



SUSQI NEWS

Susquehanna Conference

March 2006

Dear Susquehanna CASA Members:

Well it is that time of year again when things are starting new life: Spring. This is such a joyous time for me to see things starting to grow and planning for the upcoming Spring and Summer seasons.

I would like to thank Barbara Allerton for a wonderful program that was heard by all of Susquehanna Conference at the December 1, 2006 meeting in Elizabethtown. Thanks again for a wonderful program.

I hope all of you had a wonderful Holiday season and New Year's celebration.

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 16 in Myerstown**. The location for the meeting is The Country Fare Restaurant in Myerstown. Some of the topics for the meeting include: Food Chronology on Seafood and Shellfish, Plumbing issues with Fairs, and Risked Based Inspections. This sounds like a wonderful program and I hope that all of you will be able to attend this very important meeting.

This is also the last meeting for the Conference before we will be hosting the annual Conference in Gettysburg in May. The dates of the CASA Conference are from May 16 through May 19. Sue Yeager, President of CASA and I will need all of your assistance in finishing the planning and helping during the conference. Some of the areas we will need assistance in are Door Prizes, Silent Auction and stuffing the Goody bags upon arrival at the Conference.

I look forward to seeing all of you on Thursday, March 16, 2006 in Myerstown. Till then, enjoy the coming of Spring.

Lynn Roche
President of Susquehanna Conference

CASA's 90th Annual Conference will be hosted this year by the Susquehanna Conference in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania from May 16-19. The conference will feature a wide range of seminars geared around important issues in public health—pertinent to both regulatory and industry professionals.

Attendance is open to CASA members and non-members alike and promises to be an informative training and networking experience.

Additional information on the conference program, registration forms, local Gettysburg attractions, and conference activities are posted on the CASA website. The CASA Executive Board and your host, the Susquehanna Conference, invites you visit www.casafdo.org to obtain all the information you will need regarding the upcoming conference.

We look forward to seeing all CASA members and friends in Gettysburg this May.

FDA ISSUES DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR THE SAFE PRODUCTION OF FRESH-CUT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

To minimize microbial food safety hazards common to the processing of most fresh-cut fruits and vegetables sold to consumers in a ready-to-eat form, The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today published a draft guidance document for producers of fresh-cut produce entitled "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables."

"Fresh cut produce is the fastest growing sector of the fresh produce industry. This document should help to improve safety by providing clearer guidance on how to reduce health hazards that are potentially introduced during the production process," said Acting FDA Commissioner Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach.

Processing produce into fresh-cut produce increases the risk of bacterial contamination and growth by breaking the natural exterior barrier of the produce by peeling, slicing, coring, trimming, or mashing with or without washing or other treatment before being packaged for consumption. Examples of fresh-cut products are shredded lettuce, sliced tomatoes, salad mixes (raw vegetable salads), peeled baby carrots, broccoli florets, cauliflower florets, cut celery stalks, shredded cabbage, cut melons, sliced pineapple, and sectioned grapefruit.

This draft guidance discusses the production and harvesting of fresh produce and provides recommendations for fresh-cut processing in several areas-- (1) personnel health and hygiene, (2) training, (3) building and equipment, (4) sanitation operations, and (5) fresh-cut produce production and processing controls from product specification to packaging, storage and transport. The final chapters provide recommendations on recordkeeping and on recalls and tracebacks. The guide complements FDA's Current Good Manufacturing Practices regulations by providing specific guidance on the processing of fresh-cut produce.

In the draft guidance, FDA recommends that processors encourage the adoption of safe practices by their partners throughout the supply chain, including produce growers, packers, distributors, transporters, importers, exporters, retailers, food service operators, and consumers, to ensure that the processor's efforts will be enhanced. These practices include:

- Establishing a company policy that employees report any active case of illness to supervisors before beginning work and training;
- Training supervisors to recognize typical signs/symptoms of infectious disease; maintain the proper first aid to protect and cover any wound; and not allow an employee to work with any aspect of fresh or fresh-cut produce, processing equipment or tools until the wound has healed and/or the infectious disease has been treated.

The guidance also recommends that fresh-cut processors consider a preventive control program such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system to build safety into the processing operations for fresh-cut fruits and vegetables. HACCP is a prevention-based food safety system designed to prevent, eliminate, or reduce to acceptable levels the microbial, chemical, and physical hazards associated with food production.

FDA believes awareness of the common risk factors discussed in this guidance and implementation of preventive controls determined by a firm to be appropriate to its individual operations will enhance the safety of fresh-cut fruits and vegetables.

Consumers can reduce their risk of illness from fresh-cut produce by following safe handling practices such as refrigerating the product after purchase; using only clean hands, utensils or dishes in preparing the product; and discarding the product when the "use by" date has expired. More information on safe handling practices of produce can be found at <http://portal.fightbac.org/pfse/toolsyoucanuse/phec/>". Written comments on the draft guidance may be submitted up to 60 days from the date it is published. Comments should be sent to FDA's Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, Md. 20852. The draft guidance is accessible on the FDA Website at: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/guidance.html>

Avian Influenza

Avian influenza (AI) is a virus that causes disease in various types of birds, thus the common name "bird flu." AI viruses can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese and guinea fowl as well as a wide variety of other birds, including migratory waterfowl. Each year, there is a flu season for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others.

To understand the differences and potential threat to U.S. bird populations, this fact sheet provides definitions, a historical perspective, and an outline of USDA prevention and response efforts.

For more background information and to understand terminology associated with this, refer to <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2005/11/0511.xml>.

FDA to Require Food Manufacturers to List Food Allergens

Effective January 1, 2006, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires food labels to clearly state if food products contain any ingredients that contain protein derived from the eight major allergenic foods. As a result of the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (FALCPA), manufacturers are required to identify in plain English the presence of ingredients that contain protein derived from milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, or soybeans in the list of ingredients or to say "contains" followed by name of the source of the food allergen after or adjacent to the list of ingredients.

This labeling will be especially helpful to children who must learn to recognize the presence of substances they must avoid. For example, if a product contains the milk-derived protein, casein, the product's label will have to use the term "milk" in addition to the term "casein" so that those with milk allergies can clearly understand the presence of the allergen they need to avoid.

The entire article can be viewed at <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2005/NEW01281.html>.

Larry Kohl, our Associate Member Chairperson has resigned from Giant Markets effective January 13, 2006. He and his family are relocating to Florida where he accepted a position with Walt Disney World.

We wish Larry the best of luck in his new job and thank him for his service to the Susquehanna Conference of CASA.

Members, check out the CASA web site

Members, please be advised that the CASA web site is now up and running. It contains the dues renewal notice, the information and application for the H. Thompson Price Scholarship, and the agenda for the 2006 Annual Conference in Gettysburg. You should constantly check out this web site to keep up to date on the happenings in CASA.

The web site can be reached at: www.casafdo.org.

Please think about attending the annual conference. An excellent program has been planned. Also, it is a good place to network with your counterparts from other states. There is a lot to see and do in Gettysburg. Once you attend your first conference, you will not want to miss the succeeding conferences. Hope we see you there.



When Chief Chemist Harvey W. Wiley, M.D., asked Congress for money in 1899 to determine whether food preservatives "should ever be used ... and if so, what preservatives and in what quantities," it's unlikely he could have imagined where his scientific experiments would lead.

One hundred years later, computer models and sophisticated laboratory tests have replaced Wiley's group of volunteers who sprinkled substances believed to be toxic onto their food. Magnetic resonance imaging, microscopes capable of picking out strands of DNA--the building block of life--and the mapping of the human genome promise to change the practice of medicine.

In the not-too-distant future, physicians will treat people as individuals, not as members of a "population." And the biology of the disease, not just the symptoms, will be the basis of the treatment. The FDA will play an important role in the development and regulation of personalized medicine, just as it did 100 years ago with the advent of food and drug regulation.

Building on Wiley's work, the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition ensures the safety of about 80 percent of all food consumed in the United States. The FDA's food-related portfolio is diverse--cosmetics, dietary supplements, genetically engineered foods, the labeling of foods, and, in recent years, food-related provisions of the Bioterrorism Act.

It may be difficult to believe that a century ago, useless products claiming to cure a variety of ailments filled the marketplace. At best, using a product like William Radam's Microbe Killer may have done no harm. But with no federal regulations in place to protect people from the potentially dangerous substances in so-called patent medicines, there were no guarantees.

On any given day, the FDA's law enforcement arm--the Office of Regulatory Affairs--conducts inspections, collects and analyzes samples, and implements the Agency's regulatory policies. Biologics include medical products made from living sources such as humans, animals, plants, and micro-organisms. Today, the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research regulates products such as vaccines, blood and blood components, gene therapy products, and cells and tissues for transplants. Hearing aids, X-ray machines, wheelchairs, band-aids, toothbrushes, and contact lenses are among the medical products regulated by the FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health.

For an overview of the FDA's first century of protecting the health of Americans, and a glimpse of what the future may hold read our cover story titled "[The FDA At Work: Cutting-Edge Science Protecting Public Health.](#)"

FDA Consumer magazine

[The Centennial Edition / January-February 2006](#)

SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE BALLOT

As Chairman of the Nominations and Elections Committee, it is again time for the members of the Susquehanna Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association (CASA) to hold an election of officers.

Lynn Roche, the current President and Barbara Allerton, the current Vice President, will be serving the second year of their two-year term. Suzanne Yeager, the current Representative to the CASA Executive Board, having been elected and having served in that position for seven years, automatically continues to serve without being elected.

Two persons are to be elected with this ballot. The position is Member-at-Large. We will need two persons to be elected. The following named persons have agreed to have their names on the ballot, and if elected, to serve for the allotted term (two years).

Please cast your ballot by marking an X in the appropriate box or you may write in a name on the line provided. All ballots must be returned by the close of business on March 31, 2006. Please send to:

Kenneth W. Hohe
4731 Count Street
Harrisburg, PA 17109-3039

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Sandy Deaven, RN, PA Department of Health
Coordinator, Harrisburg ADHD Support Group []

Garry Ritter, Sanitarian
Allentown City Health Department []

Leon Napolitano, PA Department of Agriculture
Regional Supervisor []

Write in _____ []

Write in _____ []

Statewide Food Safety Certification Training

The Penn State Cooperative Extension, Division of Continuing Education, has scheduled a number of Food Safety Certification training courses for March through July 2006. The locations, dates, contact persons, phone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed below.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>E-mail Address</u>
Carlisle	4-3, 10 & 18	Karen Karnes	717-948-6536	ksk1@psu.edu
Chambersburg	4-10 & 24	Judy Mellott	717-709-0778	jam5@psu.edu
	7-17 & 28	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
Gettysburg	3-20 & 31	Judy Mellott	717-709-0778	jam5@psu.edu
	6-12 & 23	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
Lancaster	3-14, 21 & 29	Debbie Rubin	717-299-7667	dpr5@psu.edu
	6-1 & 8	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
	4-25, 5-2 & 9	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
	7-11, 18 & 25	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
Lebanon	4-11 & 18	Karen Karnes	717-948-6536	ksk1@psu.edu
McConnellsburg	5-15 & 25	Judy Mellott	717-709-0778	jam5@psu.edu
Middletown	3-13, 20 & 28	Karen Karnes	717-948-6536	ksk1@psu.edu
	6-5, 12 & 20	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
New Bloomfield	3-27, 4-3 & 10	Karen Karnes	717-948-6536	ksk1@psu.edu
	7-24 & 31, 8-7	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
Schuylkill Haven	3-10 & 11	David Holden	570-385-6221	deh18@psu.edu
York	4-7 & 21	Annie Haines	717-771-4197	azh2@psu.edu
	3-8, 22 & 29	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
	5-10, 17 & 24	“ “	“ “ “	“ “
<u>Chinese Language Courses</u>				
Middletown	7-24 & 31	Karen Karnes	717-948-6536	ksk1@psu.edu
York	7-10 & 17	Annie Haines	717-771-4197	azh2@psu.edu

Mysterious illness could have Katrina ties

George Graham, Crime/Courts Reporter

01-02-2006

Pafford Ambulance Service EMT Greg Coleman watched the polluted water of a flooded New Orleans stain, rust and generally erode the metal slide action of his Glock handgun.

Now the toxic water is threatening his health, as well as other Ruston-area first-responders who answered medical and law enforcement calls for assistance after back-to-back hurricanes earlier this year that may have changed Louisiana's Crescent City and other Gulf Coast parishes forever.

The paramedic recalls treating victims who trudged waist- and chest-deep through the overflow of Lake Ponchartrain with some of the same symptoms that now have him seeking medical help.

"I can't clean (the gun) because a film residue keeps coming back," Coleman said. "And, if it did that to a metal gun that is nearly indestructible, I can't imagine what it is doing to people."

Coleman is not alone. Other area law enforcement and emergency service volunteers also are reporting medical problems and attempting to alert the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals to recognize the health hazard being dubbed the Katrina Rash or New Orleans Crud.

Louisiana State Trooper David Bryant responded three times to the help call and also is receiving medical assistance after contracting a recurring 102-degree fever following his third trip. Doctors have been unable to determine whether his illness, which resembles pneumonia or bronchitis, is fungal or bacterial.

Lincoln Parish Deputy Tommy Doss, another early responder, had a different experience - a rash developed on his forearm shortly after returning from his stint in New Orleans. Topical skin treatment helped his forearm for a few days, but then the rash emerged on his legs. During treatment, it also returned to his arm.

At the beginning of Coleman's first tour, the water did not appear to be contaminated, he said. That quickly changed.

"We would be wading along and find ourselves walking beside dead and decomposing bodies," Coleman said. "In the heat, the water became very stagnant with a combination of sewage, bodies, gas, oil and other chemicals. It was horrible - and it smelled horrible.

"We were trying to save lives, but we never thought we would encounter this catastrophic experience in our own country - hunger, extreme thirst, people dying."

Coleman returned to Ruston on Sept. 6 and during the next two or three days, his appetite disappeared and his body rejected all food. He was admitted to Lincoln General Hospital and was given hepatitis and tuberculosis shots, and a series of tests were run. Then internal symptoms showed up.

"The abdominal cramps were extremely painful, the skin rash was still there and the vomiting was horrific," Coleman said. "The doctor told me he had never seen anything like what my symptoms were and said he couldn't diagnose what I had."

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Web site at www.ashp.org, has posted an article claiming several residents in other

states who traveled to New Orleans in the wake of Katrina have come down with skin infections and rashes.

Amy M. Hollar, a pharmacy practice resident at Mission Hospitals in Asheville, N.C., calls the condition the Katrina Rash. The ASHP field hospital treated several local (New Orleans) residents and relief workers for various skin infections and rashes. Several patients were diagnosed with methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

Robert Leeds, a critical care pharmacist at Durham (N.C.) Regional Hospital, part of the Duke University Health System, said another skin infection is being identified as being caused by the marine bacterium Vibrio fischeri.

A third skin infection is suspected by epidemiologists at the field hospital to be a contact dermatitis, Hollar said. Heather Tornabene is a licensed practical nurse and a first-responder EMT. She volunteered to go to New Orleans twice and says MRSA is very dangerous.

"MRSA is antibiotic resistant," Tornabene said. "Most antibiotics won't touch it, so it is extremely hard to treat."

Doss recalls post-hurricane New Orleans as a huge smelly mess filled with floating corpses when the Ruston contingent arrived. The air was also filled with smoke from fires burning out of control since firefighters had no water pressure. At one point, a factory or warehouse explosion sent huge clouds of smoke into the air and everybody inhaling the vapors suffered an immediate, serious headache

Ruston Fire Chief James Tornabene said the firefighters who returned from New Orleans only recently completed their shot regimen because no one knew what they were going into.

"We had no time to prepare, as if anyone could prepare for a disaster of the magnitude of Katrina," James Tornabene said. "The second team we sent got Hepatitis A shots, and our EMTs had to have Hepatitis B shots."

Heather Tornabene said for the Hepatitis A shot to be effective, it would have to be administered 30 to 60 days in advance. Because of that, she was extremely careful to not go into water more than ankle-deep and constantly wore rubber gloves.

James Tornabene said he was concerned about air-borne particles, but respirators were not the answer to disease prevention in aid workers.

"Respirators were impractical in the 100-degree heat and high humidity of New Orleans," the chief said. "One of the keys to avoiding diseases is to avoid prolonged contact with contaminants - the longer the exposure, the greater the chance of disease."

Coleman said he personally treated people in New Orleans with the same symptoms, and the problem now is getting the State Department of Health and Hospitals to recognize Katrina Rash as a legitimate health problem. He issued a dire warning to anyone planning to live in New Orleans.

Susquehanna Conference of CASA Quarterly Training Meeting:
FOOD & HEALTH RELATED UPDATES

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Training Site: Country Fare Restaurant
498 E Lincoln Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
717 866-9043

Located on Route 422, 1/4 mile east of Route 501

Agenda:

8:30 - 9:00 Registration

WELCOME - Lynn Roche, President - Susquehanna Conference
CASA

9:00 - 9:30 FOOD CHRONOLOGY--Pre-history to the 16th
Century

Garry Orner - PA Department of Agriculture

9:30 - 10:00 DIGITAL HEALTH--Trials & Tribulations and
What We Expect in the Future

Sheri Dove - PA Department of Agriculture

10:00 - 10:15 BREAK

10:15 - 11:45 RISK BASED INSPECTIONS--New PDA Inspection
Reports

Melissa Vaccaro - PA Department of Agriculture

11:45 - 12 noon BUSINESS MEETING - approval of Susquehanna
Conference of CASA Constitution & By-Laws

(C & B-L can read in their entirety at the CASA web site:
www.casafdo.org, then under the category "conference
quick link" choose Susquehanna. At the bottom of the
page, under the officer photos, select the C & B-L. This
action is necessary to provide uniformity for all CASA
conferences and to substantiate a proposal for tax-free,
non-profit status.)

12 noon - 1:00 LUNCH, on your own at the restaurant

1:00 - 1:30 Shellfish Tags/Traceback (Exercise)

Garry Orner, PDA

1:30 - 2:30 LISTERIA AT RETAIL - CD Video by PSU &
Discussion

Anthony Russo, PA Department of Agriculture

2:30 - 2:45 BREAK

2:45 - 3:15 PLUMBING AT FAIRS--What To Look For

Garry Orner, PDA

3:15 - 3:30 CRITIQUES

3:30 ADJOURN

Meeting travel information: For specific travel information use one of the available map searches on your computer.

General directions are: From PA TP exit at 266 - Lancaster/Lebanon, north on PA 72 to Lebanon, east on Route 422 through Myerstown. Restaurant is 1/4 mile east of intersection with PA 501.

From west, use Route 422 east to Lebanon, follow above directions, or use I-81 North to I-78 East to exit #13, Bethel. Follow Route 501 South to Myerstown, left onto Route 422 East for 1/4 mile to restaurant.

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Pre-registration CASA Quarterly Training Meeting
Thursday, March 16, 2006
Deadline: March 13, 2006

NAME _____
Agency/Firm _____
Address _____
Email address _____
Phone number _____

Registration fee: \$5.00, payable at training
Check payable to: CASA, Susquehanna Conference

Email to: tveresink@easton-pa.gov
Fax to: 610 250-6607
Mail to: CASA, Susq Conf
c/o Easton Health Bureau
1 S Third Street
Easton, PA 18042

Questions - contact Ted Veresink, 610 250-6765

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL -- IF YOU HAVEN'T RENEWED FOR 2006, GO TO: www.casafdo.org, print a renewal form, mail as instructed, or bring to the 3/16 meeting. WE NEED YOU !!!

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CAN WE COUNT ON YOUR HELP IN STAFFING THE 2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN GETTYSBURG? FOR A MINIMUM EFFORT, WE ALL GET A MAXIMUM RETURN. PLEASE CONTACT EITHER SUE YEAGER AT: syeager1945@comcast.net or LYNN ROCHE AT: lroche@susquehannatwp.com TO VOLUNTEER!!