

South Carolina Rapid Response Team: The First Year

Elaine Babb, Alexandra Whitehill Smith, Chandra Prakash Kanwat, Kara Miller, Tammy Gordon, Angie Culler-Matthews, Jon Wheeler, Shadow Gullede
 South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and South Carolina Department of Agriculture, Columbia, SC



SC RRT: Who We Are + What We Do

DHEC

- Elaine Babb, RRT Coordinator
 - Recalls
 - Tracebacks
 - Weather-Related Emergencies
 - Hurricane Dorian
 - Environmental Sampling Training
- CP Kanwat (Grants Manager), Tammy Gordon (Program Manager), Shadow Gullede (MFRPS Coordinator), Jon Wheeler (Environmental Health Manager), Sandra Craig (Division of Food and Lead Risk Assessments Director)

SCDA

- Alexandra Whitehill Smith, RRT Coordinator
 - Recalls
 - Tip Top Poultry
 - Positive Samples
 - From routine sampling program with DHEC
 - Weather-Related Emergencies
 - Hurricane Dorian
- Kara Miller (RRT Supervisor/MFRPS Coordinator), Angie Culler-Matthews (Food and Feed Safety Director), Betsy Dorton (Grants Administrator), Derek Underwood (Consumer Protection Division Assistant Commissioner), Austin Therell (Feed Program Coordinator), Lorey Bell (AFRPS Coordinator)

FDA

- FDA HAF Division 3 East
 - James Betz, Wilbur Huggins, Ingrid Zambrana, Michele Howard

Accomplishments and Strengths

- Conferences
 - 2018 and 2019 RRT F2F Conference
 - 2019 PulseNet/OutbreakNet Joint Regional Meeting
- Hosted Environmental Sampling Training with DHEC retail food
- Hosted FDA FREE-B tabletop exercise (Mass Mayhem) as a part of the inaugural SC Food Safety Conference
- Building relationships across agencies
 - Hired two RRT Coordinators in 2018, one at each agency
 - Weekly meetings/calls between DHEC and SCDA Coordinators
- Collaboration & communication building between agencies, external partners
 - Monthly FDA RRT conference calls
 - Monthly FDA Regional calls between FDA Region HAF 3 East, NC RRT, GA RRT and SC RRT
- Learning from partner agency's strengths and willingness to share information
 - Quarterly RRT Stakeholder Meetings (Epi, PHL, DHEC, SCDA, FDA RRT OP, FDA Region HAF 3 East, SC Law Enforcement, Clemson Extension (SC Meat and Poultry Inspection Division), FSIS, FBI, SCEMD, retailers.
 - Held in conjunction with SC Food Safety Task Force
- Strong relationship with Mentor States and regional/OP FDA
 - Mentor state Iowa bi-weekly calls
 - Mentor state GA monthly calls

Challenges and Opportunities

- Conducting Baseline Assessment in January 2020
- Creating awareness within agencies and marketing of the RRT to industry
- Integrating RRT in pre-existing response structures
- Incorporating RRT in standard operating procedures
- Maintaining and building stakeholder participation through exercises and continued stakeholder meetings
- Better assisting food and feed inspectors
- Capacity building between stakeholders and surrounding states
- Exercise opportunities incorporating ICS principles and practices
- Increasing Industry participation
- Strengthening food safety efforts across state food safety programs



From R-L: Shadow Gullede (DHEC), James Betz (FDA), Wilbur Huggins (FDA), Michele Howard (FDA), Alexandra Whitehill Smith (SCDA), Elaine Babb (DHEC), Ivy Sweeny (FDA), Ingrid Zambrana (FDA) at 2018 RRT Annual F2F Meeting in Austin, TX

Contact Information

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