



Proceedings of the Conference for Food Protection Meeting

**April 7 – 12, 2006
Columbus, OH**

Conference for Food Protection
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Dear Colleagues,

Greetings to all Conference for Food Protection members and partners. The biennial meeting in Columbus, Ohio was just a few months ago and the effects of the event are still being experienced. The work accomplished by all the Council Chairs, Vice Chairs and numerous committees improves with each conference. Their work and sacrifices have again produced stellar results.

Many people are responsible for the success of the Conference. I would like to especially thank our past Chair, Janice Buchanon. Her leadership and vision have brought vast improvements to our process. Thanks and appreciation goes out to our Executive Team, Trevor Hayes and his partner Linda and to our new Executive Assistant, Lisa Wright. Their dedication and professionalism were instrumental in the record-breaking attendance at this year's meeting. Words cannot describe the tremendous efforts in planning, time, and preparations made by the Local Arrangements Committee that culminated into a phenomenal experience of Ohio hospitality. The Committee was headed up by Bob Kramer and Gina Nicholson of the Columbus Health Department, Barbara Hunt of Wendy's International, and Jim Ward of The Kroger Company.

Food safety issues are continuing to present challenges to our country particularly with the vast globalization of the food economy. However, the mission of the Conference remains the same; to bring together all parties: food industry, government, consumers, and academia to collaborate and reach consensus on food safety solutions. All these perspectives bring about innovative, creative, and viable solutions to our food safety mission.

We have excellent representation of all constituencies on our Executive Board. I would like to welcome the several new and re-elected members. New State Regulatory member is Mary Glassburner (Kansas State), Local Regulatory member is Bill Hardister (Mecklenburg County Health, SC), and representing Industry is John Gurrisi (Food Service-Darden Restaurants, Inc.). We also have two new federal representatives: Art Liang (CDC) and James Drew (Canada). Our re-elected members are State Regulatory member Barbara Gerzonich (New York State), Local Regulatory member Jeff Luedeman (Bloomington, MN). Returning Industry members are Cory Hedeman (Food Store-Hannaford Bros.) and Larry Kohl (At-Large-Walt Disney World Company). I would also like to introduce our new Council Vice-Chairs: Pam Williams (Yum! Brands), Aggie Hale (Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services) and Ken Rosenwinkel (Albertson's). I encourage each of you to visit our website at www.foodprotect.org to learn more about the Board, the Conference, and opportunities for participation.

The 2008 Conference is already in the planning stages and will be an excellent gathering of many dedicated and involved partners. I encourage you to join us in San Antonio, Texas and be a part of our food safety team.



Elizabeth A. Nutt, Chair
Conference for Food Protection

THE CONFERENCE FOR FOOD PROTECTION

Mission

Though the federal, State, and local governments are primarily responsible for setting food safety standards, many other organizations share a stake in carrying out enforcement of the standards.

The Conference for Food Protection brings together representatives from the food industry, government, academia, and consumer organizations to identify and address emerging problems of food safety and to formulate recommendations.

The Conference seeks to balance the interests of regulatory and industry people while providing an open forum for the consideration of ideas from any source. The Conference meets at least biennially to provide this forum. Though the Conference has no formal regulatory authority, it is a powerful organization that profoundly influences model laws and regulations among all government agencies and minimizes disparate interpretations and implementation.

History

In 1971, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the American Public Health Association sponsored the first Conference for Food Protection in Denver, Colorado. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an interprofessional dialogue on the microbiological aspects of food safety for individuals representing industry, government, and consumers. Not until 1984 did the Conference assume a more permanent role in promoting the formulation and use of uniform model laws and regulations among all government agencies. In that year, the scope was expanded to include toxicological concerns, and a constitution and bylaws document was developed. The Conference was incorporated in 1985. To assist the Conference in its further development, NSF International agreed to provide office services and staff assistance to handle the routine activities of the Conference. Shortly after the 1990 Conference meeting, the Executive Board hired its first executive secretary and began operating on its own, marking the beginning of a new era for the Conference.

Objectives

The Conference for Food Protection promotes food safety and consumer protection by the following:

1. Identifying and addressing problems in the production, processing, packaging, distribution, sale, and service of foods;
2. Focusing on and facilitating the food protection programs governing the foodservice, retail food store, and food vending segments of the food industry;
3. Adopting sound, uniform procedures which will be accepted by food regulatory agencies and industry;

4. Promoting mutual respect and trust by establishing a working liaison among governmental agencies, industry, academic institutions, professional associations, and consumer groups concerned with food safety;
5. Promoting uniformity among States, territories, and the District of Columbia. Territories including American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, The Trust Territory, and the U.S. Virgin Islands; and
6. Utilizing the following as the primary channels for dissemination of information:
 - a. The U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food Safety and Inspection Service in matters under its purview, such as food production, meat and poultry processing, and consumer information; and
 - b. The U.S. Public Health Service/Food and Drug Administration in matters under its purview, such as food processing and assistance to food regulatory agencies based on the model food codes and related documents.

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Current Organization

The Conference is managed by an Executive Board that includes 23 voting members who represent State food regulatory agencies from each of the six CFP regions, local food regulatory agencies from each of the CFP regions, the FDA, USDA/FSIS, CDC, the food industry, an academic institution, and a consumer organization. In addition, the Board includes non-voting members as follows: the Chair and Vice-Chair of each of the three Councils; the Program Chair; the Issue Chair; Past Conference Chair, the Executive Director and the Executive Assistant.

Three Councils provide a balance between deliberating the impact of food-related laws and regulations (Council I); developing various administrative, education and certification guidelines and procedures (Council II); and discussing the science and technology of food safety issues (Council III). Separate committees in each discipline may be appointed to deliberate and review issues and make recommendations to each Council. Membership provides for participation by regulatory, industry, consumer, academic, and professional organizations. Non-voting academic and other professional consultants are available to each Council to offer needed advice. Councils deliberate Issues and recommend actions to the Assembly of State Delegates.

Presentation of Issues

The Conference deliberates food safety issues submitted by interested persons on approved forms and within specified time frames. Issues are assigned by the Issues Committee to one of the three Councils for consideration.

Assembly of State Delegates

A delegate is a registrant at a Conference meeting who represents a State, territory, or District of

Columbia food regulatory agency responsible for the enforcement of food laws and regulations for food processing, food service, vending, and food stores. The Assembly considers and votes on actions recommended by the Councils.

Future Activities

The Conference has reached consensus on many difficult Food Code issues and a variety of other matters dealing with food safety. The ongoing business of the Conference can be found by accessing the organizational web site at www.foodprotect.org. The electronic age has improved communications and provided opportunity for Issues to be submitted electronically and Issue packets to be made available on compact disk. Ongoing improvements to the Conference website will facilitate a more streamlined approach to Issue submission and the registration process.

Registration and Affiliation Procedures

If you would like more specific information about the Conference for Food Protection, its Councils or working committees, or are interested in promoting the objectives of the Conference, you may obtain forms to register or become affiliated by downloading the appropriate forms(s) from the above referenced website or by contacting:

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2006 CONFERENCE ISSUES

Following are the Issues addressed by the 2006 Conference for Food Protection. These Issues were assigned to one of three Councils for deliberation. The three Councils of the Conference are as follows:

- Council I Laws and Regulations
- Council II Administration, Education and Certification
- Council III Science and Technology

Recommendations of the Councils were passed on to the Assembly of State Delegates. A Council recommendation of "No Action" reflects the fact that the Issue was deliberated at the Council level but, for a variety of reasons, it was determined that no action was recommended. A "No Action" recommendation could relate to the fact that a particular Issue was combined with another Issue, was determined to be better addressed by another Issue or that it was the wisdom of the Council members that a particular recommendation was not warranted at this time.

As the result of extensive discussion and consensus agreement, it is now standard procedure that the Assembly of State Delegates hears all Council recommendations including those recommending "No Action". As with other Council recommendations, the Assembly members can "accept," "reject" or "abstain" a Council recommendation, **but cannot change it**. Accordingly, the effect of a vote to reject a "No Action" Issue by the Assembly of Voting Delegates is to refer the matter back to the Executive Board for disposition.

For those Issues pertaining to the FDA Model Food Code, the Conference Board has 45 days from the meeting's conclusion to submit Assembly-approved recommendations to the Food and Drug Administration. FDA has agreed to review these recommendations and respond to the Conference Executive Board within 60 days of receipt. Recommendations with which FDA concurs will then be included in the text of the forthcoming edition of the Food Code. Those Issues with which FDA does not concur will be brought back to the Executive Board for further discussion and/or remedy and possible resubmission as Issues at the next conference meeting. A similar protocol has also been developed for Issue recommendations that involve the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA/FSIS).