

FDA FACT SHEET

RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS (RRTS) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT PROGRAM

Program Description

- RRTs are multi-agency, multi-disciplinary teams that operate using Incident Command System (ICS)/National Incident Management System (NIMS) principles and a Unified Command structure to respond to human and animal food emergencies.
- Started in 2008, the RRT program has grown to include 21 states, two of which participate in a voluntary capacity outside of the funded cooperative agreement program.
- The RRT program uses a mentorship model, where established RRTs take on a mentorship role for one or more new RRTs just beginning development.

Intended Outcomes

The desired outcome of RRT development is to minimize the time between agency notification of a human or animal food contamination event and implementation of effective control measures. To accomplish this, RRTs develop and maintain processes to:

- Prepare for and effectively respond to foodborne illness outbreaks and other food emergencies.
- Enhance intra-agency and inter-agency collaboration and communication.
- Jointly train and exercise staff to be ready to respond to events when they occur.
- Identify preventive practices to reduce foodborne illness and injury.
- Establish national best practices and tools that can be shared with other states to improve their response to food emergencies.

Program Metrics

- Current program funding: \$5.68M
- Current number of awards: 19
- Average cost per cooperative agreement: \$299,103.58

Figure 1. RRT Cooperative Agreement States (2016-2017)

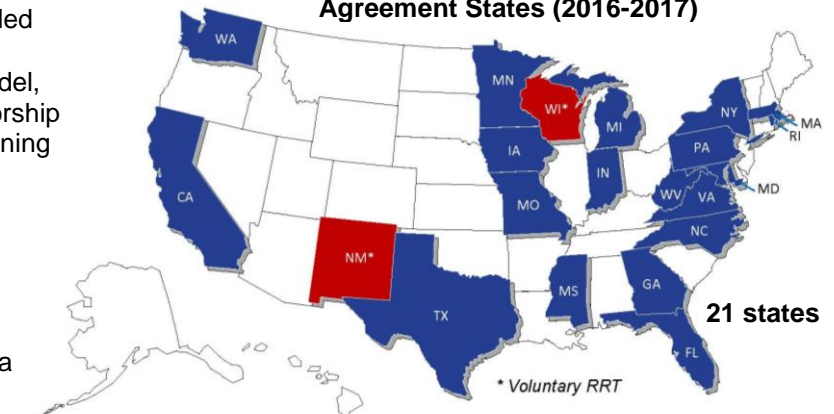
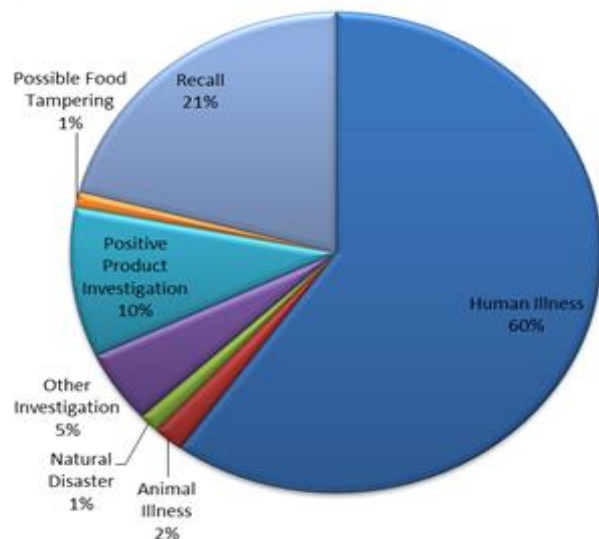
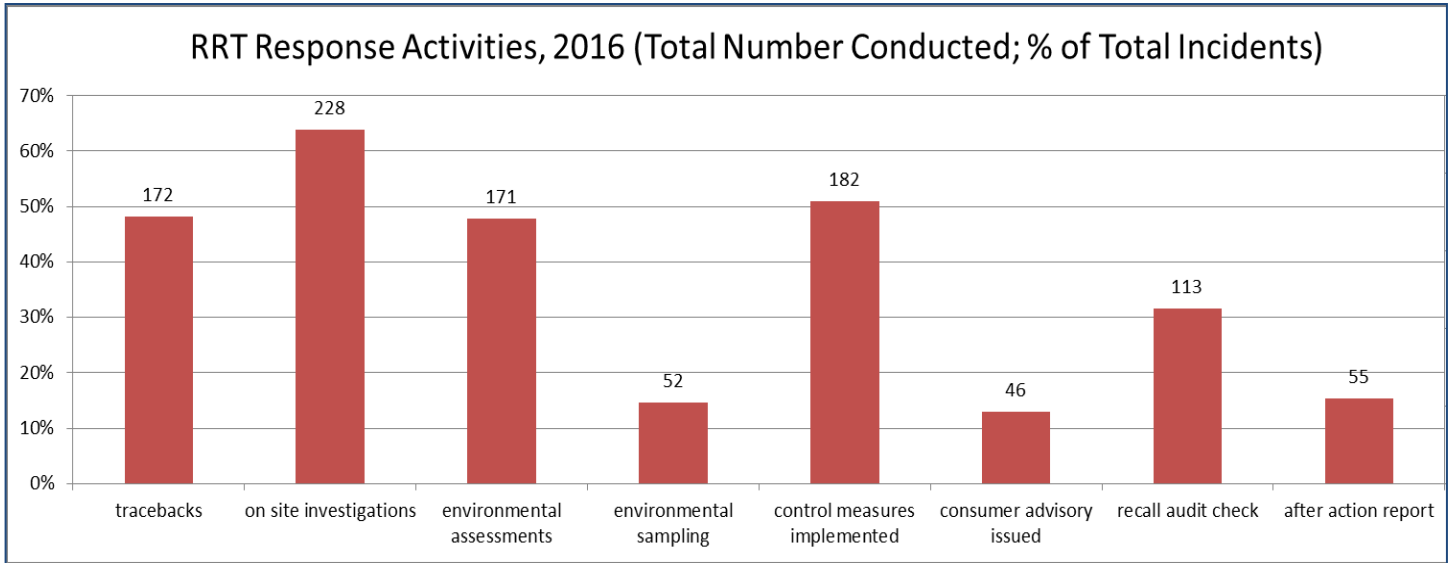


Figure 2. RRTs investigated 387 incidents in 2016



RRT Investigations by the Numbers



One Bad Apple: The Response to the Caramel Apple Outbreak

A deadly outbreak of listeriosis linked to consumption of caramel apples dominated the headlines during the 2014 holiday season. RRT actions taken to protect public health in response to this outbreak included

- California, Minnesota, and Missouri RRTs conducted follow up investigations at caramel apple manufacturers associated with ill patients.
- Using the records and information collected by these RRTs, FDA was able to trace back the apples consumed by 11 case patients through four manufacturing legs, leading to a convergence at a single apple grower.
- The California Food Emergency Response Team (CalFERT) investigation at the implicated apple grower identified *L. monocytogenes* matching the outbreak strain in environmental samples from the packing facility.
- Thanks to swift action on the part of these RRTs and other public health and regulatory partners, a full recall was in effect three weeks after caramel apples were first identified as a possible outbreak vehicle.

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