

FoodBytes

Food Protection Program

Spring, 2008

Indiana State Department of Health

Vol. 9, No. 2

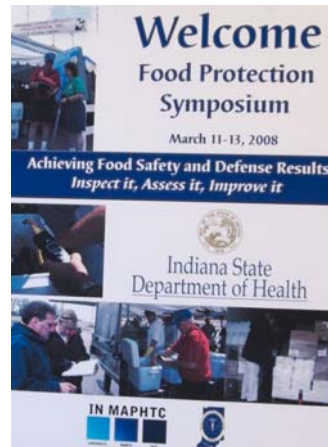
Food Symposium offers timely topics

The 2008 Food Symposium, produced by the ISDH Food Protection Program, covered a wide variety of issues ranging from working with industry to the newest food safety issues facing health departments. Most of the nearly 160 attendees represented local health departments along with industry and academia.

One of the most popular topics was presented by Scott Gilliam, Food Program Director, and Peggy Combs, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), discussing the interpretation and application of the new “food establishment” definition. Since the new law references IRS Code Sec. 501 as a basis for determining exemption from the food laws, an understanding of the meaning and application of Sec. 501 language has become crucial.

Attendees were also briefed on the practical application of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, and proposed training procedures for new food safety inspection officers.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Indiana Environmental Health Association and Mid-America Public Health Training Center. Sharon Farrell with the Food Protection Program led the organization team.



Inside this issue:

Effectiveness check: what does it mean?	2
Food safety's new challenge	3
Ask more than the routine questions	4
Local EHS's recognized at symposium	5
Should home dishwashers be allowed?	6
First public health summit set	7
Tidbits, Crumbs, and Leftovers	8

Positive comments from attendees

“We received many positive comments about the symposium,” said Sharon Farrell, in charge of planning.

She offered a sampling of the responses received.

“The information gained in this symposium will be very helpful when communicating with retail food estab-

lishments.”

“Great speakers. It was good to share different situations going on in other counties.”

“Symposium was excellent, the best we have had.”

“Great speakers, food, facility.”

Effectiveness check: what does this mean?

Recently, local health department inspectors have been asked by the Indiana State Department of Health to perform “effectiveness checks” following a recall notification. How should local health departments handle this request?

The Food Protection Program has developed a priority protocol plan to aid those receiving recall notices to determine the emphasis that should be placed on each type of recall. The importance of improving the recall protocol was brought to the forefront following the recall of

Castleberry’s Foods products in which botulism was detected in some samples.

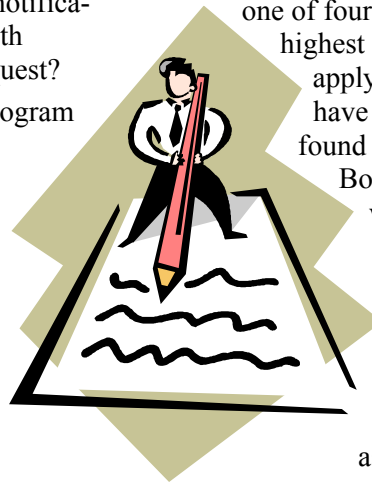
Recalls have been assigned to one of four categories. The highest emphasis will apply to products that have actually been found to contain

Botulism toxin. This will require on-site visits to establishments that may carry the products. The next category is assigned to recalls

in which there is potential for illness due to under-processing of canned foods, but no illnesses have been reported. Other types of recalls may be given a lower priority, perhaps only necessitating a telephone call to the affected establishments.

Other changes include a new “Recall Audit” form that will replace the generic FDA form used previously. A clear set of instructions have been designed to accompany this form to facilitate its use by local health department inspectors.

Information was e-mailed to local health departments in March.



Number of “community” kitchens rising in Indiana

The number of community kitchens in Indiana is on the rise. From the first Indiana kitchen, Ohio River Valley Food Venture in Madison, the list of current and planned facilities now number at least six.

New food entrepreneurs must find an approved kitchen facility to prepare their food products. This can be a difficult and time consuming task as they either must build their own kitchens or find an existing facility where they will have complete access. Many are unable to make the financial commitment to construct their own facilities. Owners of existing kitchens are often reluctant to allow outsiders to use them because of

potential liability or costs due to damage. Home kitchens may not be used for preparing any foods intended for the public.

New food entrepreneurs must find an approved facility to prepare their food products.

Community kitchens currently in operation or almost ready to operate include My Other Kitchen in Carmel, Lost River Community Co-op in Paoli, and Goodwill Industries of Michiana Inc. in South Bend.

Other facilities planning to open are The SEED Kitchen & Cafe’ in Noblesville and Bloomington Commercial Kitchen in Bloomington.

Many of these facilities will have a “process authority” available for those businesses intending to manufacture a canned or reduced oxygen packaged product. More complete information on these facilities may be obtained by contacting ISDH Food Protection.

To provide guidance to those who wish to start their own shared-use kitchen, Purdue Extension has planned a series of workshops around Indiana called “Starting A Community Kitchen” that will detail the issues to be addressed.

Are there community kitchens not listed here? Contact Food Protection at ISDH.



What is the new “food establishment” definition?

Local health department inspectors are finding provisions of the newly passed SEA 190 confusing. The law, meant to define “food establishment” and clarify what groups are exempt from compliance has become more difficult to interpret because of its language.

Scott Gilliam, Food Program Manager, has said that it is clear religious organizations are intended to be exempt from compliance with the food code, but other parts of the law are more complex.

The IRS definition of “religious organization” is not clearly defined,

according to Peggy Combs of the IRS.

Combs says it would include churches holding regular services, have a membership, and perform ceremonial functions. All facets of the church cannot be entirely controlled by one person. This prevents one person from claiming to be a “church” to avoid compliance.

With the law’s wording, Gilliam believes organizations that would have been regulated before may be exempt now. One provision is exempt organizations, which are

not religious and operate for no more than 15 days a year must now meet the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Sec. 501.

The words, “educational purposes in a nonpublic educational setting,” changed in this law would include groups like youth baseball, now making them exempt. Public schools may be exempt but booster groups may or may not be exempt.

Additional guidance is being written and will be sent to all local health departments soon.

Newest challenge: fruit and vegetable food safety

Richard H. Linton, Ph.D.
Professor of Food Safety, Purdue University

From the time we were small, someone has been telling us “eat more fruits and vegetables” and for good reason. Fruit and vegetable consumption has been linked with numerous health benefits including reduced risk of certain cancers and cardiovascular disease. However, as the consumption of fruit and vegetables grows, so has the incidence of produce-related foodborne illnesses. Just over a decade ago, produce was linked to 11 percent of all foodborne illness in the United States. Today, that number has grown to over 35 percent. The majority of produce

Recent outbreaks have increased awareness to an all time high for industry, regulators and consumers.

related illnesses (76 percent) have been limited to lettuce/leafy greens (30 percent), tomatoes (17 percent), cantaloupe (13 percent), herbs (basil, parsley) 11 percent, and green onions (5 percent). *Salmonella* spp., *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Shigella*, and the Hepatitis A virus are the most common produce contaminants.

Very large outbreaks, such as the 2006 fresh spinach outbreak that resulted in more than 200 illnesses in 26 states, have increased awareness to an all time high for the food industry, regulatory agencies, and consumers. Several new produce safety initiatives were created by food industry groups and regulatory agencies (i.e. for lettuce, tomatoes,



green onions) to encourage development of improved risk reduction programs. Produce presents unique challenges because contamination can occur in many places (on the farm, at manufacturing, during transportation, at retail food establishments and in consumer’s homes) and people often consume produce without cooking it.

We have learned that we need

(Continued on page 7)

Motel guests may think again about using glasses

Several TV stations around the country have aired “hidden camera” stories in recent months about the unsanitary practices in hotels when handling drinking glasses in guests’ rooms.

Caught on camera were hotel staff rinsing glasses in a sink, then wiping the glasses with a soiled towel that had been lying on the floor. Another camera caught cleaning staff spraying glasses with a cleaner clearly labeled “not to be taken internally.” The glasses were then placed back upon a tray (that had also not been cleaned) as if they were properly cleaned and sanitized.

Not surprisingly, local health department staff, when interviewed on-camera and shown the hidden videos, agreed the practices were totally unacceptable, but they all faced the same dilemma. No regulation to routinely address these unsafe practices currently exists.



The FDA and ISDH have agreed that hotel rooms do not meet the definition of “retail food establishment” thus the food code does not apply.

So how can inspectors address this problem?

Retail Food Program Manager Scott Gilliam says if a complaint is received, local inspectors can address this under general sanitation guidelines, such as the power granted to local health officers under IC 16-20. Proper cleaning and sanitizing may be stressed, but the food code is used only as a guide.

Ask more than “routine” questions during inspections

Food inspectors learn ways to communicate during the course of their training because it is necessary to talk with managers, owners, and front line workers.

But if an inspector is not seeing the improvements in inspection scores that he or she expects, it may be they are not asking the right questions, and the communication is ineffective.

Inspectors should already be asking routine “HACCP” questions to determine food flow and food process control. Questions like, “where did this come from” and “what is happening next” should be asked during the inspection.

How inspectors see themselves

will influence how establishment employees view them. Instead of being an environmental health specialist, why not be a “consultant” or “educator?”

If nothing is improving from one inspection to the next, try

asking additional questions to assess the knowledge of the food staff.

For example,

ask, “to what internal temperature do you cook your chicken?”

Then ask, “why do you cook your chicken to 165° F.?”

These types of questions will give you much more information than just asking a question that leads to the expected answer.

If an inspector really wants to

understand the process of preparing a food, ask the employee to describe the steps he follows to prepare chicken, for example.

Give employees a chance to answer, then listen to what they say. Answers will lead inspectors to other questions to ask to determine if the food process is under control at every step in the food flow.

Sometimes general questions can help gather information that might otherwise be missed.

Examples: “What changes have you made since the last time I was here?” Or, “have you changed your menu?”

Most food employees are more used to communicating verbally. Talking to employees will be more effective than just leaving a written report.

Talking to employees will be more effective than just leaving a written report.



Sharon Breckenridge, Madison Co. Health Department, shares some of the challenges she faces during the course of her job.



Sally Slavens, Benton Co. Health Department, asks a question of one of the speakers during the ISDH Food Symposium as Mary Wagner listens.

Local environmentalists recognized at symposium

Several environmental health specialists were recognized during the recent food symposium for their contributions and service to the food program at ISDH.



Receiving the "Award of Excellence" for work with the community and food industry were Graham McKeen (left) and Shane Modglin (right) of Indiana University. Scott Gilliam (center) presented the awards.

"Awards of Excellence" were granted to the following members of Indiana local health departments for their service and assistance to the Food Protection Program at ISDH.

Rita Hooton, St. Joseph County Health Department



Chris Boroweicki, Vanderburgh County Health Department



Diane Knies, Dubois County Health Department



Brenda Cummins, Lawrence County Health Department



Sandy Wallace, Monroe County Health Department



Laura Lindley, Clark County Health Department



Lana Buckles, LaPorte County Health Department



Dawn McDevitt, Allen County Health Department



The awards were presented by Scott Gilliam, Food Program Director, based upon recommendations of ISDH food staff.

Photos on this page by Daniel Axler

Guest speakers highlight symposium

The 2008 edition of the Food Safety and Defense Symposium featured several notable guest speakers along with ISDH staff and members of local health depts.

David McSwane, H.S.D. (below), Indiana University, shared the mission and accomplishments of the Conference for Food Protection.



Richard Linton, Ph. D. (above), Purdue University, gave an overview of the seven steps of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and its implementation as a tool in food safety.

Peggy Combs (above right) of the IRS discussed the interpretation and application of Sec. 501 of the



Internal Revenue Code.

Also sharing expertise as members of industry included Frank Leary from Wendy's and Neil Checketts of Wal-Mart.

News from the FDA and forthcoming changes in the Food Code came from Kris Moore, Regional Retail Food Specialist.

Photos by Ed Norris

Should home-type dish machines be allowed?

Should a home-type dish-machine be allowed in a retail food establishment? Before answering the first question, one needs to answer a second one. Can the dish machine meet the food code requirements?

The basic issue with home dish washers is they are not designed to meet the code requirements.

A common misconception is that if the machine can be set to achieve the sanitizing step, it will be acceptable. Sanitizing is only one step in the mechanical warewashing process.

A quick check of 410 IAC 7-24 will show that 11 sections apply to

mechanical warewashing. Look at Sections 277 through 287.

With home machines, there is usually no way to determine compliance with water temperature and pressure, or the data plate, if there is one, doesn't contain enough information.

Also in play are Sections 294 and 303, which deal with sanitizing.

Most of the time, reasons given by operators wishing to use home machines include wanting to save space, or having too little to wash. These operators might be served

better using a three compartment sink. If the foodservice operation is limited, an operation might be able to utilize a batch method with a two compartment sink, if approved by the local health department.

All options should be discussed with the operator during the plan review process, whether it is a new establishment or an establishment undergoing remodeling. Trying to achieve compliance after improper equipment is installed is difficult.

If an operator wants to insist on using a home dishwasher, he may apply for a variance with the ISDH. The operator will need to show sufficient scientific evidence that food safety is maintained.



With home machines, there is usually no way to determine compliance with the code.

Newest food safety challenge (continued)

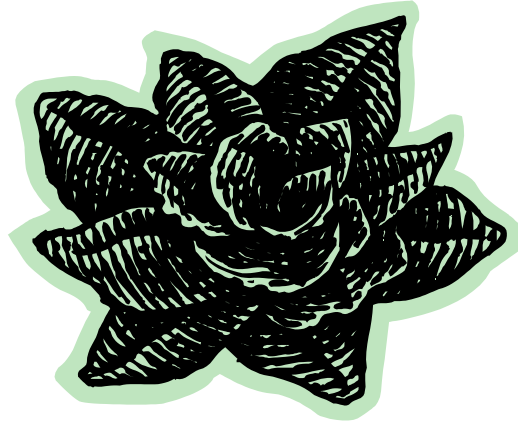
(Continued from page 3)

to do a better job increasing produce safety. Within this farm-to-fork effort we need to: reduce contamination at the farm by employing good agricultural practices; develop more effective pathogen reduction strategies (i.e. washes) at manufacturing; and develop better washing techniques and educational programs for retailers and consumers.

To learn more about what's going on, you may want to refer to the following helpful websites:

(<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/>

[~dms/prodgui4.html](#)) *FDA Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables (updated 2008)* -



provides information about risks and good handling practices for produce

(<http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/>)

National GAPs Program – provides information, PowerPoint presentations, and other training materials for good agricultural practices

(<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~dms/fs-toc.html#prod>) *National Food Safety Programs* – provides information related to produce and import safety initiatives

First public health summit set for June 3, 4

The ISDH will host its first Public Health and Medicine Summit, June 3, 4 at the Indianapolis Airport Adams Mark Hotel. This event combines the Public Health Nurses Conference and the Public Health and Medicine Day.

The summit is designed to encourage collaboration among public health professionals and healthcare providers, hence the summit's theme, "Building Bridges."

The event will include general sessions along with five optional concurrent workshops. Tuesday's sessions, targeted mostly to medical professionals will cover "Disease Surveillance and Investigation,"

"Interviewing Skills for Sensitive Topics," "Viral Hepatitis A-E," TB Beginner – Advanced," and "Leadership and Communication."

Wednesday's program will

include a keynote plenary session by Assistant Surgeon General James M. Galloway, M.D. on "Public

Health and Medicine Partnerships and Health Priorities." This will follow opening remarks by Indiana State Health Commissioner, Dr. Judy Monroe.

Concurrent sessions follow on these topics: "Pediatric Obesity: A Medical Perspective to a Public Health Issue," "The Impact of Secondhand Smoke on Health - New Research from the Field,"

"Communicable Disease Rule: What has Changed?," "Climate Change and the Public Health Response," "Vector Borne Diseases in Indiana," "Antimicrobial Resistance in Indiana and Best Practices to Minimize Disease Burden," "Food Safety: Everyone Has a Role," "Immunizations," "Medical Error Reporting: Reducing Errors in Health Care Setting," "Refugee Health," "Addressing Asthma in Indiana."

During Wednesday's luncheon David McSwane, professor at the IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs, will give a presentation entitled "Emerging Issues in Food Safety."

Registration is \$25 for general attendees and \$15 for students.

To register, go to www.inpha.org/summitform.asp

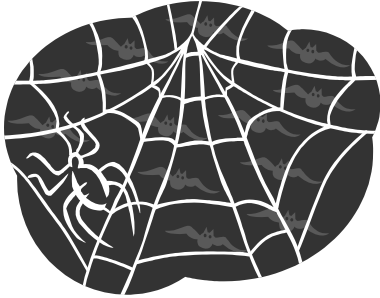
The summit is designed to encourage collaboration among public health professionals and healthcare providers.

FOOD PROTECTION PROGRAM

Food Protection Program
Indiana State Department of Health
2 N. Meridian St., 5C
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: 317 233 7360
Fax: 317 233 7334
Email: food@isdh.in.gov

FIND US ON THE WEB!



WWW.IN.GOV/ISDH/REGSVCS/FOODPROT



Indiana State Department of Health

FoodBytes

is published quarterly by the
Food Protection Program, Indiana State Department of Health.

Judith A. Monroe, MD
State Health Commissioner

Mary L. Hill, JD
Deputy State Health Commissioner

Terry Whitson, JD
Assistant Commissioner, Health Care Regulatory Services

Editorial Staff

Ed Norris, MS, CP-FS
FoodBytes Editor

Scott Gilliam, MBA, CP-FS
Food Program Manager

Email

food@isdh.in.gov

Tidbits, Crumbs, and Leftovers

- ◆ A chemical product may not be legally used in a retail food establishment unless its label specifically states that such use is approved. This includes cleaners, sanitizers and pesticides. The label should always state how to use the products correctly and the proper concentrations.
- ◆ Andrew Miller has joined the ISDH Wholesale Foods staff. He has the position previously held by Piki Saha.
- ◆ Several workshops are scheduled by Purdue this spring targeting farmers markets' masters and vendors. ISDH staff is assisting with the presentations.

- ◆ Those who hold the CFSP (Certified Food Safety Professional) credential are facing a change. Heidi Shaw, Credentialing Coordinator for the National Environmental Health Ass'n, says that a change is needed due to a trademark dispute. Starting now, the CFSP will be known as "CP-FS." Shaw says new certificates will be mailed to all those holding the CFSP. Shaw adds that nothing else has changed, just the

title, but, because of legal reasons, she advises using the CP-FS title immediately.

Send your questions and comments to the e-mail or postal address on this page.

Calendar

NSF Plan Review Workshop
May 8, 9
Indianapolis
Public Health & Medicine Summit
June 3, 4
Indianapolis
IEHA Fall Educational Conference
Sep. 29, 30, Oct. 1
Florence