

Seafood Safety and Quality PDG

Attendees: Abigail Villalba, Alex Zeman, David Baker, David Kingsley, Doug Marshall, Enrico Buenaventura, Evelyn Watts, Gary Richards, Greg Brown, Jackie Woods, Jessica Jones, Katheryn Parraga, Kevin Edwards, Kristin Butler, Marlee Mims, Salina Parveen, and Tori Stivers.

Board/ Staff Present: Dina Siedenburg and Emilio Esteban.

Number of Attendees: 19.

Meeting Called to Order: 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Thursday, June 10, 2021.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Katheryn Parraga.

Welcome and introduction by Kevin Edwards and Jessica Jones.

Katheryn Parraga provided an update regarding the Student PDG needs and announcements.

Reading of the Rules of Order and Antitrust Guidelines by Jessica Jones and Katheryn Parraga.

Old Business: A motion was made by the audience to approve the 2020 Minutes. Jessica Jones was approved by the Board to take over as Chair of the Seafood Safety and Quality PDG. Jessica Jones announced that no sessions sponsored by the Seafood PDG at the 2021 Annual Meeting. However, a Webinar took place during April 14, 2021 entitled "Surviving and Thriving in the Seafood Sector." Tori Stivers mentioned that there will be one session related to seafood on marine biotoxins.

New Business: Discussion about the program development for the 2022 Annual Meeting Symposia. Submissions due on October 5, 2021.

2022 Topic Nominations: Reviewing Food Safety Concerns Regarding Food Fraud and Traceability, Proposed by Doug Marshall, Collaborating PDGs: Food Fraud, Food Law, and Retail and Foodservice; Food Safety Resiliency in Imported Food, Proposed by Kevin Edwards, Collaborating PDGs: Food Safety Culture, Retail and Foodservice, International Food Protection Issues; Seafood Decomposition Proposed by Kristin Butler Collaborating PDGs: Fruit and Vegetable Safety, International Food Protection Issues, Food Hygiene and Sanitation; Remote Auditing, Proposed by David Baker Collaborating PDGs: Food Safety Assessment, Audit and Inspection; Food Safety Prevention Strategies for SARS Effects on Other Enteric Pathogens,

Proposed by Jackie Woods Collaborating PDGs: Viral and Parasitic Foodborne Disease, Retail and Foodservice, Fruit and Vegetable Safety; Import Refusal Categories–**Workshop**, Proposed by David Baker Contributor: Kevin Edwards; Traceability Rule–**Webinar**, Proposed by Tori Stivers Contributor: Jessica Jones.

Guest Speaker: Kevin Edwards, provided a presentation regarding "FDA Import Refusals: Pre-Pandemic 2019 vs. Year-to-Date April 30, 2021." Highlights covered: Comparing regulatory markets and import refusals by market. Reasons for refusals comparing all regions (AU, EU, JP, and the U.S.). Total U.S. refusals by the exporting country. Reasons of the U.S. for import refusals. Reasons for refusals by pathogens in all regions.

Kevin talked about the import refusals and the patterns based on different values of shipments. It is expected that the EU lead in import refusals due to the high volume. However, the U.S. leads the import refusals. There are several categories of import refusal that can vary by import market. He mentioned that FDA has the resources to look only at the 2% of seafood imports, implying that the EU looks even less than that. However, their research is not completed yet. Fewer refusals are expected for 2021 compared to 2019. This could be because of the budget and personnel allocated to COVID prevention measures and/or the increased use of software to filter incoming shipments.

Some statistics showed that as YTD 2021 U.S. has 33% fewer refusals than 2019 (four-month average); and for the EU, refusals are down 27%. Regarding the reasons for the refusals, the principal four are pathogens, decomposition and filth, drug residues, and Histamine.

However, based on the graph U.S. is not checking for additives, chemical contaminants, mercury, and toxins. Is it because the U.S. stop testing after the four principal reasons? Kevin mentioned his concern about the lack of year-after-year assessment of heavy metals and other chemical contaminants.

Also, Kevin showed data of the U.S. refusals. For example, every country has different reasons for import refusals. India: *Salmonella*, decomposition, Vet drugs, filth, HACCP specifically in shrimp. Bangladesh: vet Drugs, *Salmonella*, filth, and economic integrity. Some of the products that are imported are shrimp, carp, and Fish nec. Vietnam: drug residue, *Salmonella*, filth, Histamine, HACCP when importing tuna. Brazil: *Salmonella*, and decomposition in Snapper. Indonesia: Histamine, filthy, *Salmonella* in products like tuna, shellfish, and kingfish.

China: vet drugs, filthy, *Salmonella*, Histamine, and additives in a wide variety of fish, eel, frog legs, and shrimp.

Kevin summarized that based on U.S. imports, the principal reason for rejection is pathogens; being *Salmonella* and *Listeria* the main pathogens related to all cases. Also, observing the reasons for refusals from Brazil, in snapper, shrimp, and fish nec, what were the producers thinking when shipping products decomposed, filth, and in unsanitary conditions?

Also, Kevin mentioned that Norovirus primarily found in live shellfish is reported only by the EU but not by other countries. Kevin concluded that based on the findings of the regulatory authorities, there is evidence that they are trying to educate and guide the industry through publications such as Seafood HACCP, preventive controls and food safety plans, and regulations addressing seafood hazards. However, the best way to mitigate risk is to implement the recommended steps to control adulteration during the incoming, processing, storage, and distribution chain.

Recommendations to the Executive Board:

1. Recommend approval of Jacqueline Woods as Vice Chairperson for the Seafood Safety and Quality PDG.
2. Recommend the Board provide a mechanism to include calendar reminders with meeting/webinar announcements.

Next Meeting Date: July 31–August 3, 2022, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Chairperson: Jessica Jones.