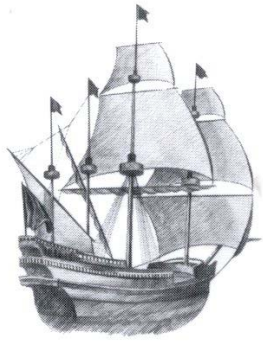


NORTHEAST NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF CASA



Voyager

Spring 2008

Vol. 1 - 2008

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President's Message - by Clarence Davis

Greetings fellow Voyagers! As I take my turn at the helm, I want to thank you all for staying aboard the good ship Halfmoon as NENY continues its journey providing useful training; fostering open communications among state, local and federal agencies, building trust with industry; and promoting leadership and goodwill.

NENY hosted the 92nd CASA Education Conference in Saratoga Springs May 6-9, 2008. Several NENY members were presenters at the annual conference. Joe Corby, Director, Division of Food Safety and Inspection, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, delivered the Keynote Address. Barbara Gerzonich, Chief Sanitarian, New York State Health Department, presented "Foodborne Outbreaks-The New York State Perspective".

Will Francis, Director, Milk Control and Dairy Services, NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets, presented "Raw Milk-A Nation of Differences".

We have the wind; the sails are set, cast off! The journey continues.

While we are re-energized, basking in the pride of our successful hosting of the annual conference, we must be mindful of the ever present challenges that lie ahead. The most daunting of those challenges is membership. With this renewed energy and pride, we must **inspire** our co-workers, friends and industry to join and actively participate in NENY. **Inspire** by telling them that NENY provides invaluable training and guidance at our quarterly meetings and annual conference. **Inspire** by telling co-workers, friends and industry

that NENY is an association where there is camaraderie. **Inspire** by telling co-workers, friends and industry that lessons can be learned from the answer to a simple question like "Did you know...?". **Inspire** by telling them that NENY is an association where ideas, beliefs and scientific research impacting **food safety, human and animal health can be shared.**

Finally, we must tell our co-workers, friends and industry that NENY is a great place to network and have fun. We must tell them that NENY is sailing smoothly aboard the Halfmoon on a fantastic voyage! Every Voyager, co-worker, friend and industry is cordially invited to each and every one of NENY's Quarterly Meetings.

Permission is granted to come aboard!

Study Ranks U.S. Seventh In Food Safety

The *Food Safety Performance World Ranking 2008*, is a new study that ranks the relative food safety of 17 industrialized countries based upon four major areas: consumer affairs; biosecurity and trades; government and recalls; and traceability and management. The study, authored by two University of Regina professors, compared food safety systems in each of the respective coun-

tries to come up with the ranking. Rankings ranged from superior, to average, to poor.

- 1 United Kingdom - Superior
- 2 Japan - Superior
- 3 Denmark - Superior
- 4 Australia - Superior
- 5 Canada - Superior
- 6 Finland - Average
- 7 United States - Average
- 8 Switzerland - Average
- 9 Norway - Average

- 10 Germany - Average
- 11 Italy - Average
- 12 Netherlands - Average
- 13 Sweden - Average
- 14 Austria - Average
- 15 France - Poor
- 16 Belgium - Poor
- 17 Ireland - Poor

More info; www.uregina.ca





**Toxins in the environment
subject of Spring meeting**



Toxic Hazards Explored At Spring Quarterly Meeting

The issue of common toxins in the environment and ways to avoid unhealthy exposures to those toxins were discussed at NENY-CASA's Spring Quarterly meeting. The afternoon meeting was held at the Washington Ave. Extension Polish Community Center on March 14, 2008 and explored four different toxic exposures ranging from lead, mold, chemicals in fish and second-hand smoke.

Curt Vincent of the New York State Department of

Agriculture and Markets reviewed the agency's "Lead Surveillance Program", discussing lead contamination in a wide variety of food products and toys. Mr. Vincent recapped efforts to remove contaminated products from the marketplace before lead poisoning could occur.

Mr. Tony Forti from the New York State Health Department, Bureau of Toxic Substance Assessment covered the 2007-2008 Health Advisories for chemicals in

sportfish and game. The advisories is released on a yearly basis and gives practical information on toxic chemical levels in fish and game and how to protect yourself if you consume them.

Mr. Ron Groves of the Albany County Health Department gave a presentation entitled "This Mold House" discussing the causes and cures for toxic mold build-up in homes. The slide presentation covered some extreme mold contamination and opened the eyes of audience members.

Dues Reminder—Renew or Join Today

NENY-CASA needs its members; both old and new. Please take some time to renew your membership if you have not already. Go to the CASA website at www.casafdo.org, print out an application, or use the one included in this newsletter and mail it with the fee.

CASA is a bargain in these hard economic times at just \$15 for regulatory members

and \$35 for associate members. You get valuable training and make professional relationships in the deal. We also challenge members to bring a new person into the organization.

Applications can also be mailed to Marianne Stone at the Albany County Health Dept., P.O. Box 678, Albany, New York 12201.

NENY-CASA thanks you.

The final presentation was given by Ms. Ursula Bauer the director of the New York State Department of Health's Tobacco Control Program. Ms. Bauer related the toxic effects of second hand smoke on children.

The meeting was attended by approximately 35-40 people. Elections for NENY-CASA were also held at this quarterly meeting. See elected officers on page one inset box.

**"If I could get my membership fee back, I'd resign from the human race."
Fred Allen**

Agriculture & Markets Requires Food Safety Education Certification For Retail Food Stores; Health Dept. Rule Pending

Owner and/or operators of retail food stores regulated by NYS Agriculture and Markets are now required to have a food safe certification for those stores where food is prepared on premises. The recently amended law requires establishments, with certain exceptions, to demonstrate that at least one

employee has been properly certified. Courses must be approved by the department, be 10 or more hours and cover one or more topics ranging from NYS statutes, food microbiology, food-borne illness, HACCP, cleaning and sanitation, personal hygiene, temperature control, food security and pest

control. Recertification is required every 2 years.

The NYS Legislature passed a similar requirement for food service establishments regulated by State and County Health Departments. Final regulations are pending at this time.



"Fish is the only food that is considered spoiled once it smells like what it is"

P.J. O'Rourke

NENY-CASA Hosts 92nd Annual Conference In Saratoga Springs



Will Francis; NYS Ag & Markets

The CASA organization celebrated 92 years in existence at its' Annual Education Conference and NENY-CASA was proud to be the local conference hosts for the event. The Holiday Inn in beautiful Saratoga Springs, New York was the site of the conference from May 6-9, which provided attendees with contemporary training, an opportunity for professional networking and some enjoyable social events as well.

The educational conference kicked off on Wednesday, May 7 with the key note address given by Joseph Corby, Director of the Division of Food Safety and Inspection of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and long time NENY-CASA

member. Joe provided a outline of the public health challenges facing organizations like CASA and AFDO along with a unique historical perspective of CASA.

Additional topics included such diverse subjects as the Castleberry Recall, FDA import regulations, trans-fat update, a recap of foodborne illness data for New York State, health concerns associated with raw milk, vending machine terror, food and drug anitcounterfeit technologies, the status of bee populations in the Northeast, ethnic foods and MRSA.

The CASA Awards banquet was held Thursday evening, which was hosted by CASA President and NENY Executive Board Representative Andrew Suflita. Mr. Suflita, Environmental Health Director for the Schenectady County Health Department was awarded a life membership in CASA.

Darby Greco of the NYS Health Department and NENY Conference, acting as Chair of the H. Thompson

Price Scholarship Committee awarded the scholarship the Jared Port, the son of NENY-CASA member Nancy Port.

Two Special President's awards were given out by President Suflita. One to Ken Hohe of the Susquehanna Conference to recognize his long service to the organization, most recently retiring from the position of CASA Secretary. The other award was a CASA lifetime achievement award given to Joe Corby of the NENY Conference and the new Executive Director of AFDO.

The evening's festivities reached a climax when last year's CASA Award winner, George Zameska, awarded Ms. Glenda Christy with the 2008 CASA Award.

The conference wrapped up on Friday with the passing of the gavel to the new incoming CASA President, Howard Rabinovitch of the Philadelphia Conference.

For more information on the conference, check out CASA's website.



Andrew Suflita passes the CASA gavel to incoming President, Howard Rabinovitch



Glenda Christy of the Pittsburgh Conference is awarded 2008 CASA Award



NENY's Barbara Gerzonich discusses foodborne illness data from New York



Joseph Corby, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets

Joseph Corby, NYS Agriculture & Markets Official To Retire

Joseph Corby, Director of the Division of Food Safety and Inspection of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has announced his retirement from the agency. Joe was in charge of the day to day operations of the division with approximately 200 employees and 115 food inspectors. He is a nationally

known authority on processed foods and his talent and enthusiasm for public health work will be greatly missed.

NENY-CASA will miss Joe as well. Throughout his career, he has been a strong supporter of the NENY conference acting as its' President, VP, and Executive Board Representative. Joe

is a Past CASA President and the 1993 recipient of the organization's highest honor; the CASA Award.

His retirement from Agriculture and Markets will not mean his departure from addressing food and drug issues. Joe has been named the Executive Director of our parent organization, AFDO. We wish him well.

2008 CASA MEMBERSHIP

Now is the time to get your food and drug colleagues involved in CASA. It's a bargain that the public health professional cannot afford to pass up. Just print this page, complete and send it in to the address below with the proper membership fee; its that simple. Become a CASA member today.

Name: _____

Please affix pre-printed address label here, if available.

Agency/Firm: _____

Title: _____ Phone: () _____

Address: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

If you would like a receipt for your dues, check here: _____

I work in (*circle one or more*):

Foods cosmetics drugs devices
environmental health education/training laboratory/scientific area(s)

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Dues in all categories include membership in one of the CASA local conferences. *Please circle one.*

Baltimore	New York	Niagara Frontier
Northeastern NY	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh
Susquehanna	Virginia	

Check appropriate block below and enclose a check or money order payable to "CASA" for the amount indicated. Mail to CASA, P.O. Box 488, Abington, PA 19001-0488.

1. Regulatory \$15.00 _____
2. Retired \$10.00 _____
3. Academic \$10.00 _____
4. Associate \$35.00 _____

If you are an officer, chairperson or committee member, or attend a conference, your picture may be printed on the web site or in printed material.

NENY-CASA News - Hellos & Goodbyes

NENY-CASA goes through changes just like any organization. In an effort to keep you up-to-date with the changing face of NENY.....

We would like to welcome Nigar Hale of Paster Training to the NENY-CASA fold. Nigar has been appointed the Associate Board Representative. Welcome aboard!

Curt Vincent retired June 28th from the Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Food Safety and Inspection.

Curt began his career with the Department in 1972 as a Food Inspector working in Rockland and Westchester Counties. Over the years he was promoted to Food Processing Inspector, Senior Food Inspector, Supervising Food Inspector, Director of Field Operations and his most recent position of Assistant Director.

Curt has served as president of NENY CASA and was a long serving member of it's executive board. He is also a member of NEFDOA and

AFDO.

Joseph Corby also has retired from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. (see related story on page 3)

Do you have breaking news about a NENY-CASA member? Send the information into the editor for publication in the next *Voyager* issue.

E-mail to andrew.sufflita@schenectadycounty.com.



NENY-CASA Co-Sponsors FDA Northeast Region Food Seminar

NENY-CASA, together with the New York State Department's of Health and Agriculture and Markets will co-sponsor the FDA Northeast Region FDA Food Seminar to be held at the Albany Crowne Plaza on August 20-22, 2008.

The program for the food protection seminar will include a wide range of topics, such as New Listeria Guid-

ance, Raw Milk Issues, Hep A Case Studies, Mercury in Fish, Lead Poisoning Prevention, EHS/Net and CFP Updates, Food Safety of Locally Grown Products, and Employee Health Control Measures.

Reservations should be made by contacting the Crowne Plaza Hotel by July 30, 2008 at (518) 462-6611 to secure the government rate.

Full conference registration is \$175.00 and includes meetings for all three days, breaks and Thursday evening dinner.

For more information see the conference announcement on the CASA website at www.casafdo.org.

NYS Health Commissioner's "Tick Tour"

State Health Commissioner, Richard F. Daines, M.D. kicked off the first ever "tick tour" to mark May as Lyme Disease Awareness Month, touring the Vector Ecology Lab at Hudson Valley Community College.

"Lyme disease remains an urgent health concern, with more than 77,000 con-

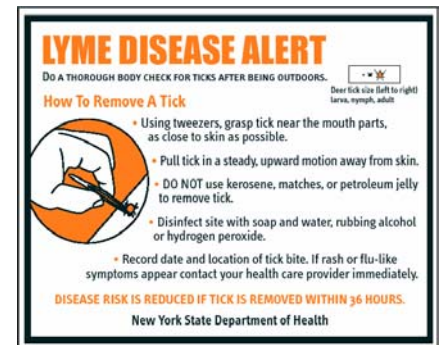
firmed cases reported since 1986", Commissioner Daines said. The Health Department is partnering with HVCC to increase DNA test-

"Lyme disease remains an urgent health concern"

ing of ticks from around the state in order to assess the risk of acquiring lyme.

Accurate identification of ticks is essential in making decisions about the transmission of illness. Four tick species out of 30 in NYS are capable of spreading tick-borne illness.

For more information on ticks and the illnesses they can transmit to humans visit the NYS website at www.health.state.ny.us.



Ticks removed within 36 hours of feeding greatly reduces the risk of infection

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Have ideas for the NENY-CASA Voyager ?
Please e-mail your suggestions, articles, and
NENY-CASA news to the editor. Thank you.

More Conference Photos



CASA Award winners in attendance, from left to right; 2008 recipient, Glenda Christy, Alan Taylor, William Kinder, Al Ondis, Joseph Corby, Ken Hohe and George Zameska



President, Andrew Suflita and Local Arrangements Chair, Darby Greco enjoy some rare down time



Andrew Suflita thanks Jim Sankovitch for his service as Associate Board Representative

We're on the web
www.casafdo.org

What is CASA? How does it fit into the food and drug safety picture? CASA is one of 6 regional affiliates of the Association of Food and Drug Officials and the largest affiliate. Below is a brief history of CASA and why it continues to exist and remain viable for 92 years and counting.....

In 1916, Food and Drug Officials, and interested affiliates in the Central Atlantic area organized themselves for the purpose of improving coordination of their respective programs at the local, state and federal jurisdictional levels – thus CASA. The current objectives of this growing professional association, as written in its Constitution, are as follows:

1. Promote and foster uniformity of laws affecting foods, drugs cosmetics and devices.
 2. Encourage and promote enforcement of said laws.
 3. Encourage and support programs which will contribute to consumer protection consistent with broad purpose and laws.
 4. Assist members in their technical work and development.
 5. Cooperate with other professional groups in advancing consumer protection under said laws.
 6. Encourage and promote cooperative enforcement programs with federal agencies and between related enforcement agencies in each state.
 7. Cooperate with the Association of Food and Drug Officials and other organizations having similar objectives.
 8. Foster and promote modernization of laws, procedures and inspectional and analytical techniques in the light of developing technological improvements relating to the production and processing of foods, drugs, cosmetics and devices.
 9. Encourage and promote improvement communications between and among consumers, enforcement and related producers and industry groups.
- Through the active participation of Regular and Associate Members, CASA works to achieve these goals, and thus, improve the effectiveness of existing consumer protection programs.

Food Safety Humor

Food safety is serious business. However, you can find humor there as well, as evidenced by the following items.

The Washington Post “Health Code Violations” page reported on a food establishment closed for operating without a license - the facility happened to be the Washington Post’s employee kitchen.

PETA, the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals recently offered a million dollar award to any scientist that could manufacture meat products from laboratory cell cultures, eliminating the need to slaughter animals.

However, in-vitro veal may be awhile in coming on the market facing opposition from interests that label cloned food products as “frankenfoods” It seems you will always step on someone toes.

Science has finally tackled the TWINKIE. Two Rice University students conducted a series of scientific tests on this much loved cream filled golden sponge cake and came up with some interesting results. A summary of the results show that Twinkies are extremely resistant to electrical current making a good insulator. The cakes do not burn well unless doused in

some accelerant. They can expand to twice their normal size when placed in water and if pureed can be compressed into a very small dense package. Twinkies can be dropped from great heights and sustain very little damage and if microwaved emit large amounts of smoke. Finally the scientists report that the control subjects were unchanged by the experiments and subsequently eaten.