

**Conference for Food Protection
2012 Issue Form**

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Council Recommendation:	Accepted as Submitted _____	Accepted as Amended _____	No Action _____
Delegate Action:	Accepted _____	Rejected _____	

All information above the line is for conference use only.

Title:

Harmonized Food Code and Electronic Reporting for Health Inspections

Issue you would like the Conference to consider:

The National Council of Chain Restaurants includes 32 chain restaurant companies with representation throughout the United States. Current health inspections use a variety of formats, scoring methods, and electronic or paper recording of inspection reports, depending on jurisdiction. This variety leads to inconsistency in inspections making comparison of restaurant performance problematic across national chains. Harmonization and electronic reporting in a single report format would create searchable and downloadable databases for use in improving restaurant performance and enhancing the effectiveness of food-safety programs.

Universal adoption of the FDA Food Code in its entirety by state and local health departments would greatly facilitate the harmonization of uniform inspection tools and compliance reporting throughout the United States. Varying Food Code regulations hamper chain restaurants from developing consistent training materials, performance metrics, and corrective actions to health report violations. This makes regulatory compliance for national chains complex, time-consuming, and resource intensive. It also results in varying programs of food-safety protection. We acknowledge that a stated goal of FDA's Retail Food Safety Initiative is the universal adoption of the Food Code and we support FDA, state and local health authorities in achieving this goal.

Public Health Significance:

A harmonized approach to Health Inspection data collection, warehousing and availability would do the following:

- Allow uniformity on the application and reporting of health-code regulations and compliance activities across the US.
- Facilitate corporate/business owner awareness of inspection results, engaging restaurant leadership in the remediation of critical violations, inspection failures, and any other urgent inspection outcomes.
- Allow industry to perform ongoing analytics of violation trends across federal, state and local jurisdictions so that resources can be better allocated to reduce targeted violations, improve public health, and manage poor-performing restaurants.

- Facilitate cross agency/jurisdictional data sharing for state and national benchmarking studies and become a data resource for academia, industry, consumers, and the media.

Recommended Solution: The Conference recommends...:

That a letter be sent to FDA recommending:

- The FDA develop an electronic database for state and local health inspection reports that uses consistent violation categories/types and scoring methodology for health inspection reporting.
- That this database should be accessible by corporate/business owners, consumers, reporters, and academia for the purpose of better compliance reporting and data analysis to improve public health protection and better manage restaurant performance.

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