

Conference for Food Protection 2004-2006  
Executive Board Meeting Committee Update

Council II – Certification of Food Safety Regulation Professionals  
Work Group Report

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**Date of Committee Report:** July 22, 2005

**Submitted By:** Dr. David McSwane, Indiana University, Co-Chair  
John Marcello, U.S. FDA, Co Chair

**Committee Charge:**

**Recommendation 1:** In future Conference discussions relative to training or credentialing of individuals responsible for the regulation of retail food establishments, these members of the regulatory authority should be referred to as “food safety regulation professionals”.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Conference charges the Standards Committee with developing a multi-tiered approach to the credentialing of regulatory officials and evaluates the potential incorporation of existing training and/or certification programs.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Conference charges the Standards Committee with using the FDA Program Standards – Standard No. 2 as the model for the evaluation of other training or credentialing programs for food safety regulatory personnel.

**Recommendation 4:** That the Conference request FDA provide guidance on how §8-402.10 can be practicably implemented within a regulatory food program and what may be the resulting legal ramifications to state or local jurisdictions that have adopted Chapter 8 by reference.

**Recommendation 5:** That the Conference charges the Standards Committee with conducting a joint review with FDA of the FDA ORA University training curriculum as it pertains to Standard No. 2.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Conference charges the Standards Committee with formally approaching FDA on the concept of forming a cooperative partnership with a focus on training, standardization and/or certification of food safety regulation professionals.

**CFP Issue II-017 – Certification of Health Officials:** The Conference recommends a letter be sent to FDA to promote the criteria of Standard #2 as the minimum standard for all entry-level food safety regulatory food safety professionals.

**Committee Members:**

See Attached Membership Listing

## Progress Report/Committee Activities:

**CFP Recommendation 1** – The work group has used the term “ Food Safety Regulation Professionals” in its deliberations per the CFP recommendation. Work group is moving toward the use of the term “Food Safety Inspection Officer” associated with regulatory retail food programs within the context of the revisions to Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standard #2.

**CFP Recommendation 2** – The work group has developed a draft proposal for a multi-tiered approach to assessing the competencies of regulatory retail food safety inspection officers. This multi-tiered approach is outlined in a revised draft of the current Program Standard #2 – Trained Regulatory Staff – that is part of the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. The work group intends to submit these revisions as an Issue to the 2006 Conference. The draft language in the revisions to Program Standard #2:

- Defines “pre-requisite” training courses (curriculum) that must be successfully completed prior to conducting any independent inspections;
- Provides a logistically feasible method for Food Safety Inspection Officers to obtain access to needed training either through the FDA ORA-U program or through an equivalent course curriculum;
- Outlines a approach for regulatory retail food program training officers or food program managers/supervisors to assess the equivalency of comparable courses to the FDA ORA-U curriculum;
- Incorporates the use of a Training Needs Assessment instrument as part of the joint field training inspections. The Training Needs Assessment is a field performance based assessment designed not only to assess a candidate’s readiness to conduct independent inspections but also to provide feedback to the regulatory agency as to the effectiveness of their internal staff retail food training program;
- Details the steps required, including completion of a training curriculum and fieldwork, to obtain a field standardization within 18 months of hire or assignment to the food program; and
- Describes the continuing education requirements for food safety inspection officers.

**CFP Recommendation 3** – Per the above discussion of Recommendation 2, the entire model for assessing the competency of regulatory retail food safety inspection officers is based on revising the language in Program Standard #2 and using the Standard as the impetus for implementation throughout the nation.

**CFP Recommendation 4** – Currently there is no logistic or economically feasible way to require regulatory food safety inspection officers to adhere to the criteria contained in Standard #2. Section 8-402.10 of the *Food Code*, cited in the charge, is intended to ensure that regulatory retail food program inspection staff can perform all the inspection responsibilities listed under this administrative procedure.

Provisions in the *Food Code* that end with .10 are not regulatory provisions but intended to provide guidance as to how to interpret and apply Sections/Paragraphs/Sub-paragraphs in the Food Code that have a regulatory foundation. There is no one universal oversight arm that is in place that could hold State/local/tribal jurisdictions accountable for training and assessing their staff competencies using the CFP model. The Food Code is a model document based on the best available science. State and other regulatory jurisdictions are not obligated to follow/adopt all provisions in the FDA Food Code.

In addition, there is no national certification board available to oversee the field assessment process proposed by the work group. Developing one would take many years and be cost prohibitive. Almost all certification programs are voluntary – so developing a national certification board for assessing the competencies of regulatory food safety inspection officers would not make it mandatory for them to participate in the process.

The work group decided the approach that would have the greatest impact on putting in place a credible and reliable process for assessing the competencies of regulatory retail food safety inspection officers would be one founded in the Program Standard #2 criteria. Over 160 jurisdictions are currently enrolled –

the Standards provide criteria and a structure that can be applied consistently and universally by the nation's regulatory retail food protection programs.

**CFP Recommendation 5** – The work group is continually working with staff from FDA's Divisions of Human Resource Development, particularly those associated with the development of the ORA-U curriculum. The identification of the courses associated with the curriculum in the revised Program Standards #2 has been a collaborative effort between the CFP work group and FDA ORA-U representatives

**CFP Recommendation 6** – The work group has developed an on-going informal partnership with FDA on the issues related to the training and assessment of regulatory retail food safety inspection officers.

- Representatives from FDA's DHRD serve as consultants to the work group.
- A CFP representative has been appointed to serve on FDA's Retail Food Certification Board.
- Work Group assessments of initiatives/documents always include an assessment of the symmetry between the FDA ORA-U model and the CFP model. Though work group decisions are not dictated by the structure of the FDA certification process, consideration is given to achieving symmetry between the FDA and CFP.

#### **Items currently under work group development**

- Completion of the revised Program Standard #2 language outlining the structure for training and assessing regulatory retail food safety inspection officers;
- Developing the Appendices that will support, and provide direction, for the criteria presented in Program Standard #2
- Completing the development of the Training Needs Assessment tool and guidance document to be used by regulatory training officers/program managers during the joint field training of candidates prior to their conducting independent inspections. The work group is intending that this assessment tool be submitted to the 2006 Conference and pilot tested by jurisdictions enrolled in the Program Standards.

#### **Requested Actions:**

The complexities and volume of information associated with the recommendations coming from this work group to the Conference, in the form of Issues to be considered, will require Conference participants to be well briefed before they deliberate the Issues in Council (Council II). The work group Co-Chairs request consideration from the Executive Board to provide a scheduled time during the 2006 Conference, prior to Council II deliberations, for an orientation of conference attendees to the Issues the work group will be submitting. We estimate that this briefing would require about an hour in order to be able to address the conference participants questions related to the Issues and proposed training/assessment process for regulatory food safety inspection officers.

There is precedent for this type of briefing. The same approach was used to orientate conference participants to the accreditation process that was submitted as an Issue for Food Protection Manager Certification.

# CERTIFICATION OF FOOD SAFETY REGULATION PROFESSIONALS WORK GROUP

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