

## **Fruit and Vegetable Safety and Quality Professional Development Group**

**Members Present:** Jack Guzewich (Chair), Stan Bailey (Board Liaison), Kevin Allen, Bassam Annous, Larry Beuchat, Elizabeth Bihn, LeAnn Chuboff, Michael Cooley, Michelle Danyluk, Francisco Diez, Elena Enache, Eelco Franz, Donna Garren, David Gombas, James Gorny, Robert Gravani, Steven Grove, Keith Ito, Stephen Kenney, Sun Kim, Kalmia Kniel, Larry Kohl, Keith Lampel, Alvin Lee, Bashir Manji, Mayra Marquez Gonzalez, Karl Matthews, Sherri McGarry, Xiangwu Nou, Jitu Patel, Terence Peters, Suresh Pillai, Jena Roberts, Joan Rosen, Manan Sharma, Amarat Simonne, Michelle Smith, Stacy Stoltenberg, Thomas Taylor, Mary Tortorello and Randy Worobo.

**New Members:** Henry Nahmad, Leslie Thompson, Jason Wan, Elaine Black, Roger Cook, Bridget Tinsley, Wendy Maduff, Carlos Menes, Andrew Farnum, Elsie Friesen, Jerry Erdmann, Hyun-Gyun Yuk, Joshua Gurtler, Jeff LeJeune, Tong-Jen Fu, Karl Reineke, Divya Jaroni, Christine Aleski, Zhinong Yan, Thomas McCaskey, Pat Millner, Stephanie Jensen, Pascal Delaquis and Sharon Lanini.

**Visitors/Guests:** Sid Thakur.

**Meeting Called to Order:** 1:02 p.m., August 1, 2010.

**Recording Secretary of Minutes:** Sherri McGarry.

**Old Business:** Motion to accept Minutes from 2009 PDG Meeting was adopted.

### **New Business:**

**Outbreak Update:** Sherri McGarry gave the FDA report on outbreaks linked to produce. There were six produce outbreaks in 2009 with approximately 288 illnesses reported. For 2009, agents involved *Cyclospora* and *Salmonella* with berries, melons, tomatoes, and sprouts associated with illness; cucumbers and lettuce were suspect vehicles in two outbreaks. So far in 2010, there are 7 reported outbreaks with produce either implicated or suspect including an *E. coli* O145 outbreak associated with eating shredded romaine lettuce. Jack Guzewich discussed FDA recent efforts to conduct more intensive environmental assessments for certain outbreak such as the *E. coli* O145 outbreak. He mentioned that FDA will be providing the findings of that environmental investigation.

**Regulatory Update:** Michelle Smith, Ph.D, and Jim Gorny, Ph.D, provided the FDA regulatory update. Michelle Smith informed the group on FDA's plan to focus efforts on produce safety regulation though there are many other efforts underway. She mentioned that the White House Food Safety Working Group identified two items relating to produce safety as priorities. One was to issue commodity specific guidance

and the second was obtaining input for improving produce safety and preventive controls. Commodity specific guidance was issued in the *Federal Register* on August 2, 2010. This guidance is largely based on efforts by other groups including Dave Gombas of United Fresh Produce Association. For the second item, FDA is in the deliberative process for regulation development for growing and packing of produce preventive controls. A docket was opened for public comment and closed recently with over 700 submissions. Some key considerations mentioned by Michelle Smith include the importance of collaboration with stakeholders and FDA has held listening sessions and visited growers and others in 13 states. A few themes FDA has heard include holding imports to the same standard as domestic produce, provide access to tools to assist firms to comply with any regulation, and FDA to leverage with existing resources and collaborate with other groups that have an on-farm presence. After the draft Rule is published, possibly 2011, there will be another opportunity for comment.

Jim Gorny provided an overview of FDA's approach including if Congress doesn't pass a bill with new authorities, FDA intends to move forward with the regulation using existing authorities to improve produce safety.

E-Extension Initiative: Amy Simone discussed the E-Extension Initiative and is soliciting expertise to contribute to the effort. The effort includes gathering food safety materials and putting them in one online place for easy access. She disseminated information and materials to the PDG and asked that those interested contact her or the individuals identified on the materials.

**IAFP Symposia:** Jack Guzewich mentioned that the PDG has until October 18 to submit symposia suggestions. He also mentioned the new proposed Pre-harvest Food Safety PDG and the importance to coordinate with them and that they had a few ideas on symposia. Sid Thakur from that PDG gave an overview of the PDG planning meeting.

- Jack Guzewich mentioned that Trevor Suslow submitted a Symposia idea.
- Jim Gorny will work on On-Farm Preventive Control Symposia with Dave Gombas, Bridgette Tinsley, and a USDA representative.
- Keith Warner will spearhead Effective Interventions and New Concepts/Technology and had several volunteers to assist in developing the Symposia.
- Environmental Sampling will be developed for Symposia by Thomas Taylor working with Dairy PDG. Ideas discussed include statistical sampling strategy, interpretation of results for low numbers of positives, costs, and using results to inform policy.

**Other:** Bob Gravani mentioned Cornell University is offering a GAP training course on August 17 and 31, 2010.

**Recommendations to the Executive Board:**

1. Dave Gombas is recommended by the PDG as Vice-Chair.
2. The PDG discussed IAFP's idea for charging a fee of \$25 for Webinars. There were differing opinions on the cost and a suggestion that instead of holding a Webinar with a fee use a conference call and E-mail out the PowerPoint presentation in advance. The majority support the idea of a Webinar and \$25 fee. Many thought it was a means of IAFP membership building and the Webinar should reach out to industry.
3. The PDG recommends to the Board that presentations from the Annual Meeting be posted on the IAFP Web page, or sent after the meeting on a thumb drive, to persons who paid registration for the meeting. IAFP would have to consider having authors sign a release form to share their presentations.

**Next Meeting Date:** The PDG will consider holding conference calls and or Webinars during the year on topics such as FDA's development of new produce regulations or produce outbreaks of significance.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 2:45 p.m.

**Chairperson:** Jack Guzewich.