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**Approved 4/20/2016**

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**COMMITTEE NAME:** **Product Assessment Committee**

**DATE OF REPORT:**  Initial fall progress report  Spring progress report  Second fall progress report

Date submitted: 7/1/2019

Date amended (if applicable): [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Date accepted by Executive Board: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT:**  Council I  Council II  Council III  Executive Board

**REPORT SUBMITTED BY:** *Veronica Bryant and Jon Freed*

**COMMITTEE CHARGE(S):**

Issue # III-024

The Product Assessment Committee was created to leverage the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) challenge study guidelines document to create tools that are easier for the end users to understand and implement. Charges for this committee would include creating:

1. A standardized template and checklist of appropriate criteria to consider when reviewing a challenge study, including directions for use.
2. A tool to assist in selecting appropriate organisms.
3. Standardized guidance on how to interpret results.
4. Direction on when it is appropriate to use computer modeling to either support or replace an inoculation study.
5. Report the committee's findings and recommendations back to the Conference at the 2020 Biennial Meeting.

**COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE:**

During initial committee meeting September 21, 2018, it was determined that committee work would be accomplished as follows:

1. Committee work will be split into two subcommittees. Subcommittee #1 will handle charges, 2 (create a tool to assist in selecting appropriate organisms) and 4 (direction on when it is appropriate to use computer modeling to either support or replace an inoculation study). Subcommittee #2 will handle the charges 1 (create a standardized template and checklist of appropriate criteria to consider when reviewing a challenge study) and 3 (direction on how to interpret results).
2. Subcommittees will be allowed to do work concurrently and will work on charges subsequently.
3. Subcommittee #1 will be led by chair Veronica Bryant and will consist of Bryant, Burgess, Burns-Savage, Bush, Krzyzanowski, Willis, Bongo-Box, Derr, Karlicek, Mers, and Schaffner. Phone conferences will be held monthly on the first Friday of each month at 2:00 PM EST to discuss progress on charges.
4. Subcommittee #2 will be led by co-chair Jon Freed and will consist of Freed, Boyer, Curtis, Gordon, Pelech, Romo, Touhey, Wijesekera, Craig, Crownover, Shelton, and Thesmar. Phone conferences will be held monthly on the first Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM EST to discuss progress on charges.
5. The chair and co-chair will monitor attendance of voting and non-voting members and voting members of the full committee will vote to excuse members if unexcused absence of the voting member becomes a pattern.
6. It is anticipated that work will be completed as follows:
  - a. March 1: Overall guidance document outline completed
  - b. May 1: Guidance document sections for charges 2 and 3 to be completed
  - c. July 1: Product Assessment evaluation checklist completed
  - d. **Fall 2019 Update: Example challenge study using checklist will be completed by October 1**
7. Periodic reports will be submitted by March 1, 2019 and July 1, 2019 to the Council Chair.
8. Final guidance document to be submitted to Council Chair by October 1, 2019.

**COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES: Dates of committee meetings or conference calls:****1. Overview of committee activities:**

- a. The entire committee met on 9/21/18 and on 2/15/19.

*Fall 2019 Update: Entire committee met on 4/26/19.*

Sub-Committee #1 met on 11/2/18, 12/7/18, 1/4/19, and 2/1/19.

*Fall 2019 Update: Subcommittee #1 met on 3/1/19, 4/5/19, 5/3/19, 6/7/19.*

Sub-Committee #2 met on 12/5/18, 1/2/19 and 2/6/19. There were additional smaller group meetings with section owners on 1/9/19 and 1/23/19.

*Fall 2019 Update: Subcommittee #2 met on 4/17/19 and 5/8/19.*

- b. At the 9/21/18 meeting we decided to break out into two distinct sub-committees with each sub-committee working on two charges. Each of the sub-committees is also splitting work into smaller groups to accomplish charges. Documents are being shared via email, and software programs with shared editing capabilities, such as Google Docs. At the entire committee meeting on 2/15/19 we aligned to add additional sections to our guidance document (Introduction, definitions and laboratory qualifications). The committee aligned to our timelines with a target date for document completion of 10/1/19.

At the Sub-Committee #1 meeting on 11/2/18 we agreed to start with Charge #2 and move to work on Charge #4 when finished. During the meetings on 11/2/18, 12/7/18, and 1/4/19, it was determined that organism selection needs to highlight Table 2 and Appendix C already in the document, and this information could not be distilled into a flow chart. During the meeting on 2/1/19, final terminology for the outline was discussed and drafted and the committee will move to discuss Charge #4 at next meeting.

*Fall 2019 Update: At the Subcommittee #1 meetings on 3/1/19, 4/5/19, and 6/7/19, resolution of the two charges for the subcommittees were completed. Information regarding these charges will be included in the guidance document. The determination was made that computer modeling alone is not a suitable replacement for a challenge study.*

At the Sub-Committee #2 meeting on 12/5/18 we agreed on a work strategy to address our charges. By the 1/2/19 meeting we aligned on creating content based on the NACMCF sections 1, 3 and 8 – 11. Our sub-committee assigned out section owners and began to create content. At the 2/6/19 meeting we reviewed first drafts of each section and aligned on a checklist format.

*Fall 2019 Update: Draft versions of the guidance document were reviewed by all members and discussed during 4/17 and 5/8 committee meetings. A subgroup consisting of Todd Mers, Robert Curtis, Jon Freed and Veronica Bryant met to make final edits to the guidance document and incorporate all changes from the group.*

**2. Charges COMPLETED and the rationale for each specific recommendation:**

- a. *None for the Fall 2019 Update:*

**3. Status of charges still PENDING and activities yet to be completed:**

- a. *Fall 2019 Update: An example challenge study using the created checklist will be completed and included in the committee's final progress report.*
- b. *Fall 2019 Update: Charges #1 through #4 have been completed. The guidance document from the Product Assessment Committee will be edited and approved by committee vote before submission of the final form as an Issue for the 2020 Biennial Meeting*

**COMMITTEE REQUESTED ACTION FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD:**  No requested action at this time

- a. *The committee requests the board acknowledge the Fall periodic progress report.*

**ATTACHMENTS:****1. Content Documents:**

- a. **Committee Member Roster:**  See changes noted above under "requested action"  No changes to previously approved roster  
"Committee Members Template" (Excel) available at: [www.foodprotect.org/work/](http://www.foodprotect.org/work/) Committee roster to be submitted as a PDF attachment to this report.
- b. **Committee Generated Content Documents (OPTIONAL):**  No draft content documents submitted at this time

**2. Supporting Attachments (OPTIONAL):**  Not applicable**Document Reviews include:**

1. *FSIS Report, Establishment Guidance For the Selection of a Commercial or Private Microbiological Testing Laboratory - <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/464a4827-0c9a-4268-8651-b417bb6bba51/Guidance-Selection-Commercial-Private-Microbiological-Testing-lab-062013.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>*

2. *Evaluation and Definition of Potentially Hazardous Food* -  
<https://www.fda.gov/downloads/food/foodborneillnesscontaminants/ucm545171.pdf>
  
3. *Parameters for Determining Inoculation Pack/Challenge Study Protocols* -  
[https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/3b52f9c0-0585-4c0a-abf2-b4fc89a9668c/NACMCF\\_Inoculated\\_Pack\\_2009F.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/3b52f9c0-0585-4c0a-abf2-b4fc89a9668c/NACMCF_Inoculated_Pack_2009F.pdf?MOD=AJPERES)