

CONFERENCE FOR FOOD PROTECTION



Biennial Meeting INFORMATION MANUAL 2008

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General Introduction

This Information Manual has been developed to explain how the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) conducts its business and to assist all members in better understanding their participation in the CFP biennial meeting. It also provides an overview of the CFP process from Issue submission to Council deliberation and outcomes. For specific details about these procedures visit the Conference website located at www.foodprotect.org and review the *CFP Constitution and Bylaws* and the *Conference Procedures*.

Conference Objective

The Conference for Food Protection is a nonprofit organization established in 1971. The structure of the Conference provides a representative and equitable partnership of regulatory, industry, academia and consumer professionals. The goal of the Conference is to identify problems, formulate recommendations and develop practices that promote food safety and consumer protection. The Conference convenes a meeting every two years with work being carried on by committees and the Executive Board between these biennial meetings.

Food security concerns, the ever-changing world of foodborne illness, rapidly-developing food technologies and marketing innovations challenge all groups to work together. The success of the Conference is a function of its structure, its process and the expertise and collaborative spirit of its members.

The objective of the Conference is to promote food safety and consumer protection by:

- Identifying and addressing problems in the production, processing, packaging, distribution, sale and service of foods;
- Focusing on and facilitating food protection programs governing the food service, retail food store and food vending segments of the food industry;
- Adopting sound, uniform procedures that will be accepted by food regulatory agencies and industry and promoting these procedures among States, territories and the District of Columbia;
- Establishing a working liaison among governmental agencies, industry, academic institutions, professional associations and consumer groups concerned with food safety;
- Coordinating with the USDA and FDA to disseminate information regarding food safety matters that fall under their jurisdiction.

considered by the Board through an application process. With Board approval, the new Conference Chair then makes the formal appointments. Standing Committees provide interim reports to the Board.

Councils

There are three Councils:

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

Each Council is comprised of 22 members from industry, State and local regulatory agencies, academia, and consumer groups with balanced representation as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws. The positions of Chair and Vice-Chair alternate between regulatory and industry representatives. In addition, non-voting parliamentarians, consultants and advisors (often from federal agencies) are appointed to assist each Council.

In Councils I and II, eight members are from State and local food regulatory agencies; two from territories, District of Columbia or federal jurisdictions that regulate commercial or institutional feeding operations; ten from industry, one from an academic institution, and one representing consumers. Industry representation is apportioned so at least one member is from food processing, two from food service, two from retail food stores and one from food vending.

Council III has at least five members from State and local regulatory agencies, five from industry and the remainder at-large. Industry representation includes at least one each from food processing, food service, retail food stores and food vending. Greater at-large representation affords Council III the opportunity to include the appropriate technical expertise necessary for scientific deliberation of the Issues.

Members who wish to be considered for Council appointment may register their interest on-site. There is a formal online application process that begins the summer before the upcoming biennial meeting. Its availability is announced to all current members. All interested parties must apply.

Council Committees

Most of the work of the Conference is done in Committees. Committees convene during the two years between biennial meetings to complete discussions of the Issues assigned to them through Conference action. Committee work may be accomplished by face to face meetings, conference calls, E-mail or fax. Committees that are assigned to a Council provide interim reports of their activities to the Executive Board via their Council Chair. They then submit an Issue at a subsequent biennial meeting with a recommended action. During the biennial meeting, sign-up sheets for each Committee are available for members to indicate a desire to participate.

Council Committees are formed based on the Conference's recommended actions. The new Council Chairs submit, for Board approval, the names of Committee Chairs. The Conference Chair makes the formal appointment. The Committee Chair then selects the remaining members of the Committee and submits their names to the Conference Chair for final Board approval. Membership of the Committees should reflect the make-up of the Conference - representatives from around the country and from

regulatory, industry, academia and consumer groups. Federal participants (FDA/USDA/CDC) may appoint a member and an alternate for each Committee. The member participates in discussion but does not vote.

Final Committee reports are submitted to the respective Council Chair along with any accompanying Issue(s) according to a schedule approved by the Board. The Committee Chair or the Committee Chair's designee should be present when the Council meets during the biennial meeting to present and discuss the Committee's report.

A Committee ceases to exist when the Final Committee report is submitted, unless it is a Standing Committee, or the Council and the Assembly reauthorize the Committee to continue work on the Issue under consideration.

Assembly of State Delegates

The Assembly of State Delegates (Assembly) consists of designated representatives from food regulatory agencies representing 50 States, 6 territories and the District of Columbia. Each State has one vote, which may be divided equally in States with multiple food regulatory jurisdictions. The six territories and the District of Columbia have ½ votes each.

The Assembly is active only during the biennial meeting when its members vote on the Council recommendations. A quorum (2/3) must be present to adopt an Issue in the Assembly. A 2/3 majority is required to make a change in the *CFP Constitution and Bylaws* or to the *Conference Procedures*; other actions require a simple majority.

At least 150 days preceding the Conference meeting, a call for participation in the Assembly of Delegates is sent to State regulatory agencies and territories. Delegates are required to be Conference members and must register for the biennial meeting.

Before the Biennial Meeting (Note: For a graphic representation of the CFP process, see page 10)

In addition to the ongoing work of Committees, two significant activities take place in the months preceding the biennial meeting:

1. Council Formation
2. Issue Submission and Review

Council Formation

To become a member of a Council, a member completes an online application for a specific Council(s) that provides work background, past Conference and Committee participation, and a brief summary of academic and professional credentials. Notification is mailed to all members that the instructions and online application form are available on the Conference website. The application period is generally for 6 weeks ending June 30th of each odd-numbered year. Each Council leadership develops a recommended membership which is presented for Board approval at the fall Board meeting preceding the biennial meeting. All applicants are then notified of their status (selected; alternate; or not selected).

Issue Submission and Review

At least 150 days preceding the biennial meeting, a call for Issues is mailed to Conference members and to anyone who specifically requests a copy of the Issue form. Issue submissions must be made electronically using the on-line Issue submission form located on the Conference website. The website also contains detailed Issue submission instructions and an example of a properly prepared Issue. Issues must be submitted at least 90 days preceding the biennial meeting. A late-breaking food safety Issue submitted after the deadline may be considered for assignment to a Council if it has first been presented to the Board for review and acceptance.

The Issue must be within the scope of the Conference's objective which is outlined in the *Constitution and Bylaws*. The objective of promoting food safety and consumer protection is broad-based and multi-faceted but focuses on the retail segment of the food industry.

Issue Acceptance Criteria

In order for the Issue to be accepted by the Conference and considered for Council deliberation, all sections of the form must be completed and the Issue described completely including its impact on the retail food industry.

The submitter is encouraged to become familiar with previous actions by the Conference related to the submitter's proposal or to similar Issues. Previous Conference Proceedings located on the website can provide that background information.

Issue Committee Assignment of Issues to Councils

Members of the Issue Committee, including the three Council Chairs, assign each accepted Issue to a Council and a number to each Issue. The first two numbers represent the year of the Conference; Roman numerals indicate the Council, and a number is given to the specific Issue based upon its order of deliberation in the Council. For example, Issue 04-II-03 means 2004 Conference, Council II, Issue #3.

Issues Posting

Issues are posted to the website at least 40 days prior to the Conference meeting. An email is sent to the members notifying them of the posting.

During the Biennial Meeting

Orientations

Several orientations are conducted during the biennial meeting:

- *New members* receive an overview of the biennial meeting events and are provided an opportunity to ask questions relative to the structure of the Conference and procedures governing its operations.
- *Council Chairs, Council members, Parliamentarians, Runners and Scribes* meet prior to Issue deliberation to review and have a common understanding of uniform procedures. Council sessions are conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- *Prospective Committee members* learn how to apply for committee membership and receive an overview of their responsibilities as Committee participants.
- *Delegates* receive an overview of their responsibilities and the procedures they must follow during the Assembly of State Delegates.

Workshop

A workshop is offered to members preceding the Opening General Session. Workshops are organized by the Program Committee and deal with food safety-related issues currently facing the retail food industry and its regulatory agencies.

Committee Meetings

Committees are afforded the opportunity to meet preceding and during the biennial meeting as requested by each Committee Chair.

Opening General Session

An Opening General Session is held to welcome all participants to the biennial meeting. The Conference Chair presents an overview of the meeting events, typically followed by a keynote address. Federal agency reports are then given by FDA, USDA and CDC.

Consensus/Caucus Meetings

Consensus/Caucus meetings are used during the biennial meeting to discuss Issues and elect their representative(s) as needed to the Executive Board. Each of the constituencies identified below will meet at least three times:

- State food regulatory agencies
- Local food regulatory agencies
- Industry (food processing, food service, retail food stores, and food vending).
- Academics
- Consumers

All meetings, except Consensus and Election Caucus meetings, are open to Conference members as either participants or observers. Only representatives from each specific group may attend their respective meetings; however, the State and local food regulatory agencies normally conduct a joint meeting. Consensus Meetings also help State Delegates strategize for the voting segment of the Assembly of State Delegates.

Council Sessions

A meeting room is assigned to each of the Councils for the duration of the biennial meeting. Council meetings give all interested parties an opportunity to address Issues. The Councils deliberate and vote upon the Issues assigned to them. Each Council has an assigned Parliamentarian, a Runner, a Scribe and non-voting consultants representing federal agencies. The Runner and Scribe assist in managing ongoing communication with the members through postings and transcriptions.

Before beginning Council deliberations, each Council Chair reviews Conference rules; Robert's Rules of Order are to be followed at all times. In addition, the Chair reviews the agenda, sets time limits for deliberation on each Issue by any individual, how voting on Issues is to be conducted and any other pertinent information.

Each Council will post, in a conspicuous place outside the meeting room, agendas that show the sequence in which the Issues will be discussed and will update the agenda as they dispense with each Issue. This allows a submitter or interested parties to move from Council to Council to present multiple Issues, if necessary. The Chair and/or Vice Chair ensure that, as Issues are acted upon, it is so indicated on the posted agenda.

Council Chairs make every effort to arrange their agendas to accommodate presentation of an Issue by the submitter. Should a Council member wish to change the order of discussion, the Chair will request a vote by the Council. If approved, the Chair tells the audience and the Runner amends the posted agenda. A Council may also combine Issues or send an Issue to another Council for consideration.

Presentation of the Issue to the Council

The Council Chair calls the meeting to order at the prescribed time. The Council Chair reads each Issue title to the Council and entertains a motion and a second to bring the Issue to the floor for discussion. The submitter of the Issue is afforded the opportunity to present the Issue to the Council as it is opened for discussion and to address questions that arise during its deliberation. During discussion, the Council Chair recognizes members of the Council first and then those in the audience. Should members of the audience wish to be recognized by the Chair, they need to raise their hand, await recognition by the Chair, and then step forward to address the Council. The audience may come and go in an orderly fashion. Only duly appointed members of the Council can make motions, second motions or vote on motions. All votes require a simple majority for passage. The Chair votes only in case of a tie. The Vice Chair does not vote. Council Chairs may not present themselves as advocates in favor of or in opposition to any Issues brought before their respective Councils. If a Council Chair wishes to address a specific Issue, the Chair has two options:

1. Relinquish the meeting to the Vice Chair who presides as *pro tem* during the discussion.
2. Designate another Council member or member of the audience to address the Issue.

The Council may vote to limit discussions so that timely deliberations can be held. After amendments are considered, the Council votes on acceptance of the Issue as amended or, if not amended, votes on acceptance of the Issue as submitted. A Council can take the following actions:

- ACCEPT AS WRITTEN – Issue goes to Assembly of State Delegates as submitted.
- ACCEPT AS AMENDED – Issue goes to Assembly of State Delegates as amended by Council.
- NO ACTION – Issue goes to Assembly of State Delegates as a “No Action” recommendation. The Council must give a reason for this decision.

Council Reports

At the conclusion of the deliberations, each Council Chair prepares a two-part report as set forth in the Conference Procedures. Part I of the Council Report is for Issues that were recommended “Accepted as Written” or “Accepted as Amended.” Part II of the Council Report is for Issues that were recommended as “No Action.”

Closing General Session – Assembly of State Delegates

On the last day of the Conference, a General Session is held and the *Assembly of State Delegates* is convened. The Conference Chair presides at this meeting and business is conducted according to *Robert’s Rules of Order*. A court reporter is present to transcribe the proceedings. A roll call of the Delegates is taken by the Executive Director and each Delegate specifies what portion of the State or territory vote s/he will cast. The Executive Director’s and Executive Treasurer’s reports are given, and the Conference Chair outlines the sequence of the meeting. The Parliamentarian then announces what constitutes a quorum and provides voting instruction to the Delegates as necessary.

Presenting the Council Reports

Council Reports are presented according to a prescribed format. The Chair of Council I begins by delivering both Part I and Part II of their report with corrections as necessary. The Conference Chair, presiding, then asks the Delegates to identify any Issues that they wish to extract from Part I or II. An extracted Issue is one which requires individual discussion. Delegates wishing to be recognized proceed to a microphone and state their name and affiliation. The number of the extracted Issue(s) and the name of the Delegate requesting the extraction are recorded. Part I of the Council I Report, minus the extracted Issue(s), is then voted upon as a unit. Then each extracted Issue from Part I is discussed and voted upon individually. The Conference Chair, at the request of a Delegate, may recognize other members of the Conference who wish to speak to an extracted Issue. Next, Delegates vote on the whole of Part II and then any extracted Issues from Part II are discussed and voted upon individually. The Council II and Council III Chairs follow this same procedure. Issues dealing with the *CFP Constitution and Bylaws* and *Conference Procedures* are automatically extracted from the Council II report because they require a 2/3 vote.

Voting on the Issues

The Delegates vote on all the Council recommendations. The Delegate voting choices are “yes” to accept the Council recommendation; “no” to reject the Council recommendation; or “abstain.” A Council’s recommendation cannot be changed. Roll call votes are taken only if requested by a Delegate. Extracted Issues from Part II of a Council Report (Issues that were recommended “No Action”) that are rejected by the Assembly are referred to the Executive Board for its consideration.

Finally, Resolutions of Appreciation are read and approved by the Delegates along with a request for editorial authorization. The new Conference Chair and Vice Chair are announced and the biennial meeting is adjourned

After the Biennial Meeting

After the Conference meeting, a summary of the Proceedings of the Conference is provided to all Conference members via the website.

The Conference Chair, in cooperation with the past Council Chairs, communicates the Conference recommendations to the applicable federal agency. Pursuant to Memoranda of Understanding, the agencies provide timely responses with their position on each Issue.

Between biennial meetings, Committees work on carrying out the Conference recommendations. The Executive Board meets to administer the affairs of the Conference including follow-up on Conference recommendations, review of reports of ongoing Committee meetings, and providing policy and fiscal guidance to the Executive Director. The Board may also address emergency situations during this period.

Conference Communication

The Conference for Food Protection Website (www.foodprotect.org) is an information resource for all members. Visit often to view Conference documents (such as the *Constitution and Bylaws*), refer co-workers to the membership application, view Committee and Council rosters, review Executive Board meeting minutes, apply for Council membership, register for the biennial meeting, and check in on the *Current News* section. The website also allows members to update their contact information so that important emails or mailings will reach them wherever they are.

Conclusion

This Information Manual has been provided to assist you in understanding the operation of the biennial meeting of the Conference for Food Protection. Any comments about this manual should be directed to the Executive Director of the Conference at the address shown on the front cover.

Before the Biennial Meeting

- Councils are formed
- Individuals and Committees submit Issues
- Issue Committee reviews Issues and accepts/rejects
- Issues are assigned to Council
- Issues are posted on website and Issue CDs are mailed to members

Ongoing

- Committees address assigned charges;
- Executive Board manages Conference

After the Biennial Meeting

- New Executive Board is seated
- Proceedings are published on the website
- Conference recommendations are forwarded to federal agencies.
- Federal agencies review Conference recommendations and reply to Executive Board.
- Committees are reconstituted or newly formed.

During the Biennial Meeting

- Committees meet as needed
- Workshop
- Opening General Session
- Orientations
- Consensus/Caucus/Elections
- Council sessions
- Closing General Session/Assembly of State Delegates

The CFP Process