

**VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OF CASA**  
**CENTRAL ATLANTIC STATES ASSOCIATION OF FOOD AND**  
**DRUG OFFICIALS**

**December 2006**

**NEWSLETTER**

**Number 3**



**President's Message**

*Christmas and the holidays are almost here! We at CASA wish you only the best of times during this holiday season and the happiest of New Year's!!*

CASA is looking forward to 2007 and already planning training sessions. With help from our FDA members, a medical device training meeting and tour is trying to be set up at Church & Dwight in Colonial Heights, Virginia for January 30, 2007. The upcoming meeting announcement and registration information will be in a separate e-mail first week in January. Please plan to attend with old and new CASA friends.

To recap our recent training meetings:

The Virginia Conference hosted an excellent meeting at Omega Protein in Reedville on July 26. The day included talks on "food allergens", shellfish sanitation", "heart-healthy fish oils" and a tour of the Omega facility.

The Virginia Environmental Health Association (VEHA) and CASA co-hosted an educational workshop on Oct. 20 in Charlottesville. Catherine Cummins, who is active in both groups, suggested this sponsorship and worked on making this a very successful training opportunity.

On November 8, WhiteWave Foods in Mt. Crawford provided the conference room, presentations and a tour of their soy and dairy plants. Also, speakers addressed the VDACS Dairy Services program and the "FBI's response to weapons of mass destruction". Attendees gave excellent feedback on this very informative meeting.

Hope you were among the participants at the above sessions! Feel free to contact any of the officers or board members to offer suggestions or assistance for future training activities. Please remember to renew your memberships at [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org) for 2007. Look forward to seeing you next year!

Janet Pruitt

**REMINDERS!**

**CASA has a New Address**



**Any dues or correspondence should now be addressed to:**

**Mr. William R. Kinder, CASA Treasurer**

**P.O. Box 488**

**Abington, PA 19001-0448**

**For an application, so to this site:**

**<http://www.casafdo.org/CASADuesInformationApplication.pdf>**

**Don't forget to check out the CASA website, please visit:**

**<http://www.casafdo.org>**

**MEMBERSHIPS ARE GOOD**

**JANUARY-DECEMBER**

**PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!!!!**

**Regulatory \$15.00**

**Associate \$35.00**

CASA members:

Just a reminder that renewal notices for 2007 CASA dues will no longer be send out to members by mail. Please visit the CASA website at [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org) to print out a membership renewal form and mail in to the address indicated.

Please note the conference you are joining by checking the appropriate box. Dues can be paid by check and/or money order made out to CASA. (U.S. funds only please)

Thank you for your attention to this matter and have a great 2007.

Christopher Thackston  
CASA President



---

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION / AN AGENCY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
P06-180  
November 2, 2006

Media Inquiries: Michael Herndon  
301-827-6242  
Consumer Inquiries: 888-INFO-FDA

**FDA Issues Advice to Consumers to Reduce Risk of Foodborne Illness from Fresh Produce**

**Investigation of Foodborne *Salmonella* Typhimurium Outbreak Continues**

As it investigates an outbreak of illnesses that may be related to *Salmonella* typhimurium bacteria in produce, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is reminding consumers of steps they can take to keep their food safe.

*Salmonella* can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy persons often experience fever, diarrhea (which may be bloody), nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain. In rare circumstances, infection can result in the organism getting into the bloodstream and producing more severe illnesses.

Based on information currently available from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the investigation shows a peak in cases of illness in September. This suggests that the outbreak is no longer ongoing. The agency believes that contaminated food products that caused the illnesses have at this point been consumed, destroyed or thrown out because they are perishable. Therefore, FDA does not believe a consumer warning about produce on store shelves is warranted at this time.

FDA is working closely with states and CDC to identify the most likely food item(s) that caused the current outbreak. If and when a food item is identified, FDA will investigate where the product came from and what may have gone wrong during its production, packing or distribution that could have led to contamination with *Salmonella*.

In light of recent outbreaks, FDA is emphasizing consumer advice to reduce the risk of foodborne illness, including Salmonella-related illness, from fresh produce:

### Buying Tips for Fresh Produce

- Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- When selecting fresh cut produce - such as a half a watermelon or bagged mixed salad greens - choose only those items that are refrigerated or surrounded by ice.
- Bag fresh fruits and vegetables separately from meat, poultry and seafood products when packing them to take home from the market.

### Storage Tips for Fresh Produce

- Certain perishable fresh fruits and vegetables (like strawberries, lettuce, herbs, and mushrooms) can be best maintained by storing in a clean refrigerator at a temperature of 40° F or below. If you're not sure whether an item should be refrigerated to maintain quality, ask your grocer.
- All produce that is purchased pre-cut or peeled should be refrigerated within two hours to maintain both quality and safety.

-Keep your refrigerator set at 40° F or below. Use a refrigerator thermometer to check!

### Preparation Tips for Fresh Produce

-Many precut, bagged produce items like lettuce are pre-washed. If so, it will be stated on the packaging. This pre-washed, bagged produce can be used without further washing.

-As an extra measure of caution, you can wash the produce again just before you use it. Precut or prewashed produce in open bags should be washed before using.

-Begin with clean hands. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before and after preparing fresh produce.

-Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fresh fruits and vegetables before preparing and/or eating. Produce that looks rotten should be discarded.

-All unpackaged fruits and vegetables, as well as those packaged and not marked pre-washed, should be thoroughly washed before eating. This includes produce grown conventionally or organically at home, or produce that is purchased from a grocery store or farmer's market. Wash fruits and vegetables under running water just before eating, cutting or cooking.

- Even if you plan to peel the produce before eating, it is still important to wash it first.
- Washing fruits and vegetables with soap or detergent or using commercial produce washes is not recommended.
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Drying produce with a clean cloth towel or paper towel may further reduce bacteria that may be present.

#### Separate for Safety

Keep fruits and vegetables that will be eaten raw separate from other foods such as raw meat, poultry or seafood - and from kitchen utensils used for those products.

In addition, be sure to:

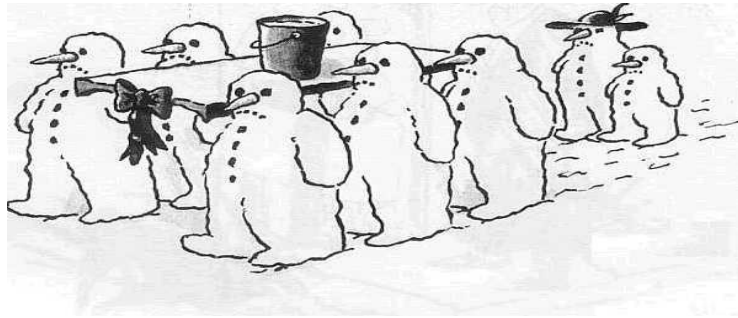
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot water and soap between the preparation of raw meat, poultry and seafood products and the preparation of produce that will not be cooked.
- For added protection, kitchen sanitizers can be used on cutting boards and counter tops periodically. Try a solution of one teaspoon of chlorine bleach to one quart of water.
- If you use plastic or other non-porous cutting boards, run them through the dishwasher after use.

####

**Note: the article be food safe/ was taken from the USDA website:**

[www.befoodsafe.gov](http://www.befoodsafe.gov)

## EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT



Snowman Funeral! LOL

Hi to all!

Almost Christmas and I KNOW everyone has all their holiday tasks taken care of and you are just sitting back, relaxing, and waiting for the big day. Yea right! Wow, what a hectic time of year I am sure for everyone, but it is still a joyous occasion-so don't let it whiz by you without enjoying the moment!

The last executive board meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Select in Timmonium, Maryland on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of December. We had a busy two days that were productive, and we were fortunate enough to have been invited over to Alan Taylor's house for a holiday supper. Alan and his wife were extremely hospitable while entertaining a fairly large group of people in their home. We had some members that could not make it this time to the meeting for various reasons, but still had a good meeting. We discussed many topics that included, but were not limited to, the following: 2007 annual conference in Va Beach, George Zameska's new position in Washington, DC, conference planning for the future, and the next board meeting dates and location. The conference planner issue I mentioned is new concept to us, but we have decided to try it for future conferences. We are going to enter into a contractual agreement with a firm that plans conferences nationwide. We feel that this will be a move in the right direction since they have a lot more bargaining power with hotels and resorts than we do as an individual group. It was a difficult decision since we all like doing things "like we have always done them", but we feel the time is right for a change and the move will be a positive one for the organization and its individual members. If it is not what we want, then we can get out of it in a couple years. You know how it goes-try it and if you don't like it, then do something else.

Now concerning George Zameska-he has accepted a new position with a food safety government agency in Washington, DC and will be leaving his post in Philadelphia. His conference will now be Baltimore (like they need more members!). He has graciously volunteered to continue his role as Education chair for the 2007 annual conference which is a big plus for us in Virginia since our conference is this year and he is in charge of the program and speakers. The Philadelphia conference is in the process of getting a new executive board rep to fill George's remaining term. I thank George for his work with this organization and wish him luck in his new an challenging position. The speakers for the conference are coming along well, but we still have some that have not confirmed in writing for the annual conference. We hope to have all of these firmed up by our February meeting which will be the final executive board meeting before the annual conference. We will be having it at the Holiday Inn Select in Timmonium, Maryland on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

You have probably gotten a "blast" email recently telling you it is time to pay your dues, so go to the casa website and do so if you haven't already. It is simple to do—just go to the web site <http://www.casafdo.org> and go to the "join/renew" tab and pull up the document. Fill it out and mail with your check to the CASA Treasurer-Mr. Bill Kinder.

The Virginia conference of CASA is always striving to provide interesting and educational training for it's members so I want everybody to put on their thinking caps and come up with some topics, and speakers for the topics, that you would like to see offered. We will make every effort to provide that particular training to the membership, but we need feedback from you on what you want and/or need.

Please remember that 2007 will be the year that the Virginia Conference of CASA will host the Annual Conference. We will be at the Ramada Plaza Resort-Oceanfront in Virginia Beach. It will not be in Virginia again until the year 2015-so next year is the year to attend!



I do appreciate the time and effort all the members take to attend the CASA functions and I hope to see everyone's smiling faces in the near future.

**Merry Christmas,**  
Christopher A. Thackston  
President, CASA  
Executive Board Representative-Virginia Conference of CASA  
[Christopher.thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Christopher.thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov)  
434-223-7416 home office  
540-201-2067 pager

# Food Safety Education

**Be Food Safe**

---



*We hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year.*

*From Your Virginia Conference Officers*

## Committee Chairs

Advisory Committee

Steve Fuller

[Steve.Fuller@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Steve.Fuller@vdh.virginia.gov)

Associate Committee

Monica Elliott, Chairperson  
Farm Fresh

[Monica.B.Martin@Supervalu.com](mailto:Monica.B.Martin@Supervalu.com)

757-306-7006

Communications Committee

Annie McCullough

[Annie.McCullough@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Annie.McCullough@vdacs.virginia.gov)

757-363-3909

Constitution & By-Law Committee

Steve Fuller

[Steve.Fuller@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Steve.Fuller@vdh.virginia.gov)

Drug Committee

Brooke Seeman, FDA

[brooke.seeman@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:brooke.seeman@fda.hhs.gov)

Education Committee

Frank Scherra

[Frank.Scherra@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Frank.Scherra@vdh.virginia.gov)

Food Committee

Charlotte Wilkins, FDA

[cwilkins@ora.fda.gov](mailto:cwilkins@ora.fda.gov)

Laboratory Committee

Janet Pruitt, Chairperson

[Janet.Pruitt@dgs.virginia.gov](mailto:Janet.Pruitt@dgs.virginia.gov)

Membership Committee

Joe Fabrizio

[Joseph.Fabrizio@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Joseph.Fabrizio@vdacs.virginia.gov)

Nominating & Elections Committee

Debbie Paul, DCLS

[Dpaul@dgs.state.va.us](mailto:Dpaul@dgs.state.va.us)

Resolutions Committee

Chris Thackston

[Christopher.Thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Christopher.Thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov)

**VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OFFICERS  
JUNE 2006 TO JUNE 2007**

**PRESIDENT**

Janet Pruitt, DCLS            804-648-4480  
**e-mail address**        [Janet.Pruitt@dgs.virginia.gov](mailto:Janet.Pruitt@dgs.virginia.gov)

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

Dawn Collins, VDACS        804-786-3520  
**e-mail address**        [Dawn.Collins@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Dawn.Collins@vdacs.virginia.gov)

**SEC/TREASURE**

Rick Barham, VDACS        757-363-3905  
**e-mail address**        [Rick.Barham@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Rick.Barham@vdacs.virginia.gov)

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Chris Thackston, VDACS    434-223-7416  
**e-mail address**        [Christopher.Thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Christopher.Thackston@vdacs.virginia.gov)

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Catherine Cummins, VDH    434-293-3504  
**e-mail address**        [Catherine.Cummins@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Catherine.Cummins@vdh.virginia.gov)

Tom Hudson, FDA            757-441-3326  
**e-mail address**        [Tom.Hudson@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Tom.Hudson@fda.hhs.gov)

Joyce Gaver, VDH            757-518-2700  
**e-mail address**        [Joyce.Gaver@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Joyce.Gaver@vdh.virginia.gov)

**EDITOR**

Annie McCullough, VDACS    757-363-3909  
**Fax number**            757-363-3861  
**e-mail address**        [Annie.McCullough@vdacs.virginia.gov](mailto:Annie.McCullough@vdacs.virginia.gov)