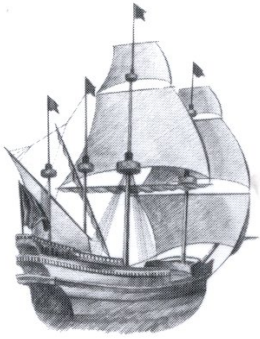


## NORTHEAST NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF CASA



# Voyager

Spring 2009

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### 2008-2009 NENY-CASA Officers and Executive Board

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Agriculture and Markets

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Schenectady County Health Dept.

**Secretary-Treasurer - Marianne Stone;**  
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**Nigar Hale;** Grant Sales & Marketing, Inc.

### President's Message - by Clarence Davis

Greetings NENY Members! This has been an inspiring year. I have sincerely enjoyed my term as NENY President. In my first President's Message you were addressed as fellow voyagers on the good ship Halfmoon. The question was posed, "If we are voyagers, where are we going?" History tells us that the Halfmoon was sailed by Henry Hudson across the Atlantic to search for a Northwest Passage. Although blocked by ice, the Halfmoon journeyed up the Hudson River as far as Albany. A fantastic voyage! So has my turn at the helm of the good ship Halfmoon.

On our first voyage, we sailed into the port of Agriculture and Markets for the summer training with current and timely topics such as Hunger & Food Safety in Today's Economy, Good Agricultural Practices – Good Handling Practices, and

Pasteurization and Pasteurizers. Attendance increased as did membership. With positive feedback on the training venue and topics, the Executive Board voted to continue this format. Our fall training was no less successful. Attendance remains constant as did growth in membership. Current issues of Tuberculosis in a New York Captive Deer Herd, New Tanning & Tattoo Regulations in NYS, and Water Supply Issues at NYS Ag & Mkt. facilities were presented by regulators with expertise in those areas. I want to thank the presenters, for taking time out of their busy schedules to provide this training to NENY members.

In closing, I want to thank NENY members for a memorable year. We made some changes and saw increases in attendance and membership

during my Presidency. I hope that I have served you well. I want to congratulate our new slate of officers and ask that you support them as you have supported me. We still have the wind in our sails. The economic climate may forecast turbulent waters ahead. However, NENY will continue to flourish and grow as you stay aboard the Halfmoon by renewing your membership. NENY continues to provide useful training for public health professionals and industry at the lowest possible cost. Make every effort to attend quarterly training meetings and inspire co-workers, friends and industry to join and participate in NENY. Joint efforts by the Officers, the Board and members are needed for NENY to continue to be strong and effective.

Sail on Voyagers! Sail on!

### Research - Have Your Cake And Eat It To; Without Trans-Fats

Trans-fats have become a hot topic for food manufacturers because although they give foods certain desirable tastes, they can have adverse health effects, namely raising bad cholesterol and lowering good cholesterol.

New research by UC Riverside chemists, led by Francisco Zaca, may have found a way to minimize the production of trans-fats in foods through the use of a platinum catalyst.

The platinum catalyst selects a specific pathway from many possible reactions, which produces partially hydrogenated fats without making undesirable trans-fats.

Researchers found that the catalytic reaction is more specific because they were able to control the shape of platinum particles. By controlling the surfaces structures of the platinum particles, in this case tetrahedral

shapes, the process allowed for selectivity in the reactions achieved.

For more information on this research, check out [www.sciencedaily.com/2009/01/0901231423908.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/2009/01/0901231423908.htm).



## FDA Issues New Guidance To Manufacturers On Use Of Peanut Derived Products

The Food and Drug Administration has published new guidance for food manufacturers that use peanut derived product in their manufactured food items. The guidance comes on the heels of the Salmonella outbreak that precipitated the largest food product recall in history and was traced back to the Peanut Corporation of America .

The FDA guidance outlines control measures and recommendations manufacturers should use when peanut derived product is an ingredient in a food product. Peanut derived products include

**“Protecting the safety of our food and drugs is one of the most fundamental responsibilities government has”  
President Barack Obama**

peanuts, peanut butter, peanut paste, peanut meal and peanut granules.

Illnesses from the recent outbreak are still being reported according to the Centers for Disease Control, postulating that people continue to consume recalled products that have been previously purchased and are still available in the home. A complete list of recalled products can be accessed from the FDA website.

The guidance recommends that manufacturers:

- Only use peanut derived product from suppliers that can show a 5 log reduction in *Salmonella* spp. or
- That the manufacturers insure a similar reduction through their own food processing methods

The recommendations for peanut derived products may be easier said than done



when dealing with *Salmonella* spp. The bacteria are typically sensitive to heat and high acidity, parameters that are utilized by food processors to control the bug. However, dry food products with low water activity and a high fat content may require processing at much higher temperatures for longer time periods to inactivate the bacteria. Additionally, acidity levels may also play a part in the mix.

Visit [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/pnutguid.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/pnutguid.html) to view the full guidance document.

### Men Rule The BBQ

Have you every noticed the praise a man receives when the savory BBQ steak arrives at the table. But what comes before and after....

A woman buys the food; makes the salad; marinates the steak; sets the table; reminds the man the steak is burning; clears the table and washes the dishes.

With BBQ season about to start, woman can fondly look forward to their night off—enjoy.

## Obama's Calls Food Safety System A Health Hazard

As reported in an Associated Press news article, President Barack Obama stated that the U.S. food safety system is a “hazard to public health” and in need of an overhaul. The sobering assessment was delivered during one of the President’s weekly radio addresses where he announced the nomination of former NYC Health Commissioner Margaret Hamburg to head the FDA. (See article; page 3)

Obama said that the country has too many agencies that have some responsibility for food safety regulations allowing for problems to fall through the cracks and for inefficient information sharing.

The lack of sufficient funds and workers makes it impossible to conduct annual inspections at the 150,000 food warehouses and plants across the country. “That is a hazard to public health. It is

unacceptable.” stated the President.

He cited a long list of what he sees as breakdowns in the food safety system, including contaminated spinach, Salmonella in tomatoes and peppers and the massive peanut outbreak that has sickened over 600 people, possibly caused 9 deaths and is the largest food recall in U.S. history.

Obama cited a increase in food outbreaks from 100 incidents a

year in the early 1990’s to more than 350 a year now. “No parent should have to worry that their child is going to get sick from their lunch.” the President said.



## Former NYC Health Commissioner Picked To Head FDA



President Barack Obama recently nominated former New York City Health Commissioner, Margaret Hamburg to be the head administrator at the Food and Drug Administration. If she is confirmed, she will be joining a governmental agency that, according to published reports, suffers from low morale, underfunding and a surplus of caustic criticism

from elected officials, which will make her job difficult.

Ms. Hamburg has garnered strong support from several prominent health officials citing her past experience as needed to handle the challenge. Dr. George Benjamin, head of the American Public Health Association stated that "FDA needs somebody who's highly ethical and can build and lead a team, I think Dr. Hamburg is the right person for that."

The experience she brings to the table is not without controversy. While with the

New York City Health Department she instituted a needle exchange program to prevent HIV transmission in drug users and fought a tuberculosis epidemic by forcing TB infected patients into treatment.

She received her medical degree from Harvard University and worked for several private and federal health agencies including Rockefeller University, the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the De-

partment of Health and Human Services.

The future of the FDA is uncertain and Hamburg will no doubt have a large part in shaping that future.

The President also named Joshua Sharfstein as deputy FDA administrator. Dr. Sharfstein recently took on drug companies in a successful effort to limit the use of over the counter cough and cold medicines in children.

## CASA MemberSHIP Sets Sail

NENY-CASA needs its members; both old and new. Please take some time to get aboard the Halfmoon and renew your membership for 2009 by going to the CASA website at [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org), print out a membership application and mail it in with the appropriate 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. To sweeten the pot, any member who brings a friend to a NENY-CASA meeting will have their meeting registration fee waived if the friend joins CASA.

Let's all take a voyage on the good ship Halfmoon and help NENY-CASA have a banner year.

## Drug Seminar Scheduled At CASA Annual Training Seminar

CASA in collaboration with the FDA is sponsoring an Industry Drug Seminar on May 11, 2009 at the Philadelphia Airport Hilton Hotel.

The impressive agenda covers a wide range of topics including the FDA's Foreign Drug Inspection Program, Import/Export Drug Requirements, Pre-Approval Inspection Program, Prevention of Cross Contamination, Drug Quality Reporting System and Validation Guide.

Registration for the seminar is \$400 and includes technical session, lunch and breaks. For more information on the seminar, visit the CASA website at [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org). There you will find a full agenda, registration forms and seminar information.

CASA hopes to see you there.

## FDA and Canadian Health Officials Explore Issues Around Bisphenol-A

Health officials from the FDA and Health Canada are exploring how to minimize levels of Bisphenol-A (BPA) that ends up in the food we eat. The meeting, held in January was designed to assist industry with a voluntary reduction of the chemical in their products.

Current research activities discussed at the meeting included exposure and management of risks, industry initia-

tives around changes in packaging, BPA risk assessments and possible future regulations and alternatives regarding polycarbonate baby bottles.

Available evidence at present from regulatory agencies in many countries suggest that current levels of exposure to BPA don't pose an immediate health risk to the general population, in-

cluding infants and young children. However, precautionary approaches to reduce exposure to BPA are being advocated by many consumer groups and governments alike.

On the local front, a Schenectady County legislator has proposed a resolution to ban BPA containers within the county. Titled "The Protection of Toddlers

and Babies Act" the legislation has yet to be reviewed and will possibly be acted upon in the future.

Reports indicate that legislation about BPA is also being researched in Suffolk County.



## NORTHEAST NEW YORK CONFERENCE OF CASA

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

### City of Brotherly Love Set To Host Annual Education Seminar

CASA members and friends will be heading for Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, this May 11-14, 2009 for the Annual Education and Training Seminar. The Philadelphia Airport Hilton is the site for the Seminar, which promises a ambitious and informative agenda.

So what on tap for the Seminar? Here's on small sample of the topics that will be presented: Food safety and security issues at the Presidential Inauguration and the China Olympics, high pressure food processing; why Americans make the food choices we make, an update on the Salmonella St. Paul outbreak, employee transfer of pathogens and on farm processing.

To access all the Seminar information, including the entire agenda, registration forms, to make an online hotel reservation and other information, simply visit CASA's website at [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org).

The Philadelphia Conference and CASA President Howard Rabinovitch continue to work tirelessly to insure attendees have an informative and enjoyable seminar. They urge all CASA members and friends to take advantage of this unique training opportunity.



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.

## NENY-CASA Schedules Spring Meeting & Elections

Spring has sprung, and with it comes the first NENY-CASA training of the new year. The meeting, on April 16, 2009, will be held at the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets offices and will explore three topics.

Susan Bishop of NYS Ag&Markets will give a presentation on Food Labeling Rules and Regulations, NENY members will get an update on tuberculosis in a New York State captive deer herd from Ag & Mkts, Dr. David Smith and NENY President, Clarence Davis will discuss direct marketing - poultry from farm to table.

The three hour training includes a deli-style lunch for the unbelievably low price of \$12 for members and \$17 for guests.

CASA members in attendance will be able to vote on new officers for the organization. The proposed slate is as follows:

For President - Dominick DiCarlo,  
*Schenectady County Health Dept.*

For VP - Cory Skier, *NYS Ag & Mkts*

For Secretary/Treasurer - Marianne Stone,  
*Albany County Health Dept.*

For NENY Executive Board Representative - Erin Sawyer, *NYS Ag & Mkts*



Please visit the CASA website for a full agenda and copy of the proposed slate of officers. The registration form for the meeting can be printed out and sent in or reservations can be made via e-mail.

As always, NENY-CASA members are encouraged to bring along a co-worker or guest to the meeting and discover what CASA is about—a unique networking organization that brings together regulatory, industry and academic food and drug professionals. Hope to see you there.