

Committee on Control of Foodborne Illness

Members Present: Ewen Todd (Chair), Judy Greig (Vice Chair), John Guzewich, Bobby Krishna, Sherri McGarry, Rajesh Nayak, Ruth Petran, Muhammad Ihsanullah Qamar, Jane Van Doren and Xianqin Yang. Marilyn Lee via Skype.

Board/Staff Members Present: Don Zink.

New Members: Amit Morey, Jeannette Sarac and Allen Saylor.

Visitors/Guests: Sultan Al Taher, Ray Collins, Pat Curtis, Ernest Julian and Modesto Olanya.

Meeting Called to Order: 8:04 a.m., Sunday, August 3, 2014 by Chair Ewen Todd.

Recording Secretary of Minutes: Judy Greig.

Old Business:

1. Revision of *“Procedures to Investigate Arthropod-borne and Rodentborne Illness”* manual (Tracy DuVernoy – not present, therefore no update). Possibly the manual may need little updating but should be put into an electronic format as a means of marketing. Action item: Board to put the manual into electronic format.
2. Status of Subcommittee Working on the 1982 CDC Diseases Transmitted by Foods: document in process, gaps to be identified and completed. The main issue is finding experts in the unusual pathogens and chemicals rather than those most members are familiar with. Action item: Ewen, Judy and other members to seek out experts for the gaps.
3. Status of Subcommittee to review *“Procedures to Investigate Waterborne Illness.”* Although Marilyn Lee (project lead) could not physically attend the Annual Meeting, she did report progress via Skype. This worked well and Skype can be a method in the future to engage members who cannot be present at IAFFP meetings. She indicated that the draft manual is complete but epidemiology bio-statistics portion needs to be reviewed by an expert. Next steps: Jack Guzewich will review full document; Sherri McGarry will suggest an epidemiology statistical expert to review the Analyze Data section; Ernest Julian suggested that members of the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR.us) could review the document in the fall. Ewen Todd spoke to Rob Tauxe and he recommended Michael Beach of CDC to review the document. Publication is expected in early 2015. Action items: Marilyn to coordinate with members and others willing to set up the review process.
4. HACCP manual. The HACCP manual developed in the 1990s has not been revised by the Committee because of lack of interest by the Board in the past. However, there is a newly-formed HACCP PDG and the current chair of that PDG would like to review the document as HACCP is still evolving and it could be mined for information or possibly be revised. The Chair prefers an electronic format but can review a hard copy as a temporary measure. Action item: the Board agrees for staff to send a copy of the HACCP manual to the HACCP PDG chair for review purposes and report back, and have the manual put into electronic format.
5. Marketing of the procedures manuals: Only about 3,000 copies of the 6th edition of the *Procedures to Investigate Foodborne Illness* have been sold by Springer directly or through IAFFP since 2012. This is much lower than with previous editions of the manual. The price of the manual may be too expensive for industry and individuals to purchase at \$30 for non-members (\$24 for members and government agencies). Also, few have bought the electronic version; this may be because the cost is the same as printed

versions. It is recommended to the Board that Springer could lower the price of the electronic version. The bureaucracy of purchasing within their organizations can also be a barrier because of the many steps involved. However, it may also be an awareness factor and many potential buyers are unaware of the manual. IAFP has been given a list of potential agencies and associations that should be informed about the value of the manual to them and their management. To this end, there needs to be more effective ways to publicize it to these and other markets. For instance, it is a reminder for local health department inspectors and others to refresh their knowledge of epidemiology and investigative skills and resources, and be prepared for outbreaks or consumer complaint investigations. It is also useful for industry employees to prepare for potential future recalls or illness complaints or even health department outbreak investigations of their products. For instance, this manual has components such as the Keys that can prove useful for industry to confirm or update their HACCP plans. Universities and schools are also potential buyers since they could include it in their curricula. We should connect with Global Food Safety Partnership – World Bank to use in their training programs, e.g., to complement incident management, supply chain management, and risk assessment. The manual could also be used for training materials by the Affiliates in other countries. Therefore, there is a need to follow up with the IAFP Board about progress by IAFP and Springer. Springer should work with CCFI to produce several publicity texts directed to the different audiences who are potential customers, e.g., sanitarians, food inspectors, public health employees, industry and trade associations involved in food safety oversight but local knowledge is useful to have. One of the issues is to be able to reach the appropriate agency or individual who is able to make decisions for purchasing large quantities. For instance, in China if the manual could be translated, there are many government departments involved in food safety at federal and provincial levels, and it would take someone knowledgeable about the system to reach the appropriate individual. This could be someone like Tracy DuVernoy who is currently in China and may be able to locate the right individual(s). Action item: CCFI to recommend to the Board that pricing and marketing strategies for IAFP manuals need to be reviewed.

6. Pat Curtis suggested using an interactive ebooks/ iBook format for some projects. IAFP has expertise and it could be beneficial by adding multimedia components to some of our manuals. Action item: the Board should consider the value of such formats and work with appropriate PDGs to explore this option.
7. Committee 100 year history. This history currently being edited by Chair Ewen Todd with input from previous Chair Frank Bryan will be submitted late December or early January to *Food Protection Trends* after the CCFI membership has seen a draft. Action item: Ewen to develop a final draft by January 2015.
8. A searchable database of over 8,400 international foodborne disease outbreaks is maintained by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Information requests can be directed to Judy Greig. Action item: Judy to keep CCFI members informed of developments for access to this data base.
9. No progress has been made on developing a training program based on the procedures manuals. (Possible collaboration with groups, e.g., International Food Protection Training Institute, NEHA – (mailing lists, Springer sales, webinars). This ties in with creating a demand by these groups. For instance, IFPTI does not have a course as yet that could use the manual as a base for training and its funds are lower than in the past. Training to be put on hold until for demand for the manual is forthcoming.

10. Translation of the 6th edition of the foodborne illness procedures manual into Chinese and Spanish. Any CCFI members have an interest? Last year there were offers for Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese. This year Xianqin Yang of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is willing to translate the manual into Chinese. However, although there are members willing to translate the manuals, Springer would have to be involved in an agreement with a third party to have the rights to translate and sell the translated manual. This means finding the right agency and contact person in other countries to pursue this approach.
11. CCFI Google groups (Kruti Ravaliya not present; however, the Student PDG is willing to assist the Committee.) Action item: Student PDG will work with CCFI to set up Google group for the Committee.

Recommendations for the Board:

1. Because sales of the 6th edition of the *Procedures to Investigate Foodborne Illness* are low compared with previous editions (3,000), and the electronic version has very few sales, the Board should dialog with Springer to lower the price of the electronic version since there are no associated publishing costs. In the past public health agencies would purchase large quantities for distribution to its employees. Higher costs of the manuals (\$24 for public health agencies and members and \$30 for nonmembers and industry) combined with lower operating budgets of agencies make this very difficult today. The main purpose of the manuals is to have wide global distribution to reduce foodborne and waterborne illness rather than make any profit (fits the vision of the Foundation). In addition, the Board in collaboration with Springer and CCFI should generate a more aggressive marketing campaign to alert potential clients of the manual and its value. It is critical to have a revised policy in place soon in order to attract potential buyers to the waterborne manual due to be published in 2015.
2. The Board should have the *Procedures to Investigate Arthropod-borne and Rodent-borne Illness* manual and the *HACCP* manual put into electronic format for editing purposes.
3. The Board should consider the value of interactive eBooks/iBook format and work with appropriate PDGs to explore this option.

Next Meeting Date: July 25, 2015 in Portland, Oregon.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:45 p.m. However, there were subsequent dialogs with attendees during the meeting to follow up on action items.

Chairperson: Ewen Todd.

Suggestions for 2015 Symposia:

- a. Manual/symposia on food safety issues associated with foodworkers and aquaculture [shrimp]
- b. Workshop or symposia on susceptible populations:
 - Physiology of foodborne illness – mechanism of infection in humans to account for variability in frequency and severity of illness
 - High risk populations – what makes people more susceptible to foodborne illness [pair with a specific outbreak if possible and food commodity]
1. Children – immature immune systems
2. Genetic variability e.g., reactive arthritis and *Salmonella*
3. Pregnancy

4. Use of immunosuppressant drugs (transplants, etc.), steroids, chemotherapies
5. Use of antacids and similar medication to decrease stomach acid production
6. Elderly with decreasing immunity
 - c. Symposia on food safety risk associated with spices [Jane Van Doren] [wonder also about teas and pesticides]. One increasing trend is to use spices at last stage before eating rather than incorporated into the cooked product in countries like India according to their tradition.
 - Because spices are widely used for many different food products, they have the ability to cause very large multi-national outbreaks. This means that where contaminated spices are suspected of contaminated food, there is a need for traceability and coordinated investigative and regulatory actions at a multi-national level.
 - Spices are ingredients that are in such low levels that they may not be considered a risk factor in outbreak investigation. Tracebacks to country of origin is important to identify risk factors not often considered in outbreak investigations, e.g. different kinds of pepper, cilantro or parsley as garnishes, or sesame seeds making tahini. Another issue worth discussing is the risk of pesticides on imported teas (even DDT has been detected).
 - d. Symposia on management culture and its effects on food safety [understanding and implementation by employees]. Example in Dubai where suggested regulation is well followed.
 - e. Symposia on ethnic foods (defined as what is familiar to regulators or not) –
 - Results from travel, imports, migration
 - Specific risk factors – pathogen/commodity combinations
 - Specific outbreaks
 - Street foods (whole foods or those prepared)
 - Issue regarding Online orders and control
 - f. How to respond to a food crisis associated with a new pathogen on the level of MERS, Ebola, or SARS:
 - Fenugreek seed from Egypt caused outbreaks in Germany and elsewhere (only epi evidence took action too quickly on Spanish cucumbers) – not labeled and not traceable – how dealt with in all countries]
 - International collaboration on large multi-national outbreaks [PulseNet etc].
 - g. A risk greater than zero:
 - Testing for STEC adulteration and result on industry – issue of testing and finding
 - Starting to see movement from the issue of zero tolerance [Australia re cheese, Canada and *Listeria*]
 - Risk assessment and the value of zero
 - Sustainability – if a health risk is not associated with low levels than zero tolerance is not a sustainable way to handle food products
 - Issue with produce and no amount of treatment takes risk to zero
 - Industry lives with the existence of risk greater than zero.
 - h. Climate change influence on production of foods: GCC [Gulf Countries]
 - Extreme weather events
 - Less water
 - Dubai issue of elevated summer temperatures: issues of temperature controls in exporting countries as well – need for monitoring. Puts an increased economic burden on industry to supply safe food
 - When it goes to the home or retail an issue of temperature abuse and pathogen proliferation
 - Different guidelines for different areas along the chain – set by authorities. Often lack

of scientific evidence – time and temperature. Issue a memo and it is well implemented and enforced.

- i. Root cause:
 - Define what it is and main steps
 - Same problem keeps being repeated – various outbreaks and why they happened.
 - International collaboration on outbreaks – cheese, chocolate outbreaks
 - Associated with consumption patterns and use of shipping data.
- j. Historical outbreaks – maybe written document but also a symposia. Selection of pathogens and associated outbreak history
- k. Global traceability [Sherri].
 - Raw materials shipped to one country for processing and then product shipped to another country to be further processed and sold as product of that country
 - Food may be imported to one country and then exported to others
 - Issues of water quality/safety
 - Herbicides and insecticides allowed in various countries [issue of teas]
- l. Today guidelines and tool kits are developed by various organizations to address food safety issues.
 - How have approaches changed over time?
 - Discuss the value of products produced by CCFI– what resources others have used and how our products can offer help.
- m. Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration [IFSAC] – pair up with risk group. Anticipating an update on foodborne attribution – burden by pathogens and commodity. Health and economic impacts. Early detection and rapid response. Metrics. Shrinking response time.
- n. Ernest: Industry uses it all the time [Sarah Geisert General Mills, Minneapolis]. [Ian Williams CDC, Tim Jackson, Director food safety North America root cause on cookie dough]. ID processors [egg outbreak to decrease outbreaks]. Root cause analysis – environmental assessment. Imports. Sold test. Fridges from outbreak no reasonable placement of equipment.
 - Carol Selman video regarding environmental assessment: equipment, ingredients, etc.
 - Regulatory
 - System controls
- o. International root cause: Muhammad Qamar – fully dependent on imports: Pick an industry – pathogen and look at root cause.
- p. Effectiveness of food safety education for consumers – Food Safety PDG
- q. Food security
- r. Halal 500 bodies – OIC – organization of Islamic countries – develop a CODEX like document (Dubai has been given the project)
- s. Advances in syndromic surveillance that would speed up identification. FSMA was to increase surveillance efforts – Food Core [surveillance activities] – Dale Morse [director food safety at CDC]. Fund local programs – talk about results.