

Conference for Food Protection 2006-2008 Executive Board Meeting Committee Update – Inspection Form Committee Report

Date of Committee Report: March 12, 2007

Submitted By: Lorna Girard and Dale Yamnik, Committee Co-Chairs

Committee Charges:

Issue 2006-I-031 stated:

The Conference recommends that the Inspection Form Committee be re-created to work in conjunction with the FDA Standardization Work Group and the CFP Program Standards Committee to evaluate the need for future changes to the inspection form and marking instructions based upon Food Code changes and any other improvements deemed necessary. The Committee will provide a report back at the 2008 CFP Biennial Meeting.

Issue-II-034 stated:

The Conference recommends:

1. that a charge be given to the Inspection Form Committee to determine if current scoring methodologies have a public health impact on food safety and reducing Risk Factors or other violations; and
2. that the Inspection Form Committee work with the FDA to evaluate and assess scoring methodologies to be used in conjunction with the Food Establishment Inspection Report Form and supporting documents and report back at the 2008 CFP Biennial Meeting.

Committee Membership:

A list of the Committee Membership is attached.

Progress Report/Committee Activities:

The inspection Form Committee broke into two subgroups in order to tackle two assignments-Marking instructions and Scoring.

Lorna Girard is heading up the the Marking instructions subcommittee which has broken their assignments into 3 parts- 1. Combine marking instructions with code references (finished); 2. Currently hyperlinking the code references in the marking instructions to the 2005 Food Code; 3. Revising the marking instructions for the Risk Factors (RF) and Public Health Interventions (PHI) first and will then work on the GRPs.

Revision of the marking instructions will occur where there is vagueness or clarification needed. They will not regurgitate food code language in the instructions. Currently, looking at where there is nothing mentioned to give guidance on how to mark an item. David Lawrence has spearheaded this task and has looked at RF and PHI to see where they are weak or lacking. They've discussed this on a conference call and are reviewing his draft. They will be discussing this at the end of February. They would like to send out their recommendations for PHI and RF by March 9. Greg Able has given FDA feedback to the subcommittee on this.

The next task is to look at the Good Retail Practices (GRPs) where they know there are no instructions for marking. They still need volunteers to work on this.

They asked for feedback from the full committee by April 30 on RF and PHI marking instructions which will be sent out in March. They will then send this to the FDA standardizations Committee for their review and comment. The subcommittee is also contemplating a pilot test of the new instructions.

Chuck Catlin is heading up the scoring subcommittee. Currently, they are looking broadly at the scoring issue. They are doing a literature review to see what material is out there that shows how scoring may or may not be related to reducing risk factors. They believe this will be easier to measure than reducing foodborne illness, even though that is the ultimate goal. So far it has been difficult to find concrete studies that definitively tie scoring to the reduction of risk factors, although there is lots of anecdotal information. Issues that seem to effect scoring are:

The inspector
Communication from inspector to restaurant staff
Media attention
Posting inspections on Health Department websites
Posting inspections at restaurants
Posting Health Department Score or Grade Cards at restaurants
Manager Certification programs

The Subcommittee is looking at a survey form that would be used to collect data from Health Departments on what they are currently doing and how it is working in regards to scoring. Janice Buchannon has drafted a survey and a psychometrician from NRA is helping to evaluate it and make sure that it is statistically valid. The questionnaire will be used to determine:

What scoring systems are out there?

Has the health department done any studies or evaluations to see how effective their scoring program is?

The subcommittee will produce a white paper on scoring best practices. They may do a pilot study to see if there is an impact on RF and PHI through a scoring process.

Kristin Viger at the MN Department of Agriculture has helped to review a lot of literature. It seems there may be some correlation between scoring and posting of scores/grades and the reduction of RF and PHI.

A question was asked as to whether we could get some moneys for a grant for a University to do a study. Perhaps EHS Net could provide a study or a grant for a study. It was suggested we ask our Council Chair to bring this to the CFP Board.

At the EHS Net meeting in January there was a lady from Texas Tech who has been involved in a study on scoring. We are trying to pull in some of this information.

The committee is contemplating a face to face meeting in May.