



Central Atlantic States Association of Food and Drug Officials

SUSQI NEWS

Susquehanna Conference

December 2008

Greetings!

As I write this message the end of another year is quickly approaching and I am reminded of how “time flies” and how important it is to spend our time wisely. Now may be the right time for you to consider running for an officer position in CASA and make a lasting contribution to improving food safety and to our organization! There are multiple opportunities to contribute and I assure you that you will feel pride in those activities and that your time is well spent. Please speak with one of our officers if you are interested.

We are asking that you “Bring a Friend” to our December 11th Meeting. If you have a colleague or friend in the field and they are not a member of CASA, bring them to the December meeting. If they join CASA, your registration fee will be waived at the next quarterly CASA meeting. In any event, we have a great meeting planned and they will meet a few people with similar interests.

Have a safe and happy holiday to you and your family!

Barbara Allerton, President

ELECTION TIME

The Susquehanna Conference of CASA will be holding an election prior to the annual conference in May. We will be voting for a vice president (two year term) and for the continuation of Melissa Vaccaro as our Representative to the CASA Executive Board.

If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please submit their name to Kenneth W. Hohe, Nominations Chairman, by January 31, 2009. Send it by e-mail to Kenhohe@aol.com or by USPS to Kenneth W. Hohe, 4731 Count Street, Harrisburg, PA 17109-3039.

Thank you.

IT'S RESOLUTION TIME

CASA MEMBERS--IF THERE IS SOMETHING THAT IS TROUBLING YOU IN REGARDS TO SOME FOOD RELATED ACTIVITY/REGULATION, NOW IS THE TIME TO THINK ABOUT PROPOSING A RESOLUTION TO EFFECT A CHANGE.

THE CASA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETS IN JANUARY, AT WHICH TIME THEY WILL REVIEW PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS FOR ACTION AT THE CASA ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN MAY.

THE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE PREPARED WITH THE WHEREAS'S AND THE THEREFORES'S TO HAVE THE PROBLEM/SITUATION CONSIDERED. IF CONSIDERED ACCEPTABLE BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, THE RESOLUTION WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE CASA MEMBERSHIP FOR ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION. IF ACCEPTED, IT WILL THEN BE FORWARDED TO AFDO FOR THEIR APPROVAL.

SINCE THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETS IN JANUARY, PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL TO MELISSA VACCARO, SUZANNE YEAGER OR TED VERESINK PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2009.

THANK YOU.

World Diabetes Day

Friday, November 14th was World Diabetes Day. Most people know that proper nutrition is essential for people with diabetes. **But food safety is also important, as diabetes can leave a person more susceptible to serious foodborne illness.**

Campylobacteriosis is four times more common and salmonellosis three times more common in persons with diabetes than in the general population. It is believed that persons with diabetes are 25 times more likely to be sickened with listeriosis.

Foodborne illness in persons with diabetes is also more likely to result in a lengthier illness, hospitalization, or even death. Diabetics should be especially vigilant when handling, preparing and consuming foods.

Download USDA's "Food Safety for People with Diabetes" at info@fightbac.org

Country-of-origin Labels to be required on Meat

American shoppers will now be able to look at a cut of meat or a pound of hamburger and see something they've never seen before—a label that says where the meat came from.

Starting Sept. 30, food manufacturers and grocery stores have to comply with a new federal law that requires "Country of Origin Labeling," or COOL, on beef, pork, chicken and lamb.

The new labels will tell consumers whether their food came from animals raised in the U.S. or another country. The law also covers perishable items, such as fruits and vegetables and a variety of nuts.

Some say this will enable consumers to avoid food that, for example, comes from countries that they have heard have food safety problems. It also will allow consumers to stick to American-grown food, if that is their preference. Because of the complexities of the livestock industry, some product labels may list multiple countries. That's especially true of ground beef, because some meat processors combine cuts from a number of countries to make ground meat and hamburger patties.

Food safety groups have hailed COOL as a necessary step toward broader consumer education and buying choices. But now they complain that the Department of Agriculture has defined it as narrowly as possible.

For example, they say, the agency has defined a host of foods as "processed," such as mixed frozen vegetables, which exempts them from the new law.

Agriculture tried to clarify this with some guidelines issued in August. A bag of imported frozen peas, for instance, must list its country of origin under COOL. But a bag of peas mixed with carrots is considered processed, and does not require such a label.

But if vegetables are imported in bulk and then mixed together by a U.S. company, then they are considered processed and don't need one.

Another controversy involves imported livestock. Under COOL, meat derived from cattle imported into the U.S. for immediate slaughter can bear a label that states it's a product of its origin country *and* the United States, even though the animal was raised entirely outside the U.S.

Melamine Contamination in China

On September 12, 2008, in light of reports from China of infant formula contaminated with melamine, the FDA issued a Health Information Advisory to proactively reassure the American public that there is no known threat of contamination in infant formula manufactured by companies that have met the requirements to sell such products in the United States. That advisory also warned members of Asian communities in the United States that infant formula manufactured in China, possibly available for purchase at Asian markets, could pose a risk to infants. No Chinese manufacturers of infant formula have fulfilled the requirements to sell infant formula in the United States.

The FDA contacted the companies that manufacture infant formula for distribution in the United States and received information from the companies that they are not importing formula and do not source milk-based ingredients from China. In addition, the FDA — in conjunction with state and local officials — continues to check Asian markets for food items that are imported from China and that could contain a significant amount of milk or milk proteins.

The FDA has broadened its domestic and import sampling and testing of milk-derived ingredients and finished food products containing milk or milk-derived ingredients from Chinese sources. FDA has recommended that consumers not consume certain products because of possible contamination with melamine.

Update on FDA's Investigation

November 13, 2008: As part of its ongoing strategy to address the present problem with melamine contamination of consumer products exported from the People's Republic of China, FDA has expanded its import controls on Chinese dairy products, and food and feed products manufactured in China that contain dairy ingredients. Since Oct. 10, 2008, FDA has had an import alert in place for specific products found contaminated with melamine and melamine-related compounds. FDA has collected additional information on the scope of the melamine contamination problem in China, and determined a countrywide import alert is warranted.

This action will help ensure that only Chinese dairy products and food and feed products manufactured in China that contain dairy ingredients are not contaminated with melamine and melamine-related compounds reach U.S. consumers. No adverse health effects have been reported in the United States from contamination with melamine of dairy products or dairy containing products. But melamine is not approved for direct addition to human or animal foods and no manufacturer is allowed to deliberately add it to any food for U.S. consumers. As part of ongoing activities, FDA will also examine a range of protein-containing products beyond just dairy and dairy-containing products for contamination with melamine and melamine-related compounds. FDA will continue to take appropriate regulatory action if these efforts uncover additional contamination.

AG SECRETARY, GAME COMMISSION DIRECTOR URGE HUNTERS TO HELP FEED THE HUNGRY, SHARE THEIR HARVEST

Hunters Can Donate Deer to Local Food Banks, Pantries, Soup Kitchens

Hunters can help food banks, pantries and soup kitchens feed Pennsylvania's hungry by donating extra deer meat to a statewide network that distributes it, said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff and Game Commission Director Carl Roe.

Roe and Wolff visited Diller's Deer Processing in Mechanicsburg, Cumberland County, to promote Hunters Sharing the Harvest, which is a program that encourages hunters to donate deer for processing into ground venison for the state's nutritionally at-risk citizens.

By donating an extra deer or parts of a deer to the Hunters Sharing the Harvest program, hunters can help ensure that Pennsylvanians have enough to eat this winter. Hunters and processors are urged to participate in this essential program to help keep our friends and neighbors healthy.

Participating hunters can take their deer to one of the nearly 80 participating meat processors throughout the state and identify how much of the venison – from several pounds to the whole animal – they would like to donate.

If the entire deer is donated, the hunter is asked to make a minimum \$15 tax-deductible contribution to help cover processing costs. Hunters Sharing the Harvest will pay the remaining fees.

Hunters may also donate a portion of their deer by paying the full processing fee and notifying the processor to hold a specified amount for the program.

“Hunters Sharing the Harvest exists because of the generosity of Pennsylvania's hunters,” said Roe. “For more than 15 years, avid sportsmen and women have been committed to serving those in need and have made a tremendous impact. I encourage all hunters to help make sure every citizen of the commonwealth has food on their table by donating extra venison this hunting season.”

Established in 1991, Hunters Sharing the Harvest provides more than 200,000 meals annually to food banks, churches and social services feeding programs. Last year, hunters donated more than 100,000 pounds of venison.

To learn more about Hunters Sharing the Harvest and obtain a list of participating meat processors and county coordinators, visit the Game Commission's Web site at www.pgc.state.pa.us and click on “Hunting” and then “Hunters Sharing the Harvest.” Information may also be found at www.sharedeer.org or by calling toll-free 866-474-2141.

SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE OF CASA QUARTERLY TRAINING MEETING
THURSDAY, December 11, 2008
Lancaster County Farm and Home Center
1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster, PA 17601
717 392-4911

Directions: From the west take Rt 30 to Rt72. Turn right at ramp stop sign. Turn left between Conestoga Marine and the Jones Honda dealer. From the east take Rt 30 to Rt 283 west to Rt 72. Turn left on Rt 72 going south under the Rt 30 bypass. Turn left between Conestoga Marine and the Jones Honda dealership.

Agenda:

8:30 – REGISTRATION / WELCOME – Barbara Allerton, President, Susquehanna Conference

HIGHLIGHTS OF EPIDEMIOLOGIC INVESTIGATIONS IN 2008
KIM WARREN, MPH and MARY THERESA TEMARANTZ, RN
Epidemiology Research Associate and Nursing Services Consultant
Northeast District Office Pennsylvania Department of Health

EMERGENCY RESPONSE
NICK DEJESSE, Regional Emergency Coordinator
United States Office of Health and Human Services/Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (HHS/ASPR)

PHARMACEUTICALS IN THE ENVIRONMENT
ELLEN SCHMITT, United States Environmental Protection Agency

LOCAL PHARMACISTS' PERSPECTIVE ON PHARMACEUTICALS IN THE ENVIRONMENT
COLEEN KAYDEN, Pharmacist
Williams Apothecary, Lancaster County Pharmacists Association, and PA Pharmacists Association

THREE YEAR OUTBREAK OF SALMONELLA MUENSTER
BONNIE KRAMPE, Epidemiology Research Associate, Southcentral District Office
Pennsylvania Department of Health

- 3:45 PM Evaluations / Q&A

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Pre-registration Deadline: **December 8, 2008** - to arrange for adequate seats and refreshments.
Please register early. YOUR COOPERATION IS SINCERELY REQUESTED.

NAME _____ Agency/Firm _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Registration fee: \$5, payable at training, to: CASA, Susquehanna Conference

REGISTRATION CHOICES:

Email to: tveresink@easton-pa.gov or Fax to: 610 250-6607 or

Mail to: CASA, Susq Conference, c/o Easton Health Bureau, 1 S Third Street, Easton, PA 18042

Questions – contact Ted Veresink @ 610 250-6765