FDA Begins Answering Pending Questions Last Friday

On Friday, March 20, the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Food and Cosmetic...
19. These answers can be found here.

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.

Food Safety Magazine Survey Paints a Picture of COVID-19 Effects on Food Processors

There are few issues more “in the news” than the coronavirus pandemic. And while SARS-CoV-2 has been shown not to be a direct threat to, or transmitted by, food, this does not mean that the current crisis has not had an impact on food processors and those of us in the food safety business, whether from the disease or from the mitigation efforts.

Food Safety Magazine wanted to find out exactly how the coronavirus outbreak and mitigation efforts are affecting food processors. We asked a series of questions in a survey conducted on March 18, and we received responses from more than 330 food processors and service companies from around the world. This is a text block. Check out this great article.

FDA Alerts Consumers About Fraudulent
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is actively and aggressively monitoring the market for any firms marketing products with fraudulent coronavirus (COVID-19) diagnostic, prevention and treatment claims as part of our ongoing efforts to protect public health during this pandemic. As a result of these activities, the agency is beginning to see unauthorized fraudulent test kits that are being marketed to test for COVID-19 in the home. The warning and related guidance can be found [here](https://www.fda.gov/coronavirus-preparedness-respond/coronavirus-testing).

---

**COVID-19: News You Should Know**

*How To Regulate Distilleries and Others Nationwide Diverting Production to Fill Hand Sanitizer Need*

Licensed commercial distilleries are diverting their production lines to develop alcohol-based sanitizers. Many of these distilleries are indicating that they have received FDA and ATTB approval to do so. With the best intention, there is still a need for oversite. The FDA has received a number of queries concerning compounding of alcohol-based hand sanitizers. The agency has issued the following information and guidance not just for distilleries but any manufacture of product:

Guidance for Industry: Temporary Policy for Preparation of Certain Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer Products During the Public Health Emergency (COVID-19) can be found [here](https://www.fda.gov/coronavirus-preparedness-respond/coronavirus-testing).

In addition, the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (ATTB) has waived provisions of internal revenue law with regard to distilled spirits, and therefore is providing certain exemptions and authorizations to distilled spirits permittees who wish to produce ethanol-based hand sanitizers to address the demand for such products during this emergency. Any existing Distilled Spirits Permittee (DSP) therefore can immediately commence production of hand sanitizer or distilled spirits (ethanol).
Defining Critical Worker Positions in the COVID-19 Crisis

There are reports of food manufacturing personnel not being allowed to go to work by law enforcement and similar situations. This guidance document can be helpful in helping identify those who can and should be working. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency or CISA developed an initial list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” to help state and local officials as they work to protect their communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. The list can also inform critical infrastructure community decision-making to determine the sectors, sub-sectors, segments, or critical functions that should continue normal operations, appropriately modified to account for Centers for Disease Control (CDC) workforce and customer protection guidance. This guidance document can be found on the AFDO COVID-19 Resources Page at www.afdo.org or by clicking here.

ASTHO List of Restaurant Restrictions Available

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials has created a resource that has the list of restaurant restrictions. The ASTHO link below summarizes recent updates on state and territorial intervention actions for restaurant restrictions because of the COVID-19 outbreak. This snapshot will be updated periodically as new information is available. Many jurisdictions have mandated restrictions or limitations for on-site consumption of food and/or beverages. All jurisdictions with mandated restaurant closures offer alternative options for patrons to purchase food and beverages for offsite consumption. https://astho.org/COVID-19/Restaurant-Restrictions/

How to Communicate During The COVID-19 Crisis Guidance Available

Clear messaging from health agencies is essential to keep the public informed during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials has created a guidance document to help. See ASTHO’s new crisis communications guide for concise, easily digestible answers to 45 pressing COVID-19 questions. This document is being update as the situation unfolds.

Activity Ideas for Inspectors When Inspections Are Not Possible

- Complete Training (see sample list)
- Clean, vacuum, and wash state vehicles
- Work on data clean up projects (inventory, past dues, not inspected, etc)
- Take additional new online training such as general education courses (see list)
- Listen to free AFDO podcasts or webcasts
- Assist in updating policies
- Complete paper audits of inspections
Do you have ideas or activities you have identified? Please send them to afdo@afdo.org for inclusion in our ongoing list.

**AFDO Rolls Out Professional Development**

Later this week AFDO will be announcing additional virtual training opportunities available in April. This offerings are in addition to topical webinars like the one below. Be looking for this announcement and plan now to attend.

---

**Webinar: Food Safety Legislation Now and Future -- a chat with Doug Farquhar**

In 2019, state legislatures introduced more than 700 bills regarding food and food safety in 2019, with 132 being enacted and 17 adopted into law. Laws in 42 of the 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia were enacted regarding food in 2019. New Jersey and New York had the most bills related to the topic (63 and 59, respectively), followed by Hawaii with 46. At the opposite end were Alaska and Ohio, which had no bills regarding food safety. **So what does that mean for the year 2020 at the state legislative level?** Doug Farquhar, director of the Environmental Health Program at the National Conference of State Legislatures, will provide insight to what happened last year and how that will inform what could happen this year.

**Webinar: Food Safety Legislation Now and Future -- a chat with Doug Farquhar**

**Who:** Doug Farquhar, J.D.
Program Director
Environmental Health National Conference of State Legislatures

**When:** April 1, 2020, 1 p.m. EST/10 a.m. PST

Learn more and register here.

---

**FSIS Creates Webpages Listing Foodborne Outbreak Investigations and Associated Outcomes**

Learn more and register here.

https://mailchi.mp/a73158c0a02e/enews-from-afdo-92418-join-us-for-a-webinar-890250?e=[UNIQID]
FSIS has created three webpages to share information about the response actions and prevention outcomes of foodborne outbreak investigations. The new webpages are:

1. www.fsis.usda.gov/OutbreakOutcomes, which provides an overview of response actions and prevention outcomes resulting from outbreak investigations and contains links to the two pages below.
2. www.fsis.usda.gov/OutbreakResponse, which contains information about selected FSIS outbreak investigations and their short-term outcomes, such as recalls and public health alerts of FSIS-regulated products linked to illnesses. This webpage also contains links to after-action review reports that have been published for some outbreak investigations, describing lessons learned that can help prevent future illness and improve response.
3. www.fsis.usda.gov/OutbreakPrevention, which contains long-term actions FSIS has taken to apply lessons learned from outbreak investigations, including policy improvements, industry guidance, consumer education, food safety research promotion, and efforts to strengthen outbreak response in collaboration with public health partners.

FSIS will update these webpages as new information becomes available. Other resources regarding FSIS foodborne illness investigations can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/PHPartners.

New Consumer COVID-19 Resources Available

Are you looking for resources to share with consumers during this COVID-19 incident? Check out the Partnership for Food Safety Education Resource page. https://www.fightbac.org/coronavirus-resource-page/ #PFSE

Clean vs. Sanitize: Know the Difference

It's important to know the difference between cleaning and sanitizing. They aren't the same thing.

Both are important to help prevent the spread of harmful germs.
Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects.

This process works by disinfecting surfaces or objects using a diluted liquid chlorine bleach solution. (see box)

Share these useful tools to help consumers learn the difference!

- Clean Fact Sheet
- Cleaning and Sanitizing Surfaces and Toys
- Spring Clean Your Way to a Safer Kitchen

---

Food and Public Health Testing Laboratories Addressing COVID-19


Reminder: Call for Input on Hemp Model Code
The Association of Food and Drug Officials and its partners are seeking input on a draft of the Model Code for Food Containing Hemp or Hemp-Derived Ingredients. The Model Code has been developed by subject matter experts and is now available for review. **Comments are due by midnight, Friday, April 3, 2020.**

The document is available both as a pdf and a Word document by clicking here.

There are two ways to provide your feedback.

1. You can provide comment and suggested changes by using track changes in the Word document and submitting the document in full after saving it to the email afdo@afdo.org. Comments that are not submitted with track changes may not be considered.
2. Using the pdf, notations of changes including page number, change, or alternate language suggested for each instance should be created in word and emailed to afdo@afdo.org.

Submitters are asked to include their name, email and phone number so they can be contacted if there are any questions about their feedback.

“We are eager to have AFDO members and others who work in this evolving arena help us formulate this code,” says Steven Mandernach, AFDO’s executive director. “Having a code that enforceable at all levels while optimally protecting the public is key. Hearing from those who will be part of this system in the U.S. is crucial.”
AFDO Announces Availability of FDA Scientific Conference Grant Program Scholarships

The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) will apply for a scientific conference grant from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The purpose of the award is to provide scholarships to state and local food & drug regulatory personnel to attend the 2020 AFDO Annual Educational Conference (AEC). This year’s AEC is being held June 27 – July 1, 2020 at the Renaissance in Glendale, AZ.

We will be able to fund a limited number of representatives to the conference. All applications must be submitted no later than the close of business on Friday, April 3, 2020.

Apply Now

What You Need to Know Now

Updates about the 124th AFDO Educational Conference

AFDO Registration is Open!
This year's annual educational conference will be co-hosted by the Western Association of Food and Drug Officials and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The Conference will take place in Phoenix, AZ from June 27 - July 1, 2020.

Get ready for five days of educational sessions focused on five content tracks. Make new connections with peers and find out how they are managing common challenges.

In addition, several training opportunities will be offered the Friday before the conference, June 26th, including an active managerial train the trainer session and a workshop for new program managers among others. If you have interest in the additional learning opportunities, announcements will be out shortly so don’t make your travel plans just yet.

**Come Early. Stay Late. Experience More at Conference**

Now is the time to book your participation in pre-conference training opportunities and tours. Spaces will go fast and available for an additional $50 fee beyond the conference registration.

Visit [https://afdoconference.org/registration-2020/](https://afdoconference.org/registration-2020/) to register for conference and get your seat in these great opportunities listed below. Learn more by clicking here.

- **2020 Active Managerial Control 4-Hour Workshop**, Saturday morning, June 27
- **Mutual Reliance: Utilization of State Lab Analytical Packages** Saturday morning, June 27
- **The Art and Science of Storytelling**, Saturday morning, June 27

Wednesday, July 1, 50 people will be able to participate in the special AFDO cannabis offsite tour. This is a unique opportunity to increase your awareness and education by touring a cannabis facility.

To take advantage of these great opportunities, go to [https://afdoconference.org/registration-2020/](https://afdoconference.org/registration-2020/) now and reserve your space and invest in your professional growth with this economical training opportunities.

**AFDO Continuing Education Tuition Reimbursement Awards**

In 2017, AFDO established a non-traditional continuing education tuition reimbursement fund to be awarded annually to worthy officials who are currently employed at a state, local, tribal, or territorial government agency and are returning to college or continuing their education to seek better career and work opportunities. Each award amount is not to exceed $1500 and is not renewable. This scholarship is coordinated for AFDO by the Professional Development Committee.

All applications must be received by **April 15 of the current year** to be considered for the current year’s award.
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)
Course Information

Intentional Adulteration Conducting Vulnerability Assessments (IAVA)
Course Information

EAS Consulting Group Training

Dietary Supplement Labeling Compliance Seminar
April 14 - 15, 2020 - Long Island, NY

Food Labeling Compliance Seminar
April 16 - 17, 2020 - Long Island, NY

EAS Complimentary On-Demand Webinar Understanding GRAS Submissions and Avoiding Data Pitfalls
April 16, 2020, 1:00PM ET
The Food Safety Doctor LLC
Promoting Public Health and Food Safety through Training and FSMA Awareness

FSPCA Intentional Adulteration Vulnerability Assessments Qualified Individuals (IAVA-QI) Certificate Training.

- April 1, 2020: New Orleans, LA
- June 9, 2020: San Juan, P.R.
- October 14, 2020: Grand Prairie
- Date TBD: Singapore

https://thefoodsafetydoctorllc.com/fspca-iava-qe-course-sc

FSPCA Preventive Controls for Human Foods Qualified Individuals (PCQI) Certificate Training.
& International HACCP Alliance (HACCP) Deep Dive Training

- April 21-23, 2020: PCQI: Grand Prairie, Texas
- June 16-18, 2020: HACCP Deep Dive Grand Prairie, Texas
- September 8-9, 2020: HACCP Deep Dive Grand Prairie, Texas

https://thefoodsafetydoctorllc.com/fspca-pcqi-training-1

FSPCA Foreign Supplier Verification Program Qualified Individuals (FSVP-QI) Certificate Training.

- August 11-12, 2020: FSVP-QI: Grand Prairie, Texas

https://thefoodsafetydoctorllc.com/fspca-fsvp-qe-training
Laws and Regulations Committee Update
A collection of current food, drug, device, and consumer product regulatory issues and news

March 16 - 17, 2020
March 18, 2020
March 19 - 20, 2020