



The International Food Protection Issues PDG

The International Food Protection Issues (IFPI) PDG was established in 2009 to provide a forum where food safety issues of interest to the international food protection community could be discussed. The PDG currently has 287 members representing the various stakeholders involved with food safety, with perhaps (compared to other PDGs) a higher number of members from international locations or those who work for global organizations having a stake in global food safety activities.

One of the first activities initiated by this PDG was the writing of a series of seven articles for *Food Protection Trends (FPT)* titled: “The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) – A Series of What is Essential for a Food Professional to Know.” These articles were published in 2013–2014, to describe and provide the legal “basics” of FSMA for the readers of *FPT*. These articles can be found in the *FPT* archive (Volume 33, Pages 44-49; 108-113; 158-165; 252-255; 327-332; 388-392; Volume 34, Pages 44-48) on the IAFP website.

The last several years have shown a trend within the PDG for discussion and topics related to food safety concerns and activities in the Middle East and Africa, reflected in session submissions for the last several Annual Meetings. At this year’s Annual Meeting, two thirds of our accepted PDGs’ sessions were focused on topics in these global areas, including an interactive session to stimulate discussion and more support for work on the continent, called: “Get-Connected Market: Connecting IAFP Professionals on Food Safety in Africa.”

Last year, the PDG initiated a new project inspired by the previous IFPI PDG Chair, Ian Jensen. He suggested creating summaries of country regulatory systems for use

by members and provided a 2-page example for his country, Australia. The idea received the needed traction to get started when the Food Law PDG said they would also like to be involved. PDG members were polled to collect input to help prioritize key countries of interest to focus initial activity and to define a standardized format that will be used to develop the 4-5 page Regulatory System Summary (RSS) for each country. A collaborative working group of the two PDGs is in place to begin the work, but additional volunteers are welcome to join!

At this year’s Annual Meeting, we decided as a PDG to meet bimonthly (every other month), to do a better job of keeping in touch, and to become more active and consistent in our project work, such as:

- Planning of submissions for 2023 sessions
- Updates of progress on the RSS project
- Creation of ideas for webinars and webinar series
- Discussion of ideas for *Food Protection Trends* article submissions
- Getting the Student PDG more involved in our activities

The IFPI PDG is always looking for more connections and active volunteers, so please join our PDG and engage with us to offer your experience and expertise to continue to help further the work of the PDG.

DeAnn Benesh, Chair
Marcel Zwietering, Vice Chair
Aaron Dudley, Student Liaison