

AFSAC Meeting Minutes July 17, 2018

In Attendance

Jeremy Ayers – DEC/FSS

Dr. Sarah Coburn – Office of the State Veterinarian

Dorothy Duncan – DEC/EH

Barb Hanson – Environmental Health Lab

Kate Helfrich – Section of Epidemiology

Dr. Brian Himmelbloom – Kodiak Seafood & Marine Science Center

Lorinda Lhotka – DEC/FSS

Bobbie McDonald – DEC/FSS

Rachael Miller – Food Corridor/AK Food Policy Council

Ytamar Rodriguez – DEC/FSS

Kimberly Stryker – DEC/FSS

Dan Tew – Yum Brands

Program Updates – Kimberly Stryker

Program Updates:

- The program is in the process of filling open EHO and EHT positions.
- A number of staff have recently returned from Bristol Bay where FDA contract and retail inspections were conducted.
- Field offices are being kept busy with summer temporary food service permitting.
- At a recent meeting with the Centers of Excellence in Florida, the program's future implementation of online data mining software (Health Mat Dashboard) linked to Twitter, designed to filter key words that identify possible foodborne illness outbreaks was discussed.
- Jeremy Ayers has worked with the section of Epidemiology on the development and application of a toll free phone line (1-800- YUCK) for the purpose of receiving foodborne illness reports via text.
- A live version of an online food inspection application is pending following additional data base clean up. The development of the application is a result of a cooperative agreement grant with FDA.

- As the state shellfish sanitation authority responsible for issuing permits, approving growing water areas, as well as water quality and bio toxin testing, the program has developed an online shellfish portal containing lab data and water temperature reports useful to shellfish operators.
- Serving as a guide to collecting defensible food samples, a Good Samples course has been scheduled for mid-August. The course is open to all processors of ready to eat products.

Presentation: Food Corridor – Rachael Miller

The high costs associated with purchasing or renting commercial space has led to the increasing trend of food entrepreneurs substantially reducing overhead by sharing commercial kitchen space that is operated by another permitted food processor. Acting upon this trend, The Food Corridor, which describes itself as, “the Air BnB for commercial food business”, is a service that provides the means for food entrepreneurs to connect with other entrepreneurs or organizations operating permitted commercial kitchens available for sharing. The Food Corridor also provides support such as document storage, invoicing, a 166 page resource guide, and a search engine that locates shared kitchens by zip code.

Member Updates

Lorinda Lhotka

Web pages are in development concerning safe methods of handling donated foods.

Dan Tew

Since October of last year, Yum Brands has been utilizing a similar online resource as Health Mat Dashboard that tracks keywords associated with foodborne illness, prompting alerts to be sent to Yum Brands establishments located in affected communities.

Dr. Sarah Coburn

Dr. Coburn and Dr. Gerlach have been involved in outreach efforts throughout the state.

Dr. Himmelbloom

- Dr. Himmelbloom's work as a process authority continues by way of a collaborative effort with Jeremy Ayers to provide safe food processing recommendations to the Anchorage processing firm Heather's Choice.
- Dr. Himmelbloom and EHO Lani Thompson recently participated in a public meeting in Kodiak concerning farmers markets.
- Efforts continue to clarify the dangers associated with the consumption of raw milk and to establish protocols for the safe processing of traditional foods such as seal oil.

Kate Helfrich

- The majority of recent multi-state foodborne illness outbreak cases have been closed.
- The section of Epidemiology is at present fully staffed.

Topics For The Next Meeting

An invitation has been extended to the operators of the Anchorage food processing firm Heather's Choice to attend the next meeting.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 16, 2018.