

COMMITTEE NAME: Mail Order Foods Safety Committee

DATE OF FINAL REPORT: 11/1/2017

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Council I Council IIX Council III Executive Board

REPORT SUBMITTED BY: Christine Applewhite and Christina Bongo-Box

COMMITTEE CHARGE(S):

Issue # 2016 III-037

- 1. Identifying best practices and existing guidance documents that relate to shipment directly to a consumer of perishable food items.**
- 2. Developing a guidance document for food establishments that includes best practices for transportation directly to a consumer of perishable products, to include proper packaging; temperature control during shipping, receiving, and storage; return of compromised and abused products; and other food safety related topics.**
- 3. Determining appropriate methods of sharing the committee's work, including but not limited to a recommendation that a letter be sent to FDA requesting that the Food Code, Annex 2 (References, Part 3-Supporting Documents) be amended by adding references to the new guidance document as well as any existing guidance documents that the committee recommends, and the posting of information on the CFP website.**
- 4. Reporting the committee's findings and recommendations to the 2018 Biennial Meeting of the Conference for Food Protection.**

COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE:

1. On September 1, 2016, the Committee decided to tackle the charges of the Committee by the following:
 - a. Committee Chair created a workgroup on the FoodSHIELD.org website to post all research documents currently circulating. Industry committee members were provided guest access to the FoodSHIELD site. Regulatory, as well as academia members were already afforded access to this site.
2. The Committee tackled Charge #1, *Identify best practices and existing guidance documents related to shipment of perishable food items directly to a consumer*, first. The committee researched what documents, guidelines, best practices, etc. were already published and available. The committee was provided 30 days to complete this task. This research and document collection was conducted by a sub-group of the committee, consisting of four members: Reyes, Zimmermann, Thomas, and Auffray, with assistance from Chair Applewhite. Documents were reviewed by all Committee members once compiled and pertinent information was extracted from existing guidance.
3. On September 27, 2016, Dr. Bill Hallman and Dr. Sandria Godwin joined the Committee weekly call to discuss their findings of a study conducted to learn current practices of meat/fish/seafood purveyors who shipped items by mail order directly to consumers. This study, "Identifying Food Safety Risk Factors and Educational Strategies for Consumers Purchasing Seafood and Meat Products Online", grant number TENX-2011-02567, was a USDA/NIFA/1890 Capacity Building Grant that provided valuable information to the Committee.

4. Committee then moved to Charge #2, *Develop a guidance document for food establishments that includes best practices for transportation of perishable food items directly to a consumer to include proper packaging; temperature control during shipping, receiving, and storage; return of compromised and abused products; and other food safety related topics.*
 - a. Committee was responsible for determining the intent of certain language included in the charges such as “perishable”, “transportation”, “packaging”, etc.
 - b. Periodic reports were submitted on March 1, 2017 and July 1, 2017 to the Council Chair
 - c. Final committee report and Final guidance document was submitted to Council Chair on November 1, 2017.
5. During the bi-weekly call on August 15, 2017, the Committee discussed changing to a weekly call versus a bi-weekly in order to complete Charge #2 by the deadline. The proposal was sent to the entire Committee by the Chair through email for a vote. The vote passed and the Committee began having weekly calls from this point forward.
6. On the September 12, 2017 conference call, the Committee heard from Melissa Germain and Dr. JP Emond of the Illuminate Group about their experiences shipping perishable items through the mail. These individuals had approached a Committee member after hearing of the Committee’s work during a conference and suggested they may have some valuable information the Committee would be interested in learning. This member brought the suggestion to the Committee and the Committee agreed to hear about their experiences.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

1. **Dates of committee conference calls:** 9/1/16, 9/13/16, 9/27/16, 10/11/16, 10/25/16, 11/8/16, 11/22/16, 12/6/16, 12/20/16, 1/3/17, 1/17/17, 2/14/17, 2/28/17, 3/14/17, 3/28/17, 4/11/17, 4/25/17, 5/9/17, 5/23/17, 6/6/17, 6/20/17, 7/18/17, 8/1/17, 8/15/17, 8/22/17, 9/5/17, 9/12/17, 9/19/17, 10/10/17.

2. **Overview of committee activities:**

On September 1, 2016, the committee began the task of completing the charges of issue #2016 III-037. A workgroup folder was set up on FoodSHIELD as members worked to complete charge #1.

The Committee completed Charge #1, by researching what documents, guidelines, best practices, etc. were currently available. Members were provided a period of 30 days to complete this task. This research and document collection was conducted by a sub-group of the committee, consisting of four members: Reyes, Zimmermann, Thomas, and Auffray, with assistance from Chair Applewhite. Documents were reviewed by the full Committee members once compiled and the full Committee decided to utilize one document available in the United Kingdom, “*Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: MAIL ORDER*” in support of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs and the temperature control requirements of the Food Hygiene (England/Scotland/Wales/Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006, as the foundation for completing charge #2.

On the October 25, 2016 call, the Committee moved forward to begin working on Charge #2. The Committee was able to obtain an electronic version of the UK document and decided to begin reviewing it line-by-line utilizing the GoTo Meeting platform provided by member Schaffner. This enabled the entire Committee to see all edits in real-time. The Committee decided to break the document up into sections and created sub-groups of members to review each section and make edits prior to the entire committee reviewing. Chair Applewhite developed an Excel spreadsheet and distributed it to all members of the Committee for sign-up. Each sub-group consisted of 3-4 members who worked independently of the Committee to review each section.

From November 22, 2016 until October 10, 2017, the Committee consistently edited each section of the foundation document line-by-line and produced a new, original guidance document for final review by the entire Committee.

On October 31, 2017, the Committee was provided a final draft of the guidance document for review prior to submittal to the Council Chair.

3. Charges COMPLETED and the rationale for each specific recommendation:

- a. Charge #1 *Identifying best practices and existing guidance documents that relate to shipment directly to a consumer of perishable food items.* Recommendation to utilize "Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: MAIL ORDER" document as the foundation for completing Charge #2.
- b. Charge #2 *Developing a guidance document for food establishments that includes best practices for transportation directly to a consumer of perishable products, to include proper packaging; temperature control during shipping, receiving, and storage; return of compromised and abused products; and other food safety related topics.* A draft guidance document is attached as a "content document" for review and approval by the Conference.
- c. Charge #3 The Committee recommends a letter be sent to FDA requesting the most recent edition of the FDA Food Code, Annex 2 (References, Part 3-Supporting Documents) be amended to include reference to this guidance document. The Committee also recommends that this guidance document be included on the CFP website in a PDF format, as well as a link provided for anyone to be able to download the document.
- d. Charge #4 Report the committee's findings and recommendations to the 2018 Biennial Meeting of the Conference for Food Protection.

4. Charges INCOMPLETE and to be continued to next biennium:

None

COMMITTEE REQUESTED ACTION FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD:

X No requested Executive Board action at this time; all committee requests and recommendations are included as an Issue submittal.

LISTING OF CFP ISSUES TO BE SUBMITTED BY COMMITTEE:

1. **Issue #1: Report - Mail Order Foods Safety Committee (MOFSC):** Acknowledge the 2016-2018 Mail Order Foods Safety Committee final report, thank the committee members for their work, and disband the committee.
 - a. **List of content documents submitted with this Issue:**
 - (a.1) **Committee Final Report**
 - (a.2) **Committee Member Roster**
 - (a.3) **Committee generated guidance document entitled "Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies"**
 - b. **List of supporting attachments:**
 - (b.1) The original foundation document, "Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: MAIL ORDER" in support of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs and the temperature control requirements of the Food Hygiene (England/Scotland/Wales/Northern

Ireland) Regulations 2006, can be found at <https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/publications/industrypublications/industry-guides>

(b.2) Conference call meeting minutes

(b.3) List of committee reviewed existing guidance documents

2. **Committee Issue #2: MOFSC 2- Approval of Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies** The Committee recommends acceptance of the Committee generated guidance document entitled “*Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies*” and inclusion of the guidance document on the CFP website in a down-loadable PDF format.
3. **Committee Issue #3: MOFSC 3-Add Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies into FC Annex** The Committee recommends inclusion of a reference to the committee generated “*Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies*” in the FDA Food Code Annex.
4. **Committee Issue #4: MOFSC 4- Recreate the Mail Order Food Safety Committee at the 2020 Biennial Meeting** The Committee recommends re-creating this committee at the 2020 biennial meeting to update and evaluate the *Guidance Document for Mail Order Food Companies* and report back findings at the 2022 Biennial Meeting.