accepted through July 15. Once the Scholarship Committee has reviewed applications and determined if there is an appropriate candidate to select, the $4,500 annual scholarship award will be awarded for the 2020-2021 school year. More details can be found here, and the new online scholarship application is available here: https://forms.gle/hw5PtC8AmwSJQ6M59 (please share with potential applicants you know in the SE region!).

Join Us “AT” AOAC’s 2020 Annual Meeting!

AOAC currently plans to move forward with the September 2020 Annual Meeting scientific program, either in-person or virtually. Final plans will be confirmed during the June 9-10, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. The next CASP Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, stay tuned for details!

AFDO Webinars this week....

Retail Virtual Inspections Update

During this COVID-19 outbreak many food safety programs are considering implementation of various levels of virtual or telephone based inspections for retail food establishments and manufactured foods. Learn what others are states are thinking and implementing, ask questions, and learn from your colleagues.
Presenters:

- Sandra Craig, South Carolina Department Of Health And Environmental Control
- Steve Moris, Kansas Department Of Agriculture
- Mandy Sedlak, Ecosure

Register: Monday, June 1, 2020 at 2:00PM - 3:30PM

Register Now

Cyclospora: Part Two—Regulatory Approach

This follow-up presentation will focus on FDA response to positive cyclospora findings. FDA will review our process and objectives during follow-up to a positive finding, provide an overview of investigative priorities, summarize some of the challenges to addressing cyclospora contamination, and the process for coordinating with state partners to protect public health, including the documents that FDA would need in order to consider taking compliance action.

*Registration is limited to 1,000 seats

Presenters:

- Joann Givens, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Crystal McKenna, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Maria Knirk, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Register: Friday, June 5, 2020 at 2:00PM - 3:30PM

Register Now

AFDO Professional Development Series Adds More Offerings
AFDO is offering a series of FREE webinars and web-based training courses that can be utilized for staff development. AFDO anticipates providing a variety of courses and webinars along with our regular podcasts over the next several weeks. Because we are continuously developing new offerings, please visit this webpage on a regular basis to look for the latest training courses.

In addition, 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.

No CEU's or Certificates of Attendance will be available for these sessions.

FDA Continues to Answer COVID-19 Questions & Update Documents

The Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Food and Cosmetic Information Center (FCIC)/Technical Assistance Network (TAN) continue to released responses for questions of interest to AFDO members.
It's important to check back frequently for the latest as well as visit the AFDO COVID-19 Resource Page.

This is in addition to updating its COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions page to include guidance regarding food products. Real time updates of the FDA’s Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) page can be found at https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19. Updates are dated so you are able to tell what information has been added each time.

As part of the AFDO commitment to providing information and resources to members and the those we serve, we continue to add resources to the COVID-19 Resource Page. We continue to offer links to information that has been developed by our partnerships and other subject matter experts. If you identify resources that should be considered or your organization develops some of your own that can be shared with other members, please email them or the link to bbenschoter@afdo.org. We appreciate everyone who helps us be more prepared.

FDA Updates

FDA Publishes Report with Key Investigation Findings From 2019 Outbreaks Associated with Leafy Greens

Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration published the findings of an investigation into the contamination of romaine lettuce implicated in three outbreaks of E. coli O157:H7 during the Fall of 2019. Late last year the FDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state partners investigated the contamination of romaine lettuce with several strains of E. coli O157:H7 that resulted in three outbreaks of foodborne illness traced back to the Salinas Valley growing region in California. These outbreaks -- two multi-state and one single-state beginning in September and ending in December 2019 -- collectively resulted in 188 people falling ill.

Please see below for further information,


The investigation was conducted at several farms identified in the outbreak traceback, as well as at other businesses and public access areas and resulted in several key findings:
Each of these three outbreaks, identified in the report as Outbreaks A, B and C was caused by distinctly different strains of *E. coli* O157:H7 as determined by whole genome sequencing (WGS) analysis;

2. Traceback investigations of multiple illness sub-clusters and supply chain information identified a common grower with multiple ranches/fields which supplied romaine lettuce during the timeframe of interest to multiple business entities associated with all three outbreaks.

3. The same strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 that caused Outbreak A was found in two different brands of fresh-cut salads containing romaine lettuce in 2019;

4. This same outbreak strain of *E. coli* O157:H7 in Outbreak A was detected in a fecal--soil composite sample taken from a cattle grate on public land less than two miles upslope from a produce farm with multiple fields tied to the outbreaks by the traceback investigations;

5. Other strains of Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC), while not linked to any of the outbreaks, were found in closer proximity to where romaine lettuce crops were grown, including two samples from a border area of a farm immediately next to cattle grazing land in the hills above leafy greens fields and two samples from on-farm water drainage basins.

The FDA considers adjacent or nearby land use for cattle grazing as the most likely contributing factor associated with these three outbreaks. While the agency could not confirm a definitive source or route(s) of contamination of the romaine fields, the agency considers indirect transmission of fecal material from adjacent and nearby lands from water run-off, wind, animals or vehicles to the romaine fields, or to the agricultural water sources used to grow the romaine, as possible routes of contamination.

These findings, together with the findings from earlier leafy greens outbreaks, suggest that a potential contributing factor has been the proximity of cattle—a persistent source of *E. coli* O157:H7 and other STEC—to the produce fields identified in traceback investigations. These key findings reinforce our concern about the possible impacts of nearby and adjacent land use on the safety of leafy green crops and further underscore the importance of implementing appropriate risk-based preventive measures to reduce the potential for contamination of leafy greens.

Because of the reoccurring nature of outbreaks associated with leafy greens, the FDA recently released a 2020 Leafy Greens STEC Action Plan, which outlines a three-pronged approach for tackling this problem. It describes the FDA’s plans for working with industry, federal partners, state and local regulators, academia and others to address the safety of leafy greens by advancing work in three areas: prevention, response, and addressing knowledge gaps.

Food safety is a shared responsibility that involves food producers, distributors, manufacturers, retailers, and regulators. FDA is committed to working with these stakeholders to implement this action plan to ensure that America’s food supply remains among the safest in the world.

For More Information

- Factors Potentially Contributing to the Contamination of Romaine Lettuce Implicated in the Three Outbreaks of *E. coli* O157:H7 During the Fall of 2019
- 2020 Leafy Greens STEC Action Plan
- FDA Outlines 2020 Action Plan to Help Advance the Safety of Leafy Greens
- Outbreak Investigation of *E.coli*: Romaine from Salinas, California (November 2019)
- Outbreak Investigation of *E.coli*: Salad Mix (December 2019)
Other Training Opportunities

Preventive Controls for Human Foods and Foreign Supplier Verification Programs

Intentional Adulteration Conducting Vulnerability Assessments (IAVA) – 1 Day
Course Information/Schedule Page

Preventive Controls for Human Foods Course (PCQI) – 3 Day
Course Information/Schedule Page

Preventive Controls for Human Foods Course (PCQI) Blended Course Part 2 – NEW
Course Information/Schedule Page

Foreign Supplier Verification Programs Course (FSVP) – 2 Day
Course Information/Schedule Page

EAS Consulting Group Training

EAS Consulting Group Offers Complimentary Webinar Best Practices for Food Manufacturers, Restaurants and Food Distributors During the COVID-19 Pandemic – Conducted in Spanish

Top Advances in Food Safety Technology
June 4, 2020 at 2:00PM
May 27, 2020 at 1pm eastern

Dietary Supplement Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) Compliance Seminar
September 29-30, 2020 • Dallas, TX

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

While sheltering in place, The Food Safety Doctor LLC is offering

- ONLINE Preventive Controls for Human Foods (PCQI) Courses
  - June 2 - 4
  - June 2-4
  - July 21 - 23
  - Click here to access the schedule of online PCQI Courses

- ONLINE Foreign Supplier Verification Courses (FSVP-QI) Courses
  - June 23 -24
  - August 11 -12
  - Click here to access the schedule of online FSVP-QI courses

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