

GFSDTF

Minutes Food Safety and Defense Task Force Jan 9, 2008

Attendees:

DHR:

Melissa Tobin-D'Angelo, Carrie Shuler, Dana Cole, Sandra Coleman, Belen Moran

GDA:

Rex Holt, Jackie Sosby, Van Harris, Oscar Garrison

Honey Baked Ham:

Marcus Johns

FDA:

Elizabeth Kage, LaTonya Mitchell, Lurlene Dixon, Russell Zablan, JoAnn Pittman, Ingrid Zambrana, Laurie Farmer

DOE:

Melinda Scarborough

Kroger:

Allison Jennings

Publix:

Michael Roberson, Brenda Reid

GA State

Missy Cody

The usual welcome and introductions were led by Van Harris, with the addition of introductory comments by Mr. Irvin, the long standing commissioner of the Dept. of Agriculture.

Dana Cole provided an update of the Water Advisory Group. A draft of their initial guidance to deal with drought issues is available through her or Van. Important points in the guidance include a contact list, and specific information about dialysis patients, a very high risk group.

The public communications panel, consisting of JoAnn, Brenda, Belen, and Jackie, representing FDA, Publix, GDA, and DHR was convened. Each representative discussed their agencies' strategies for communicating with the media and the public. Specific issues that were mentioned were some of the recent multistate outbreaks, recall alerts and the need to assist small independent retailers, and the need for rapid response times to requests, and the need for involved agencies to send the same message to the public and media. Other more general strategies include the importance of messages being at the 6th grade reading level and the concept of "message mapping".

Missy Cody revisited the importance of educating the public about dairy pasteurization, which was a salient topic at this group's previous meeting.

An agenda change occurred such that Yao Wen was unable to provide a China update.

Carrie and Melissa provided an outbreak update. Carrie discussed an egg-associated restaurant outbreak in Athens, and indicated that the norovirus season has begun. Melissa provided an update of the Peanut worker illnesses being investigated in southeast Georgia. NIOSH report is still pending at this time and no laboratory evidence of a toxin had been identified to date.

Van assigned Sandra to update the Task Force Directory, so please be prepared to provide any changes in your agency staff or contact information.

Next meeting: