

MINNESOTA FOOD SAFETY AND DEFENSE TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2021

Today's meeting was held via WebEx

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM.

Members present included: Courtney Bidney, Chris Gindorff, Jaime Kirkpatrick, Jamie Pfuhl, Julia Selleys, Sarah Anderson, Brent Kobiellush, Lolly Occhino, Annalisa Hultberg, Caldoun Abuhakel, and Michelle Rossman.

Visitors present included: Ruth Petran, Cheryl Eia, Joseph Scimeca, Linda Prail, Melanie Harris, Kathy Como-Sabetti, Angie Ames, Alida Sorenson, Jennifer van de Ligt, Cari Dufner, Jan Kelly, Mathew Gerths, Jane Jewett, Jennifer Stepes, Natasha Hedin, Heidi Varberg, Carolyn Warren, Karly Akerman, Lemlem Kebede, Gabe Wilson, Heidi Kassenborg, Thom Petersen, and Lenora Howard.

1. Dates and links

The next Food Safety and Defense Task Force (FSDTF) Meeting will be Tuesday, November 9th, 2021 via WebEx.

- [Cyber Threats in the Dairy Sector Webinar](#) – September 28, 2021
- [Listeria Control Training Course](#)
- [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#)

2. The minutes from the July 2021 meeting were accepted with no comments.

3. Member and Visitor Updates

Jan Kelly (MDA): Jan is the Manufactured Food Program (MFP) Manager within the MDA. The Manufactured Food Program has transitioned from pre-announcing inspections to unannounced inspections. Additionally, all state employees working with the public need to provide COVID-19 vaccine attestation or test negative on a weekly basis.

Heidi Kassenborg (Kassenborg Consulting LLC): In June, Dave Read, formerly of IFPTI and MDA received the Association of Food and Drug Control Officials (AFDO) 2021 Wiley Award. The Harvey W. Wiley Award is AFDO's most prestigious award, presented to a regular or honorary member for exceptional service to the state or nation in the performance of duties and responsibilities in the administration and enforcement of food and drug law and/or consumer protection laws and demonstrated promotion of the objectives of the Association.

Mathew Gerths (MDA): Matt is the Commercial Animal Feed Program manager with the MDA. He shared that they are in alignment with the MDA Manufactured Food Program. They have hired a new position in the program to build a needs assessment survey with an outreach focus

Joe Scimeca (International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA): IDFA has a cybersecurity webinar on October 18th at noon (will have a dairy focus). The American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI) has joined forces with IDFA to provide a listeria monocytogenes control training course hosted by the International Food Protection and Training Institute (IFPTI) – see links above.

Julia Selleys (Hennepin County): Hennepin County has also implemented mandatory COVID-19 vaccine requirements by October 1st. Some staff have been reassigned from Environmental Health to help with COVID-19 response. They have an open inspector position. They have also returned to unannounced inspections.

4. COVID-19: State of the Pandemic

Kathy Como-Sabetti, COVID-19 Epidemiology Section Manager presented on the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her presentation slides are attached, and she addressed the following:

- Recommendations for mitigation of the delta variant are the same as the original strain.
- Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) – Anyone can search the VAERS database and report a reaction. Due to this, there is less bias, but also requires a lot more investigation.
- An individual must be fully vaccinated to be considered a “vaccine breakthrough case”. The MDH is not tracking single-dose recipients to determine if they are breakthrough cases.

5. FSDTF Reground and Looking Ahead Discussion

Natasha Hedin, Outreach Coordinator with the MDA presented on the history and mission of the Minnesota FSDTF. Her presentation slides are attached.

Looking Ahead Discussion Thoughts:

- The FSDTF should consider offering a second traceability training because there was a lot of interest this first round.
- Restaurants and manufacturing jobs have a need for basic food safety education – could put together some sort of basic food safety training.
- Inspection forum – consider Pat Kennedy’s presentation on inspection modernization.
- Agreement that there is a need for basic information in food safety; how to do a comprehensive hazard analysis, identifying hazards, verifying hazards are managed (lots of agreement from others here).
- Consider offering different training formats beyond the typical “workshop”.

6. Food Innovation Team (FIT)

Jane Jewett, FIT chair provided updates from the FIT meeting earlier today. The team reviewed a case about cross-border sales regarding products at the Red Wing Farmers Market (bordering with Wisconsin). The second discussion was regarding a business called Dwala. The business plans to operate a washing facility for returnable containers. The food business owner plans to explore variance options for food businesses they will be working with.

7. Traceability Training Update

Courtney Bidney, FSDTF chair, provided an update on the recent traceability training.

- The session was facilitated by Shaun Kennedy and Courtney Bidney
- Feedback received has been positive. Participants expressed that they appreciated the ability to connect with others during the workshop to add to the value of the course the modules from the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Global Food Traceability Center.
- The group should consider offering another round based on interest and contract already in place.

8. Potential Agenda Items for November

- Ecolab member presentation pushed to November
- MDA to present on FSMA survey results
- Acheson group update (maybe January?)