

AFSAC Meeting Minutes

October 8, 2013

In Attendance

Tony Barrett – Municipality of Anchorage FSS

Barb Hansen – Division of Agriculture

Dr. Brian Himmelbloom – Kodiak FITC

Steve Lacey – Fred Meyer

Lorinda Lhotka – DEC/FSS

Randy Pfeuffer – DEC/FSS

Morgan Poloni – DEC/FSS

Sarah Stanley – Doyon Universal Services (DUS) Food Safety & QA

Michel Villon – Culinary Institute

John Walker – JTAK, LLC

Opening Remarks – Kimberly Stryker

- In an attempt to accommodate varying schedules, the 10/8 meeting was switched from afternoon to morning.
- The idea of introducing guest speakers in order to generate excitement for committee meetings was discussed.

Norovirus Presentation – Sarah Stanley

DUS Company Overview:

- DUS provides facility and security consulting throughout Alaska for food, janitorial and housekeeping services.
- The firm has implemented extensive preventative measures in order to combat Norovirus in North Slope labor camps.

Norovirus Facts:

- Discovered in 1972 in Norwalk Ohio, it was originally referred to as the Norwalk Virus.
- It is the most common food borne illness. From 2006-2010, 49% of food borne outbreaks in the U.S. were caused by Norovirus.
- It spreads rapidly via fecal/oral transmission.
- It is commonly mistaken with stomach flu and 24 hour flu due to similarities of symptoms.

FSS Program Updates – Kimberly Stryker

Personnel Changes:

- New EHO IV Scott Gladden – Anchorage.
- New EHT Steven Hoke (Short-term non-perm) – Fairbanks.
- New EHO Nikki Potter – Fairbanks.
- New EHO Heidi Isernhagen – Soldotna.
- New EHO Sunny Muir – Valdez.
- Vacant EHO position – Anchorage.
- Vacant EHO position – Dutch Harbor.

Training:

- Several FSS staff members recently attended a UAF sponsored class on smoking seafood.
- FDA manufactured food training is ongoing.
- Two classes will be available in November:
 1. Learn to Return (flight/marine safety).
 2. AKOSH Seafood Processing Safety.
- Two FDA classes will be available from March 3-7:
 1. Food Borne Illness Investigations.
 2. Special Processes in Retail (Up to 60 spots are available for this class. The Municipality of Anchorage has been invited. Contact Morgan Poloni for details).

Budget/Funding:

- FY14 budget is stable. There are no major issues.
- Legislative approval is pending for capital request to replace the current FSS database.

Program Performance:

- Efforts have increased in simplifying information provided via the website to processors/operators.
- An Allergen Control Plan for operators has been implemented on the website.
- FDA outreach material such as the Oral Culture Project may be viewed on the website. A poster for food service employees provided by the project will be mailed to operators along with permits.
- The focus on conducting inspections in rural communities has increased.

- 4,683 food establishments are currently permitted.
- Impressive inspection percentages have been achieved by the program. The percentages are as follows:
 1. 54% of inspections for high risk facilities have been completed, an increase of 7% from last year.
 2. Nearly 50% of inspections for medium risk facilities have been completed, an increase of 11% from last year.
 3. 90% of high risk seafood inspections have been completed.
 4. 100% of body art inspections have been completed.
 5. 40% of pool & spa inspections have been completed.

FDA Program Assessment Validation Audit (PAVA):

- The feedback from this weeklong audit for Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards conformance conducted in September was very positive. A final report is still pending.

Alaska Food Policy Council:

- With the help of grants from the CDC and the Department of Health & Social Services, the council's focus is geared towards local foods and food security in relation to hunger and the availability of food.

Alaska Food Resource Working Group:

- The group requested an administrative order from the Governor for the purposes of improving the health of state residents, increasing food security, strengthening local economies, and encouraging community development through policies and measures to increase the purchase and consumption of local wild seafood and farm products. The order was signed in June.

Alaska Environmental Health Association (AEHA):

- FSS staff attended the conference held last week.

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA):

- The comment period on proposed federal rules governing produce and preventive control ends on November 15th. For more information go to: <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFSIS/bulletins/869e67?reqfrom=share>

USDA:

- FSS strongly supports the USDA's proposed rules governing tenderized and pinned meat. For more information go to:
<http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFSSIS/bulletins/869e67?reqfrom=share>

Interagency Coordination:

- Kimberly Stryker addressed the importance of establishing a sense of mutual cooperation between FSS and rural community groups involved in environmental health work. Presently, a distinct lack of coordination exists between the program and rural communities, particularly regarding the management of food borne outbreaks.

News From The Section Of Epidemiology (Investigations)

- Assisting the State of Nebraska - Campylobacter/13 people ill/Still under investigation.
- Village in SE AK- Salmonella Enteritidis/8 people ill/PFGE match to an Anchorage outbreak Spring 2013/ No source identified.
- Village in Northern AK - Salmonella Enteritidis/40 people ill/No source identified.
- Village in Northern AK - Salmonella Typhi/Associated with travel to foreign country, but ill persons had connections to distributed food.

Member Updates

Tony Barrett:

- Online Food Worker Card training and testing will be available by mid October. The English version will go live first, with Chinese, Korean, and Spanish versions to follow. This endeavor was three years in the making.
- September was proclaimed, Food Safety Education Month by the Mayor of Anchorage.
- The decision has been made by the MUNI to issue cottage food permits.

Michel Villon:

- The School Handwashing Poster Competition Proposal is still a work in progress due to budget and logistical concerns and formatting issues relating to state compliance.
- Randy Pfeuffer suggested incorporating Germ City into the competition.

Morgan Poloni:

- The Small Processor Committee was established as a workgroup to provide a clear breakdown of requirements for new businesses and is presently accepting new members. The committee is in the process of developing guidelines for the following items:
 1. Labeling of packaged foods
 2. Acidified food/seafood
 3. Recall Plan
 4. Allergen information for small processors
- The next committee meeting will be held on 10/31 at 10am.

Lorinda Lhotka:

- The Risk Factor Survey has identified specific firms for inspection.
- Lorinda Lhotka suggested the development of hands on demos as a learning tool in evaluating safety factors such as cold holding temperatures.

John Walker:

- John will be teaching the following classes in Soldotna:
 1. Cottage food industry safety – October 22
 2. Home food safety – End of November (No charge)
 3. Seafood HACCP segment 2 – This winter

Topics For The Next Meeting

- Barb Hansen volunteered to make a presentation on small/family farm food safety.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 7th at 1:30 pm