

Georgia Food Safety and Defense Task Force

Date: December 5 2012
Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Location: Food and Drug Administration
60, 8th Street
Atlanta, GA 30309

MINUTES

Attendees: Melissa Tobin D'Angelo, Tori Stivers, Kathleen Schmidt, Natalie Adan, Jason Reagan, Priya Nair, Tonya Gray, Hope Dishman, Karen Gulley, Kathryn Nagy, Mark Woodard, Renne Dewach, Mark Miklos, Terri McConnell, Cameron Wiggins, Kimberly Livsey, Mike Farrow, Mark Hodges, Terri McConnell, Michael Squibb, Kenny R Robinson, Phil Campbell, Fred Omotayo, Renee Delouche, Lakisha Morton, Jessica Holthaus, Ingrid Zambrana, Brad Bush, Patricia Batten, Krissa Jones, Susan Alexander, Chad McCord, Ryan Cochran, Alan Maxwell, Paul Williams, Barney Harmon, Don Ackerman, Larry Hortert, Dawne Hines, John Gridley Jessica Hardwick, Mitchell L Martin, Wu San Chen

1. Welcome- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
John Gridley, Program Director with Food and Drug Administration gave a warm welcome to all the attendees of the Task Force meeting. Priya Nair introduced herself and stated the purpose of the meeting. She thanked everyone for their voluntary participation. She thanked the staff at Food and Drug Administration for setting up the venue for the meeting. There was an open round of introductions among the attendees. In total there were about 56 attendees.
2. Food Safety Activities pertaining to recent Political conventions – FDA
Kim Livsey, Regional Emergency Response Coordinator with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) discussed the local, state and federal integration of the food safety coverage done at the recent Democratic and Republican National political conventions.
3. Highlights of the Food Safety Summit & Legislative update
Oscar Garrison; Director Food Safety Division at the Georgia Department of Agriculture briefly discussed some highlights on the recent Food Safety summit that he attended on April 17-19 in Washington DC. He gave the Keynote Address: Building an Integrated Food System: How the Food Industry and Public Health Officials Must Collaborate to Succeed at the Food Safety Summit. He informed everyone that Food Safety Modernization Act was a hot topic in the Summit. Next year, he will be serving on the education committee and plans are being made to sponsor scholarships to bring some regulatory staff to Food Safety Summit, which will be held in Baltimore on April 30-May 2.

In addition, he gave a brief overview of the legislative update for the Department. He informed everyone that Department did face some recent budget cuts however the Food Safety Division was not affected. There is a new legislation with regards to cottage food known as Model Cottage Food Regulations. He mentioned about Senate Bill 80 with regards to penalties associated with it, coming from Food Safety Modernization Act. The Department has recently received an FDA grant for lab accreditation, Retail standards and for establishing a Rapid Response Team.

4. Public Health: A Litigation Perspective" - Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial
Alan Maxwell, partner of Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial talked about his perspective from a legal standpoint on his experience with handling food borne outbreaks.
5. Epidemiological update
Hope Dishman State Outbreak Coordinator with Department of Public Health informed every one of the following:
 - o There were 12 Norovirus outbreaks in November this year, which is much more than we usually see (median=5).
 - o CDC has identified a new strain of Norovirus circulating this year, which has lead to increased Norovirus activity when we've seen that in the past.
 - o Most of these Norovirus outbreaks are person-to-person, but they can also be foodborne (usually food is contaminated at point of service by an ill food handler with ready-to-eat foods).
 - o In addition there were multi-state foodborne outbreaks that caught national attention, but did not include any GA cases.
6. Announcements and comments
Priya informed everyone that final draft of the proposed Charter of the Task force has submitted to all the members for their input and it can be discussed before the next upcoming meeting.
Tori Stivers informed everyone that the next meeting of the Georgia Association of Food Protection (GAFFP) will be Thursday, March 7 2013 at the Chick-fil-A corporate headquarters on Buffington Road which is south of the Atlanta airport. Please contact Tori Stivers<mailto:tstivers@uga.edu> if you would like to be added to the email list for information about this and future GAFFP meetings, or go to the website www.GaAFP.org<http://www.GaAFP.org>
7. Planning for the next meeting
Next upcoming meeting will be planned in May 2012. Date and time of the upcoming meeting is yet to be finalized. Anyone interested to present some topics for discussion or if any member wants to provide a venue for the upcoming meeting may contact Priya at pnair@dhr.state.ga.us.