**IOWA FOOD SAFETY TASK FORCE MEETING**

The Iowa Food Safety and Defense Task Force met on Thursday, January 17, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. at Joint Forces Headquarters, State Emergency Operation Center, 6100 NW 78th Avenue, Johnston, Iowa 50131.

Those in attendance:

Nancy Degner, Iowa Beef Industry Council

Jim Dickson, Iowa State University

Susan Dixon, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division

Nilani Downs, Iowa Department of Public Health, CADE

Ann Garvey, Iowa Department of Public Health, CADE

Cindy Jordan, Iowa Restaurant Association

Nick Kalas, Iowa Department of Public Health/CADE

Steven Mandernach, Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals

Janelle Meyer, Iowa State University

Mary Montgomery, Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals

Jeneane Moody, Iowa Public Health Association

Kristin Obbink, Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals

Carlene Russell, Iowa Department of Aging

Abby Brecken, (Intern) Iowa Department of Aging

Angela Shaw, Iowa State University

Mark Shearer, Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division

Those in phone attendance:

Jeanne Hansen, Hansen’s Farm Fresh Dairy

Sandy Heinen, Black Hawk County Health Department

Janis Hochstetler, Iowa Department of Agriculture, Meat and Poultry

Heidi Peck, Iowa Environmental Health Association/Linn County Public Health

1. Welcome: Steven Mandernach welcomed the group and introduced new members, Carlene Russell, Iowa Department of Aging and Dale Yamnik with Yum! Brands, Inc.
2. Presentation: Joyce Flinn with Iowa Homeland Security, Emergency Management Division, spoke and provided a tour to the group concerning the Emergency Operation Center in dealing with emergency situations and disasters throughout the state.
3. Budget: The $10,000 grant award received this past year ends in August. The planning process has started for next year.
4. DIA Update: Steven Mandernach thanked the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division for hosting today’s meeting.
5. Two major rule-making packages related to the Food Safety Modernization Act were released on January 4, 2013. (Handout attached.)
* The proposed rules, summaries, and videos on the proposals and the rule-making process are available online at: <http://www.fda.gov/food/foodsafety/fsma/ucm334120>
* The public comment period ends May 16, 2013
1. Iowa will be hosting an FDA retail food class “Risk-Based Inspection Methods at Retail” January 29-Feburary 1.
* Doing two of the same class back to back
* With 90 registrants, virtually every inspector in Iowa will attend
1. The Rapid Response Team is up and going with staff in place; two core members will be providing an update.
2. Foodborne Illness Update: Dr. Garvey gave an update concerning reported cases of foodborne illnesses. There have been several outbreaks of norovirus cases since the holidays. On the national level, there has been one salmonella exposure.
3. Raw Milk Update: Jeneane Moody, Iowa Public Health Association, gave an update on the raw milk activity for 2012 reporting the year started and ended with no change in the number of states allowing raw milk sales: 30 states allow raw milk sales; 20 states prohibit, including Iowa. Johnson, Polk and Cerro Gordo counties have adopted a policy statement against the sale of raw milk in Iowa.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued a press release touting a 13-year study concluding that the states where the sale of raw milk was legal had more than twice the rate of outbreaks as states where it was illegal.

Representative Jason Schultz confirmed with legal counsel for the Iowa Dairy Foods Association that during the 2013 Legislative Session, he intends to introduce again his bill to legalize the sale of raw milk in Iowa. (Handout attached.)

1. Food and Feed Rapid Response Team: Kristin Obbink, DVM, MPH, with the Department of Inspections and Appeals and Nilani Downs, MPH, with the Department of Public Health reported on the Iowa Food Protection Rapid Response Team.

 Increasing risks to our nation’s food safety system in recent years led to expanded efforts toward ensuring food safety in our country at all levels. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) initiated the Food Protection Rapid Response Team (RRT) program. The program began in 2008 and 2009 with the funding for nine RRT pilot states, including Minnesota and Michigan. These states were charged with strengthening food safety infrastructure and developing capabilities for rapid response to all types of food and feed emergencies.

 In 2012, the FDA again announced funding opportunity for ten additional states to implement a Food Protection RRT through a three-year cooperative agreement. In September 2012, the State of Iowa was notified as being a recipient.

 The goals of the Iowa RRT are to improve the proficiency of food and feed emergency response and to increase communication and collaboration between federal, state and local response partners. It is anticipated that local health department and local food contracting agencies will also be included in the RRT initiatives through training and exercise opportunities.

The team consists of DIA Food and Consumer Safety Bureau, IDPH Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE), IDPH Bureau for Environmental Health Services, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) at the University of Iowa, and Iowa Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

 The three individual core members, Kristin Obbink, RRT Coordinator, Nilani Downs, Public Health Liaison and Neal Vaughn, IDALS Liaison, work together to streamline and coordinate with all agencies involved. (Handout attached.)

1. Old Business: Working with Dr. Strohbehn on 2013 educational offering sponsored by the Task Force.
2. Item 1, record portions of 2012 session and make available online
3. Item 2, regionally based sessions focusing on retail and the following topics:
* Retail Food Defense
* 2009 Food Code – changes, people up to speed
* Session on procuring fresh produce

 The timeframe is possibly late June but still trying to solidify dates. This needs to be completed by August 29, 2013.

1. New Business: Year three of the five-year grant program will focus on food manufacturing.

 There was discussion concerning morning or afternoon preference for our next meeting scheduled Tuesday, April 16, 2013 at Hansen’s Farm Fresh Dairy, Hudson, IA. We will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

1. Information Sharing from Task Force Members:

Mark Shearer noted the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture is celebrating its 10th Anniversary. The Partnership which now includes 14 states has been actively developing tools and resources that will benefit all member states.

Nancy Degner, Iowa Beef Industry Council, indicated registration is now open for the 2013 Beef Industry Safety Summit scheduled for March 13 – 15, 2013 in Dallas, TX.

Carlene Russell, Iowa Department of Aging, reported there will be some restructuring of meal sites across the state concerning congregate meals.

Dale Yamnik, Yum! Brands, Inc., spoke of his Company’s views on selling safe food and keeping business continuity going and the importance of working with regulatory agencies. He indicated they have over 38,000 restaurants in different countries and try to do things right because it only takes one thing to ruin a brand.

1. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Handout attached:

* Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)
* Iowa Public Health Association Raw Milk Update
* Iowa Food Protection Rapid Response Team (RRT)