



North Carolina Food Safety and Defense Task Force

Established 2003

Wednesday July 8, 2020
Zoom Meeting

9:30am

- I. **Welcome & Introductions** –Veronica Bryant
 - 63 participants - Skipped introductions on Zoom meeting

 - II. **Agenda:**
 - A. Review of minutes from May task force meeting.
 - Nancy Smith in motion; Courtney Matthews seconds the motion. Minutes accepted.
 - B. Foodborne Illness Outbreak Update – DPH/NCDHHS
 - Emergency Management Update- Sandy- Receiving and distributing PPE; Designated feeding coordinator in counties. Food supply chain working group- monitor what will happen in food supply, processing plants, industry partners from each group. Maintenance mode is in effect as things start the level out and work through issues. Department public instruction, summer months with constrained school food. Currently there is hurricane preparation underway with mass care/shelter planning.
 - C. Call for Officer Nominations – Veronica Bryant and Executive Committee
 - Need to rotate officers in a more structured manner than past years; Chris Gunter nominates- Lynette Johnston from Food Science Department. This will be further discussed with the Executive Committee

 - III. **Business:**
 - A. Committee reports:
 - Executive Committee – **Veronica Bryant**
 - In August/Oct, the Executive Committee will start talking about what we will do for Conference 2021. A report will need to be completed later this year for the Governor’s office; Website paid by a grant from last year has expired in June 2020; The website is currently inactivated and we will need to see if there is grant money we can apply. Daniel Gaines and Anita McMullen, NCDA&CS will assist with this.
 - FERC – Food Emergency Response and Communication sub-committee– **Sean Silva NC Dept. of Ag**
 - It’s been quieter than usual- few updates besides recalls. Recalls- Now Real Food Raw Macadamia Nuts (possible contamination with *Salmonella*); Fresh Express Southwest Chopped Salad Undisclosed allergens); Fresh Express bagged salads containing iceberg lettuce, red cabbage and carrots recalled (Possible contamination with *Cyclospora*). Midwest states have gotten sick, whereas NC just recalled; On mission investigation currently- Nicole Clausen confirms); Garland Ventures Five Cheese Stuffed Shells (presence of *Listeria monocytogenes*)
 - Crop/Produce – **Chris Harris, NCDA&CS – Sarah Cope**
 - Virtual and in-person trainings occurring; Clusters of COVID-19 associated with farms/farm workers- Chip Simmons has helped with this. Created webinars to give out to agents. Opportunity for workers to be
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tested. To get a test, there are barriers such as requiring a physician's referral currently. There is a standing order for tests across the state.

- Dairy Committee/ Egg & Poultry Committee – **NC DA & CS, Daniel Gaines**
 - Dairy inspections began July 1st. 5 Dairy farms have gone out of business and has impacted the dairy industry in NC.
 - Conference Planning Committee- **Steve Tracey/Veronica Bryant**
 - 2020 conference in May did not occur. Assessing what to do moving forward but it's very early to know what 2021 will be.
 - Task Force Education and Exercise Committee – **Candice Christian**
 - Looking for September Speaker
- B. COVID Updates from All Stakeholders:
- Academic Reports
 - Chris Gunter, preparing for face to face classes in August. NC State University semester shortened. Safe Plates will share update with Natalie Seymour's discussion today
 - Industry Reports
 - Steve Tracey, plexiglass at Food Lion registers, customers and staff wearing masks now, working with distribution as it's been a challenge for the food at the warehouse to make it to stores.
 - Agency Reports
 - John Zeberan, FSIS, currently working along with each state to understand any issues; Michele Howard- partial stock orders have gone back to work for FDA; Nicole Clausen- ongoing investigation for cyclospora; Veronica Bryant- Changes to R&C with a reduced event being held in Charlotte; FDA Southeast Seminar to be held in Alabama this year is being postponed to 2021.
 - Daniel Gaines, NCDA&CS, Food program resume onsite field inspections with guidelines created for COVID-19; Susan Thompson, DPI, appreciates all collaboration with Environmental Health to allow innovative SAFE meal service. Anxiously awaiting announcement about plans for opening school. Will continue meal service in whatever manner is appropriate and compliant within USDA regulations and waivers. Environmental health update- New regional specialists, food program is now fully staffed.
 - Peter Sloane, Second Harvest, there are 6 branches that cover 1/3rd of state. Clear protocols are now in place with revamped structure to partner agencies. Crisis Planning Committee created to stay in compliance with Feeding America. No reports of positive COVID-19 cases in any branch; Debbie Hamrick, Farm Bureau- thanks all for keeping the food system open. They are beginning policy development process and moving everything online. Currently there have been 30 committee meetings talking to farmers about issues with COVID-19; Lisa Morgan, Chatham Co. facilitating weekly zoom meetings. They are receiving many questions about face coverings, if someone is positive, etc. Routine inspections continue

IV. Speaker – Update from NCSU Cooperative Extension and Safe Plates Food Safety Information Center– Natalie Seymour

VI. Adjournment