



NEWSLETTER

YOUR PATHWAY TO RESOURCES

A Letter from the Governing Council

As we move into summer, it seems like just yesterday we were all in St. Louis sitting around the same table to develop our goals for the PFP Strategic Plan. I'm happy to report that we are well on our way to meeting our objectives. Our Training and Certification Workgroup is working on the first annual Training Summit. Our Surveillance, Response, and Post-Response Workgroup disseminated best practices for using FoodSHIELD during recall incidents. Our project managers have been hard at work providing administrative guidance for the workgroups as they meet their objectives. The PFP is working hard on developing an integrated food safety system and the Governing Council wants to thank everyone for their continued dedication.

PFP newsletters focus on bringing you stories and articles on integration and collaboration throughout all of our stakeholders. Newsletter content consists of original pieces from our PFP members and spotlight PFP partners and the work they are doing outside of the PFP. Our goals of integration and collaboration don't stop when we take off our PFP hats and we need to be cognizant of that going forward. We want to bring you stories on local health departments working to supply safe food using community gardens, and what our state partners are doing in response to the avian flu outbreak to show that promoting food safety and public health are responsibilities of everyone, at all levels of government. Through sharing such efforts with our partners in our newsletters, we hope we can initiate dialog and share ideas as we all work to keep the public safe.

As you read through this newsletter, the GC and the Outreach Workgroup ask that you think about how PFP can better disseminate its message of integration and collaboration. What can we do better? What's working and what's not? Please share your thoughts with us at PFP@fda.hhs.gov. We look forward to keeping our communications lines open and appreciate your input. Please reach out to Ryan Cates and or Troy Huffman, our talented Outreach Workgroup leads, if you have contributions for future PFP Newsletters.

Lastly, although there is much to do on the food safety integration front, we hope everyone is enjoying their summer (and even maybe able to relax and enjoy a cold drink)! The PFP GC wishes you a safe and happy summer and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Barbara Cassens
Governing Council Co-Chair

Pat Kennelly
Governing Council Co-Chair

In Case You Missed It

Learning from the Oneida:
Food and Fellowship at the Heart
of a Community

Local Health Department Plants
Community Garden to Support
Food Bank, Healthy Eating

USDA Goes All in for Produce
Safety Outreach

Upcoming Events

2015 NASDA Annual Meeting
September 13 – 16
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

2015 AFDOSS Fall Conference
September 13 – 16
Gatlinburg, Tennessee

2015 COSDA Annual Meeting
October 25 – 28
Des Moines, Iowa

2015 ASTHO Annual Meeting
September 30 – October 1
Salt Lake City, Utah

Summer Tips

Make sure you're
[Grilling Like a Pro](#)

Remember the
[Safe Cooking Temperatures](#)

and [Always Be Prepared](#)



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Outbreak in the Central and Western US: Incident Command System (ICS) Benefits Public Health Response

Alida Sorenson¹, Carrie Rigdon¹, Ryan Cates², and Brian Sauders³

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When people hear about flu in the news, many think initially of the human impact – missed days of work and school, morbidity and mortality, vaccination campaigns, and even pandemics, but few realize that influenza can be a large problem for other species, including poultry. December 2014-June 2015, there have been 231 separate flock detections of a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) affecting nearly 50 million birds in 15 states (AR, CA, IA, ID, IN, KS, MO, MN, MS, ND, NE, OR, SD, WA, WI). The last detection of an infected flock was June 17, 2015. So far the impacted flocks include 210 commercial operations and 21 backyard flocks. USDA reports that while the outbreak was first detected in Oregon in December 2014, it quickly spread as far east as Indiana. Fortunately, the disease has not spread farther into the eastern half of the country where poultry farms are in much higher density in the Mid-Atlantic area and parts of the Southeast. CDC reports that they are monitoring the situation, but at this time it is believed the current HPAI outbreak does not pose a significant risk to human health.

Under USDA's response plan, Federal, State, and local partners worked together to implement a five-step plan to:

1. Quarantine the movement of poultry and equipment into and out of the control area,
2. Eradicate the virus by humanely euthanizing the affected flock(s),
3. Monitor regions by testing wild and domestic birds in a broad area around the quarantine areas,
4. Clean and disinfect the affected barns to kill any remaining virus, and
5. Conduct environmental surveillance testing to ensure the farms are now free from the avian influenza virus.

At this point, the sheer magnitude of this outbreak is staggering. How could any one specific public health entity respond to an event over such vast geographical areas with such cross jurisdictional differences? Simply, they can't. For the past several years the USDA and FDA have been laying the groundwork for coordinated response by encouraging the use of Incident Command System (ICS) to respond to large-scale public health event. ICS allows response groups to speak the same language, report through a shared hierarchy, and interchange resources as necessary with minimal lag time. Positions are routinely rotated to prevent burnout and exhaustion which, if unintended, could lead to mistakes in this high stakes situation.

Iowa and Minnesota have been hardest hit with a combined total of nearly 40 million birds lost; almost 31 million of those birds are in Iowa. While Iowa had by far the largest number of impacted birds, Minnesota reported a higher number of overall site detections with 105 (nearly 30% more sites than in Iowa). Fortunately, both of these states have been funded under the Rapid Response Team Cooperative Agreement Awards which require States and FDA districts to incorporate ICS into their all-hazard food and feed emergency responses. Training and exercising ICS prior to this current response gave each state a cadre of personnel that could immediately immerse into the ICS response.



In Iowa, over 2200 USDA staff and contractors are responding to the avian influenza situation in Iowa including the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Liaison, Robin Pruisner. Joyce Flynn from the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has also been working closely with Incident Management Team (IMT) members in Ames. To date, more than 300 state employees have participated in the disaster response including representatives from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Public Health (in conjunction with local public health officials), Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Transportation, and Iowa National Guard have all supported the response effort to this disease.

In Minnesota, at its peak response, nearly 700 USDA, state, and contractor staff were working on HPAI response every day. Approximately 90 personnel from the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) have participated in the response. Alida Sorenson, who works for the MDA as their Rapid Response Team Investigator and Recall Coordinator, spent the last several months rotating in and out of the IMT staffed by both MN and USDA personnel. “My experience was there are lots of moving parts to this response – from the incredible scale of the clean-up process to the fact we had some small outbreaks of influenza (not the same strain as the HPAI) and *Campylobacter* among our response teams – but what really worked well is that we all are speaking a common operational language. That means that we can staff the response with people who can adapt quickly to the roles that are required.” Alida also notes that their prior experience with ICS gave them “A better understanding of each role and duties associated with them even before receiving their assignments – it really helped them hit the ground running – especially with use of the ICS forms and the [Planning P](#).” There have been some challenges. “We realized early on that participating in exercises only helps so much – there have been many instances of changes in the incident that could not be predicted or practiced.” For example, “Some of the facilities identified earlier in the response have moved into environmental testing for release of quarantine, but we are also still getting positive environmental samples from these facilities.” In addition, “When folks that have not had ICS training are pulled into the middle of the response, it can be an overwhelming amount of terminology and acronyms to learn all at once – this can really slow things down.”

While the response to HPAI has been swift and efficient, it has become evident that ICS needs to continue to grow and spread across the country. Too few have had the opportunity to receive ICS training or participate in ICS exercises which aid immensely in reinforcing what is learned in the classroom. By educating and training our partners, we can be equipped to respond to any disaster in the future.

Further information on ICS and the HPAI Response:

- [Incident Command System \(ICS\) Resources](#)
- [Iowa Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Minnesota Board of Animal Health](#)
- [USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service](#)



Planning the first 2015 FDA/ORA Public Health and Regulatory Food and Feed Training Summit

Authors: Rachel Fefer with John Sproul

The FDA is hard at work preparing for the 2015 FDA/ORA Public Health and Regulatory Food and Feed Training Summit, September 28-30, as part of the Agency's effort in collaboration with PFP, to continuously improve training quality to support federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial food safety regulatory officials and to promote our collective public health mission. The FDA and PFP envision a national curriculum standard for training to support the Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS). The goal of this meeting is to develop a forum to begin a conversation among partners on how to evaluate the quality of training programs.

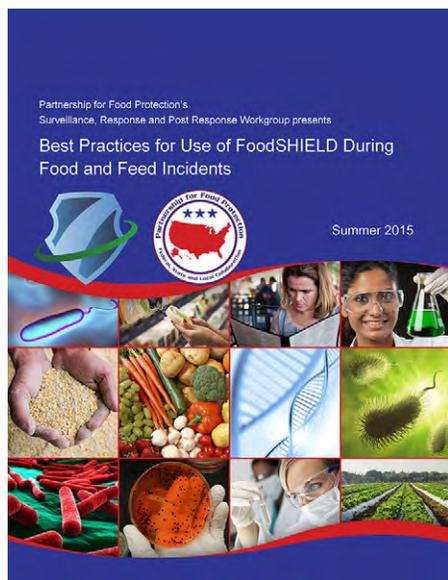
The Training Summit will engage participants to exchange ideas and feedback on training regarding curriculum development standards and training program evaluation. FDA has invited a diverse array of stakeholders, both domestic and international, to leverage perspectives on training needs and identify opportunities for further collaboration and partnership as we move toward an IFSS.

We will share the results of the Training Summit and next steps in a future edition of the PFP Newsletter. While this summit is specifically focused on food and feed, it is designed to be the first of a series of such summits dedicated to identifying best practices in training for different public health regulatory roles.



Release of “Best Practices for Use of FoodSHIELD During Food and Feed Incidents”

The Surveillance, Response and Post Response Workgroup (Response Workgroup) developed a “Best Practices for Use of FoodSHIELD During Food and Feed Incidents”. FDA, state, and local governments use the FoodSHIELD web-based system during incident response efforts as a platform to share information, support collaboration, enhance communication, and provide training and education. This Best Practices guide provides an easy-to-follow outline for utilizing FoodSHIELD effectively in sharing incident response information in real time. Topics in the document include: understanding the roles and responsibilities of each agency with respect to using FoodSHIELD; building and managing workgroups; and developing consistent approaches to share outbreak investigation activities in order to standardize the information collected for documentation during incidents.



The document was a collaborative effort to the Response Workgroup, FDA's Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation (CORE) Network and Rapid Response Teams.

[The document is available here.](#)