

## Food Safety Culture

**Attendees (September 23, 2020):** Lone Jespersen (Chair), Laura Dunn Nelson (Vice Chair), Adam Kramer, Alexis Hamilton, Alison Cousins, Angela Bernoski, Bertrand Emond, Bill Huntley, Brenda Halbrook, Brian Himelbloom, Briana Burke, Brita Ball, Carol Wallace, Caroline Wang, Carolyn Trabert, Conrad Choiniere, David Buckley, Dina Scott, Donald Prater, Elizabeth Demmings, Elizabeth Williams, Ellen Evans, Ellen Shumaker, Emma Samuel, Eric Moore, Ethan Reggia, Gale Prince, Greta Tessman, Hannah Bolinger, Jack Burnett, Jennifer Hughes, Jill Hollingsworth, Jill Stuber, Jose A Bolanos, Joyce Wert, Julian Graham, Kara Baldus, Kasey Ward, Katy Kadlec, Kolawole Banwo, Kory Anderson, Larry Steenson, Laurel Burke, Laurel Burke, Lidia Vidal, Margarita Gomez, Mary Gillespie, Megan Jensen, Megan Kenjora, Melody Ge, MiKayla Mentzer, Michael Johnston, Michael Roberson, Nathan Libbey, Neil Bogart, Patrick Pimentel, Paula Herald, Peter Hibbard, Rounaq Nayak, Ruplal Choufary, Ryan Maus, Sarah Azinheiro, Sara Mortimore, Sharon Birkett, Shingai Nyarugwe, Tayo Irawo, Vanessa Bussiere, Vikas Gill, Yvonne Masters, Zeb Blanton, and Chris (no last name provided).

**Attendees (September 24, 2020):** Lone Jespersen (Chair), Laura Dunn Nelson (Vice Chair), Adam Kramer, Alexis Hamilton, Alison Cousins, Andrew Clarke, Angela Bernoski, April Bishop, Austin Welch, Bertrand Emond, Bill Cunningham, Bill Huntley, Brian Himelbloom, Briana Burke, Brita Ball, Caroline Wang, David Buckley, Elizabeth Demmings, Ellen Evans, Ellison Cunningham, Emma Samuel, Eric Moore, Jack Burnett, Jason White, Jennifer Hughes, Jill Hollingsworth, Jose A Bolanos, Julian Graham, Kasey Ward, Katy Kadlec, Larry Steenson, Laurel Burke, Lorilyn Ledenbach, Margarita Gomez, Marie Tanner, Megan Jensen, Megan Kenjora, Melody Ge, Michael Johnston, Mike Batz, Neil Bogart, Neil Coole, Nicola Sharman, Patrick Pimentel, Peter Hibbard, Romina Zanabria Eyzaguirre, Sally Klinec, Sharon Birkett, Shingai Nyarugwe, Tayo Irawo, Tim Stubbs, Vanessa Bussiere, and Vikas Gill.

**Board/Staff Present:** Ruth Petran, Didi Loynachan, and Dina Siedenbug.

**Number of Attendees:** 74 (September 23), 56 (September 24).

**Meeting Called to Order:** 11:06 a.m. Eastern Time, Wednesday, September 23, 2020; 11:01 a.m. Eastern Time, Thursday, September 24, 2020.

**Minutes Recording Secretary:** Alexis Hamilton.

**Old Business:** Lone Jespersen, PDG Chair, welcomed all attendees, introduced the agenda and speakers for the meetings, disclosed recording and accessibility information, thanked all who attended and worked on the webinars as part of the Food Safety Culture webinar series, mentioned progress on a trends paper related to content discussed throughout the webinar series, and congratulated Andrew Clarke on his industry award.

Ruth Petran, IAFF Vice President, gave an update to PDG members from the IAFF executive board. Ruth thanked all members for their work to promote food safety, protection, culture throughout the industry, encouraged all to register for IAFF 2020, and asked that members join IAFF in its ongoing conversations on diversity and inclusion within the organization.

Laura Nelson, PDG Vice Chair, discussed the purpose of the PDG and its use and application within and across industries, encouraged involvement in the development of content for 2020-2021, and asked that members communicate with the leadership team through the PDG through the IAFF FSC PDG Connect page if members' interests or needs were not being met.

Alexis Hamilton, Student PDG Liaison to the PDG, thanked all who participated in the recent food safety culture materials repository survey. Alexis reported the current results, which were organized into three main content areas (print materials, in-house operations, and outside or shared resources), and asked that members please submit additional materials, suggestions, or other relevant material through the second survey which will be opened after the PDG meetings and close after IAFF 2020, after which the full repository will be compiled and posted on the PDG's Connect page.

## New Business:

Conrad Choiniere, with support from Donald Prater, gave an update about the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Nutrition's initiative to (1) promote food safety culture throughout the food safety system, (2) promote food safety within and across the FDA's own agency, and (3) develop and promote smarter food safety among consumers. Donald emphasized that it would be helpful to assess and measure food safety culture from a risk mitigation perspective to incorporate into oversight work. Jose Bolanos asked what progress had been made in this initiative to date? Conrad confirmed that work on this initiative has begun and asked that members reach out with suggestions or preferences for engagement in this endeavor. Lastly, an invitation was extended to all PDG members to join the FDA and USDA on October 6<sup>th</sup> for a public meeting on consumer education entitled "Food Safety: Consumer Outreach and Education Today and for the Future" go to <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/08/25/2020-18589/food-safety-consumer-outreach-and-education-today-and-for-the-future>. Carol Wallace introduced the PDG to what the Salus Research Network is, the activities it has conducted, and its future aspirations. This science group is actively researching food safety culture and related fields, founded upon trust, honesty, and respect of shared materials, and focused on achieving consensus in understanding based on science to give rigor to the field. Members have collaborated on research papers, worked on a framework to describe food safety culture and its interaction within food businesses, supported the work of graduate students, and funding proposals across the globe to widen the food safety culture network of academic, business, and food chain stakeholders. Carol, with support from Sara Mortimore, shared that Salus is looking for new members who are researching in the field or interested in participating in research to reach out to be connected.

Rounaq Nayak discussed his research, with Lone Jespersen, focused on the regulatory perspective of food safety culture and the use of technology to make culture more consistent. A review of regulations and regulatory agencies is underway to create a globally applicable framework for comparing food safety regulations between and within countries. The study is expected to be completed and available for view by January 2021. Neil Bogart asked if this project was addressing the inconsistencies between maturity and implementation because differences in regulations will not make a difference in enhancing food safety culture within the industry if these businesses cannot be held accountable. Lone responded that this project attempted to increase proficiency across industry and how to improve culture consistently.

Andrew Clarke, with support from Neil Coole, explained the BRCGS START program to aid small businesses in developing their food safety culture through a stepped audit approach to full certification. The certification process includes four steps: (1) learn and review content related to a strong food safety culture, (2) preparation through training, (3) planning for the company's future through a gap analysis of existing practices, and (4) an audit relevant to the step chosen. Nicola Sharman asked if smaller businesses can remain on START or if they are expected to progress to the full standard. Andrew said that BRCGS did not mandate that participants complete the program to full certification, but that BRCGS supported participants make progress that support their own business needs and priorities. Patrick Pimentel asked when the next version of the document would be available. Andrew confirmed there was uncertainty about an exact date, but that it would occur after version 9 of the current standard was released and the new document would reflect those changes.

Neil Coole informed the PDG about work to develop Publicly Available Specification 320: "A Culture of Food Safety." A steering group has been developed to help create a practical guide to creating a culture of food safety within the industry. Neil mentioned that there were two ways to get involved in this group: (1) as a member of the steering group to shape the development of PAS 320 or (2) as a part of the review panel which will be detached from the steering group to effectively evaluate its progress while remaining close to the content presented with the documents. The group is looking to work on a scope for the document next and encouraged interested parties to reach out to Neil or Lone Jespersen for involvement.

Marie Tanner shared the process to enhance food safety culture, as utilized by the Dairy Farmers of America. Marie said expressly emphasizing the importance and commitment to food safety-positive messages and behaviors were imperative to a company's success, suggested that companies with low employee engagement implement engagement surveys to better understand gaps in commitment, and described the elements that should be present in a behavior-based food safety culture and steps that should be taken to effectuate a cultural change.

Laura Nelson led the discussion of ideas for content for next year's PDG activities and IAFP 2021 symposia. Neil Bogart suggested that content be developed around effectively auditing an organization's food safety culture, for which Lone Jespersen and Eric Moore volunteered to help. Jill Hollingsworth shared that Sima Hussein submitted an idea to look at the implications of having a food safety culture in quick-sale and full-service restaurant establishments and its impact on regulatory compliance and third-party food safety audits, for which Sara Mortimore, Jack Burnett, and Sophie Wu expressed interest and/or relevance in assisting and the Food Safety Culture PDG could be interested in co-sponsoring. Bill Cunningham suggested that content be developed around enhancing employee retention as a function of trust in the workplace, for which Julian Graham and Eric Moore suggested collaboration with or co-sponsoring existing content with the Retail and Food Service PDG and Bertrand Emond suggested incorporating content from relevant GFSI benchmarking documents which address this or similar issues. Alison Cousins suggested that a roundtable proposal be developed around novel and unusual training delivery in engaging new and temporary employees. Lone ended this discussion by asking for continued submission of ideas and volunteers to work on turning these ideas into activities either directly (by emailing Lone, Laura Nelson, or Alexis Hamilton) or indirectly (through the Food Safety Culture PDG's Connect page through the IAFP portal) before wrapping up the meeting by thanking all participants for their attendance and participation.

**Recommendations to the Executive Board:** None.

**Next Meeting Date:** July 18-21, 2021, Phoenix, Arizona.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 12:04 p.m. Eastern Time, September 23, 2020;  
12:02 p.m. Eastern Time September 24, 2020.

**Chairperson:** Lone Jespersen.