



# PARTNERSHIP FOR FOOD PROTECTION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2014

## WELCOME

We welcome you to the Partnership for Food Protection Newsletter! Our intent is to spread the word on all the great work the PFP Workgroups are accomplishing.



### This edition features:

- A letter from the PFP Governing Council discussing the PFP 2014 50-State Workshop and outcomes;
- Update on the launch of the new Animal Feed Network, which includes updates to the Pet Event Tracking Network (PETNet) and the addition of a new portal called LivestockNet;
- Project updates from the Response and Recall Workgroup:
  - ◊ A written framework for National Capacity Building & Mentorship for Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).
  - ◊ District and State Recall Cooperative Plan.
  - ◊ FoodSHIELD Best Practices for States/Locals/FDA during Incidents.
- Check-in on the Job Task Analysis project from the Training and Certification Workgroup.
- Integration at work: The efforts of the FDA and its partner agency in Mexico towards increasing produce safety.

As always, please let us know if you have updates on food safety activities that you would like to include in future additions of the PFP Newsletter. This newsletter is published on a quarterly basis. If you have contributions to future newsletters, please send to [pfp@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:pfp@fda.hhs.gov).

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PFP GOVERNING COUNCIL

*Dear Valued Partner,*

*The PFP continues to make progress in having a major supporting role in building and implementing an Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS). One of the milestones was hosting the 2014 50-State Workshop held August 15-17, in St. Louis, Missouri. The theme was “Mutual Reliance for a Safer Food Supply.” Over 200 representatives from federal, state, local, and territorial governments that have roles in protecting the food supply and public health attended this workshop.*

*The discussion brought to light exciting challenges the PFP will need to take on to assist strategic partners towards mutual reliance to achieve an IFSS. This workshop focused on implementation of the PFP’s Vision for the IFSS and the roll-out of the PFP’s six-year strategic plan. The workshop participants were engaged in identifying practical applications that would enable public health partners to work more effectively in an integrated fashion to promote the safety of the United States food and feed supply in the areas of communication, compliance, surveillance, response and post response, laboratory science, and training and certification.*

*Many thoughtful recommendations and ideas from workshop attendees have given the PFP leadership much to consider. We are truly grateful for the feedback we received, since integration cannot be accomplished thru a single perspective or group. The PFP Governing Council is in the process of thoroughly reviewing and incorporating the suggestions for improving the PFP Strategic Plan. While we can’t include every recommendation, given personnel and capital resources, we will address all comments provided to us.*

*Again, we want to thank all those that took time out of their busy schedules to attend the workshop and participate in the discussions, as well as those who have signed up to participate in the PFP workgroups moving forward. Once the strategic plan is finalized, we will share this collaborative document with our partners. We will also be reaching out to those that volunteered to participate on a PFP workgroup.*

*The PFP is looking forward to working with our strategic partners to develop other helpful tools towards integration in this next cycle.*

*Sincerely (On behalf of the Governing Council),*

*Barbara Cassens and Pat Kennelly*

*PFP Governing Council Co-Chairs*

## PFP Governing Council Members

### **Barbara Cassens**

*FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs*

### **Claudia Coles**

*Washington Department of Agriculture*

### **Jeff Farrar**

*FDA Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine*

### **Tracey Forfa**

*FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine*

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### **Patrick Kennelly**

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### **Roy Kroeger**

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### **Adam London**

*Kent County (MI) Health Department*

### **Marguerite Pappaioanou**

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### **Daniel Rice**

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### **Steven Solomon**

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### **Roberta Wagner**

*FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition*

### **Robert Waltz**

*Office of Indiana State Chemist*

*\*non-voting council member*



# LAUNCH OF THE ANIMAL FEED NETWORK

*Jenny Murphy and Liz Higgins*



On July 25, 2014, the PFP and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announced the launch of the Animal Feed Network, a new system for federal and state regulators and health officials to share information about animal feed-related illnesses and product defects.

The Animal Feed Network facilitates sharing of information between various government agencies, which can serve as an early alert for pet food and animal feed-related incidents. The information can then help regulators best target their investigative and laboratory resources to address adverse events associated with adulterated pet food or animal feed. Information exchanged in the Animal Feed

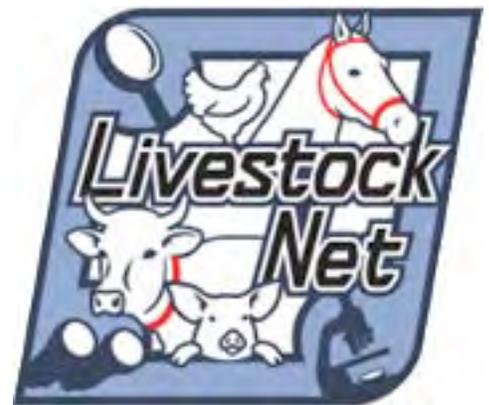
Network is intended only to facilitate communication between officials and does not commit members to take enforcement or regulatory action.

The Animal Feed Network is a secure reporting and notification system, accessible by officials with regulatory authority and responsibility over animal feed, including pet food, and is not accessible by the public.

The Animal Feed Network system consists of two distinct, secure reporting portals:

- Pet Event Tracking Network (PETNet): for pet food-related illnesses and product defects.
- LivestockNet: for feed-related illnesses and product defects associated with livestock animals, aquaculture species, and horses.

PETNet was originally launched in August 2011 as a response to the 2007 outbreak associated with melamine in pet food. A mandate within the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007 (FDAAA) called for the establishment of an early warning and surveillance system to identify adulteration of the pet food supply and outbreaks of illness associated with pet food. Once PETNet was launched, PFP and FDA received many requests to expand PETNet to include livestock animals, aquaculture species, and horses. As a result, LivestockNet was developed to serve a similar early-alert function for feed-related illnesses and product defects associated with feed for these animals.



# RESPONSE AND RECALL WORKGROUP PROJECT UPDATES

## Developing a Written Framework for National Capacity Building & Mentorship for Rapid Response Teams (RRTs)

*Travis Goodman*

Enhancement of federal, state, and local infrastructure to improve capabilities for rapid response to food and feed incidents is a recurring theme and directive, most recently highlighted in the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The Cooperative Agreement Program of OP's Rapid Response Teams (RRT) was established for this purpose. To date, best practices for all hazards related to food and feed emergency responses have been documented with the publication of the RRT Best Practices Manual. There are currently 18 multi-jurisdictional RRTs within the Program.

The PFP aims to investigate ways to customize and propagate the use of best practices and capacity building aids developed under the funded RRT Program for other state food regulatory programs that do not receive dedicated funding for rapid response activities.

Currently, only 18 states are currently funded for rapid response. The RRT Program wishes to leverage the outcomes of and continued investment in the RRT Program to build capacity and improve capabilities for multi-jurisdictional rapid response to food and feed incidents nationally.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Adapt existing RRT Program documentation (i.e. RRT Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework) for use by agencies not currently funded under the RRT cooperative agreement.
- Develop recommendations for implementing of the RRT program, to include tools, mentorship, capability assessments, performance benchmarks, etc.
- Pilot the revised Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework with both RRT and non-RRT states and revise the process to incorporate lessons learned prior to a national roll out of the process.

### STATUS:

- The RRT Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework has been revised and is under final review by the PFP Response and Recall Workgroup members.

### NEXT STEPS:

- Finalize the RRT Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework and submit to the PFP Governing Council for final review and distribution.
- Indiana and Michigan have agreed to pilot the RRT Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework. Move forward with the Indiana and Michigan pilots and incorporate any recommendations for improvement into the RRT Capacity Building Process & Mentorship Framework.
- Assist any states interested in building an RRT and improving their response capacity.

## District and State Recall Cooperative Plan

*Brad Honold*

A critical component of an IFSS is enhancement and efficiency of communication during food-related and emergency recalls among the FDA and other federal, state, and local counterparts with overlapping jurisdiction. This project sought to determine the current state of, and barriers to, communication, and to, identify possible best practices to overcome these communication issues, with the goal of greater efficiency in response to food emergencies. This project was completed with the help of over 50 volunteers representing FDA and state agencies.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Establish points of contact for recall and food emergencies in relevant jurisdictions and methods of posting.
- Establish what, when, and how information is shared and establish uniform communication procedures between FDA and states.
- Determine any training needs for food emergency and recall staff.
- Identify and share investigation documents to provide or collect at firms.
- Determine when and how the different jurisdictions involved in inspections are brought in to consult, and how to follow-up on a state identified recall of an FDA product (i.e. state positive sample of FDA regulated product).

### **STATUS:**

- The work group has identified Best Practice Recommendations to enhance communication and sharing of information between partner agencies.
- The work group is in the process of finalizing the best practices document and submitting it to the PFP Governing Council.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Review the Best Practice Recommendations and determine if a new recall workgroup(s) needs to be created to refine and further develop the recommendations.
- Provide an update to this and the other PFP Response and Recall projects at the NCAFDO Conference in Cleveland, OH, on October 23, 2014.

# FoodSHIELD Best Practices for States/Locals/FDA during Incidents

*Jennifer Pierquet*

FoodSHIELD is a secure web-based system for communication, coordination, education and training around food safety and defense practices. FDA, state, and local agencies use FoodSHIELD during incident response efforts and to share information during outbreak investigations.

Information sharing via FoodSHIELD has become an integral part of outbreak investigations. The FDA Coordinated Outbreak Response Evaluation (CORE) Network created an internal FoodSHIELD standard operating procedure to respond to incidents in order to increase the efficiency of utilizing the system during outbreak investigations. However, this document is not shared outside of FDA. Hence the need to create a FoodSHIELD best practices document for all other (non-CORE) users during incident response situations.

At the time of this publication, FoodSHIELD has a total of 11,461 users. This includes members from federal, state, and local agencies.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- To identify and communicate best practices for utilizing FoodSHIELD during an incident response.
- To test the functionalities of FoodSHIELD and identify best practices.
- To standardize workgroup and folder names.
- To create a best practices document that can be shared with federal, state, and local food safety officials that captures best practices around managing the workgroup, sharing information among members, and identifying naming conventions for workgroups and folders for outbreak incidents.

## **STATUS:**

- The best practices document has been completed and is being reviewed for submission to the PFP Governing Council.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

- In the future, the document needs to be disseminated widely to federal, state, and local partners who are involved in incident response.
- Promote the use of this best practices document for FoodSHIELD users during incident response
- Promote FoodSHIELD training.

# TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION WORKGROUP PROJECT UPDATE

## Job Task Analysis Update

*Will Bet-Sayad and Melissa Vorobyev*

As highlighted in the summer edition of the PFP Newsletter, the Job Task Analysis (JTA) process identifies the knowledge and skills necessary to do a job as well as the level of proficiency required. Following the completion of the JTA, work can begin on the design and development phase of the training curricula.



Work began on the curriculum development phase for the State Feed Inspector training October 28-31, 2014, at the Division of Human Resource Development (DHRD). This next phase took the information gleaned from the JTA to begin building training curricula for the job of a State Feed Inspector. Additionally, during the week of December 15, 2014, DHRD will bring in up to nine state regulators to conduct a state review of the FDA GMP Food Investigator JTA. This process will capture perspectives from both FDA investigators and state food GMP inspectors who do the work.

DHRD and PFP members are continuing work with the International Food Protection Training Institute (IFPTI) on writing competency statements, an important element used to develop training curricula. A follow-up meeting took place the week of November 17, 2014, to finalize competency statements for the entry level knowledge content areas within the training curriculum framework.

Scheduled for 2015, work on two additional JTA's will begin. The State Shellfish Inspector and State Milk Inspector JTA's will require the participation of state inspectors currently doing the work to help determine the tasks and steps necessary to conduct these types of inspections. Additional information on how to participate in the process will be available in the near future.



## **INTEGRATION AT WORK**

### **Mexican Delegation Work**

*Camille Brewer and Kenneth Nieves*

Mexico and the United States share a strong commitment to assuring the safety of produce for consumers. Mexico is a major exporter of fresh produce, much of which is exported to the United States. While Mexico is the stronger exporter of fresh produce, the United States exports approximately 2 billion dollars' worth of fresh, chilled produce to Mexico each year. It is widely recognized that produce is an essential component of a healthy diet, and the safe production and harvesting of fruits and vegetables helps consumers maintain healthy diets. Foodborne illness outbreaks associated with contaminated produce over the last decade have caused a widespread recognition that we need a new, modern food safety system that prevents food safety problems in the first place--not a system that just reacts once they happen. Like Mexico, the United States is strengthening regulatory approaches to food safety. Part of this strategy is to implement preventive practices in the food safety system.

The FDA, and Mexican food safety authorities- the National Service of Agro Alimentary Health, Safety and Quality (SENASICA) and the Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risks (COFEPRIS) are working in partnership to implement preventive practices and verification measures that will support high rates of compliance with produce safety standards, guidelines and best practices and therefore reduce risk of illness or death associated with the consumption of fresh produce.

In support of the goal of achieving high rates of compliance with produce safety standards, the partnership will emphasize joint activities to facilitate an understanding of each other's fresh produce industry oversight systems, coordinated risk communication, and data sharing. Activities will be jointly developed and conducted under the framework of the Food Safety Cooperative Arrangement signed by the United States and Mexico in 2012.

In addition to government-to-government efforts, this new produce safety partnership will seek to leverage activities with partners from academia and the private sector that can help develop and implement a joint, multi-dimensional collaborative agenda on produce safety. These partners will include representatives from consumer groups, non-government organizations and non-profits.