



General Meeting, November 12, 2024, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Walnut Woods Conference Rooms, 6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines

1. **Welcome** – Michelle Boyd, DIAL
 - a. Michelle welcomed attendees to the meeting.
 - b. Final attendance – 19, including 2 virtual presenters

2. **Introduction of Task Force Board** – Michelle Boyd
 - a. Michelle introduced the board, stating their name, title, agency/organization, and position on the board.
 - b. Thao Schlichte is on maternity leave and is not present. Bambi Press and Ellen Ciarimboli were in attendance. Jim Dickson and Michelle Clausen-Rosendahl were not present at the meeting.

3. **Task Force Update** – Bambi Press, IHHS
 - a. Deliverables
 - i. Bambi addressed the surveys to be sent to home food processing owners and inspectors. The inspector survey has been distributed and will be presented to the Task Force at a future date. The Owner survey is to be discussed in today's meeting.
 - ii. The organizational governance document will be completed by the Board in 2025 and will be shared with the membership.
 - iii. Other deliverables are goals for the Task Force to complete.
 - b. Bambi presented the Mission and Vision statements to the attendees.
 - c. Bambi explained members will be asked for input on speakers and topics through a survey to be distributed after the meeting.

4. **FDA's Role During National Special Security Events** - Michael Nordos, Erin Dugan, FDA
 - a. **Michael**
 - i. Mike presented on special events FDA works on, including international summits, presidential inaugurations, national political conventions, major sporting events (World Equestrian Games, for example), and the Super Bowl.



- ii. NSSEs are when the Secret Service is in charge as the lead agency and asks FDA to participate. The Republican National Convention in Wisconsin in July 2024 is the most recent NSSE in which Mike participated.
 - iii. Mike went into detail into how the response is structured. FDA is part of the Health and Medical Sub-Committee, under the authority of the Executive Steering Committee. There are workgroups under the HM Sub-Committee.
 - iv. The two objectives are Food Defense and Food Safety.
 - v. Challenges with food safety are foods prepared in advance and off-site, in large volumes with a large number of volunteers.
 - vi. Subject matter experts are on standby if some practices or processes are not following the current FDA Model Food Code.
 - vii. FDA uses an Assignment List, ICS Form 204, to keep track of assignments and lead inspectors.
 - viii. They also use the ICS Form 214 instead of an inspection form – an activity log. The form has a monitoring log in section 7 to monitor personal hygiene, cooking and holding temps, cross contamination, and risk assessment/active managerial control.
 - ix. Answers to questions from attendees
 1. FDA does not always get prior notice of events.
 2. Some planned events require planning to begin a year in advance.
 3. FDA has done some of the work in foreign countries but only when invited. Mike said he has not had to do that since he started his job. The Navy has done some of the international work.
 4. Supplier verification – FDA requests the menus in a timely manner, but they do not always get them. Vendors will get products from unchanged suppliers and can provide that information to FDA. Some private parties at events do not provide menus or supplier information in advance.
- b. Erin**
- i. The title of her presentation is “FDA Special Events Guidance”
 - ii. Erin explained the process of how FDA is requested to participate in NSSEs. The Human Food Inspectorate has the regulatory authority at the field level.
 - iii. FDA plays a supporting role to the local health departments/ regulatory authorities. The Retail Food Specialist leads a group of people performing inspections.



- iv. OPS Chief, Incident Commander, Planning Section Chief, etc. are coordinated through an Incident Management Team (ITM), as a unified command.
 - 1. Samples are collected if needed, analyzed by a FERN lab
- v. CDC conducts epidemiological surveillance. USDA/FSIS partners with local regulators to perform food defense/supply chain integrity checks (meat and poultry). Department of Homeland Security also participates.
- vi. The state agency is the lead regulatory agency. They conduct inspections of event specific retail food establishments, lodging and complaints.

BREAK

- 5. **Home Food Processing Survey Development** – Tenesha Stubblefield, DIAL – **this presentation was after Kemi Oni’s presentation.**
 - a. Tenesha provided information on the background of the Home Food Processing Establishment license and inspection program. The law was signed July 1, 2022.
 - i. Iowa Code Chapter 137D Home Bakeries was changed to Home Food Processing Establishments
 - ii. Iowa Code Chapter 137 F was updated to exempt Cottage Food from regulations (with requirements included)
 - iii. Iowa Code Chapter 137F was updated to exempt packaged time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food sold at farmers markets from being licensed, however, the source still applies
 - b. Tenesha provided information on how the creation of the new HFPE license required the sunset of the Home Bakery license, due to the different requirements of the law.
 - i. This new program area is inspected with all other program areas (retail, processing, hotels).
 - ii. Existing home bakeries were notified via email of the law change.
 - c. Operators must demonstrate control and a thorough understanding of food safety principles
 - i. Proof of attendance in an approved food safety course
 - ii. Written records and procedures describing control over food safety hazards in their establishment (SOPs, templates, records)
 - iii. Control is also observed during the inspection



- d. Statewide, there are 502 active HFPEs, 107 virtual preopening inspections, 119 standard preopening inspections (onsite)
- e. Tenesha described the resources available to operators on the DIAL website and the Task Force website. She explained how DIAL needed feedback on whether or not the resources are adequate
- f. Tenesha went over the Home Food Processing Establishment Operator survey
 - i. Audience feedback upon review
 - 1. One person asked if the purpose was to make improvements. Tenesha said yes, we needed to know if we were going in the right direction with what we were providing to operators.
 - 2. One person asked about catering. People can cater hot foods but the labeling requirements are in effect.
 - 3. One person indicated all the questions inspectors try to field questions in areas they are not knowledgeable in (especially fermentation and jams/jellies). He asked for other resources to help inspectors answer questions.
 - a. Tenesha said in two weeks she will hold a refresher webinar for inspectors, to help answer questions. There will be an opportunity at that time to ask questions, and reach out to Tenesha or Kurt Rueber for assistance if they can't answer them.
 - 4. One person said we recognize when a new inspector starts, they can't absorb the HFPE information and require additional training.
 - a. Tenesha said she is working on a training for DIAL staff, including creation of a training plan after they are comfortable with retail inspections. If they feel they are ready to learn more about HFPEs, Tenesha begins training them individually. She said it has worked out that the inspectors are ready after about 3 months independent work. She provides one-on-one training, then they watch videos, then read through the guides/templates, etc. They then observe an inspection with an experienced inspector, and then Tenesha has them walk through the process to gauge their knowledge and comfort with the program. She then observes their first solo inspection to see how they do and give them the approval to do more on their own. They will then be assigned inspections in their territory.



5. Tenesha did mention that the guide is designed to be helpful to the operator, if they would follow the guide when creating their own procedures.
 - ii. After questions were answered, the audience did not have any suggestions on changes or additions to make to the operator survey. Tenesha will send the survey out to operators at her convenience.
6. **Iowa RRT Update – Kemi Oni, IHHS – this presentation was immediately after the break, as Kemi had to present virtually over Zoom.**
 - a. Deliverables 2023-2026: Met expectations for the past 11 years
 - b. Conformance has been met for both retail and manufactured food program standards.
 - c. The RRT End of Year report was completed and submitted for review
 - i. Iowa is a Level 2 RRT, meeting 19 goals (the minimum expectation is 11 goals).
 - d. Iowa is a mentor with Arkansas RRT. AR RRT observed the RAGBRAI 2024 ICS annual activation and joins the Iowa RRT bi-weekly calls.
 - e. Kemi read through the Year 2 goals to be met
 - i. Conduct a tabletop exercise with the Environmental Assessment (EA) team
 - ii. Update and implement the EA procedure for retail firms to use during outbreak investigations
 - iii. Train the EA team on enhanced investigation and interview techniques
 - iv. Develop and implement an EA procedure for manufactured food facilities to use during outbreak investigations
 - f. Complaint Response
 - i. Since the launch of the complaint line in 2016, Iowa HHS has received over 2600 illness complaints and investigated over 200 outbreaks. The complaints plummeted during the pandemic but are crawling back up each year.
 - ii. DIAL has responded to a growing number of total complaints since 2021. As of this date in 2024, there are 1610 total complaints, 157 illness complaints, and 11 EAs conducted.
 - g. ICS Activations
 - i. 2024 was a busy year. Three activations total
 1. First one involved multi-storms, including a derecho, tornado, flash floods and power outages
 - a. The Governor’s Proclamation covered 44 counties



- b. Activation was 5/22/24 through 5/31/2024
 - 2. Flood Response was the second activation
 - a. Heavy rainfall caused flooding in several counties in Northwest Iowa.
 - b. As the event progressed, counties along the Missouri River and surrounding area were impacted.
 - c. The Governor's Proclamation covered 28 counties.
 - d. Activation was June 22 through July 15, 2024
 - ii. RAGBRAI response
 - 1. The annual RRT activation occurred July 20-27, 2024.
 - h. Other responses
 - i. *Salmonella* linked to live poultry
 - 1. CDC joined HHS in investigating this outbreak
 - ii. Listeria linked to sprouts
 - 1. Sprouts were not linked to the source, but the investigation is ongoing
 - iii. Salmonella enteritidis linked to eggs
 - 1. Wisconsin led the investigation. DIAL assisted in obtaining records from the grocery store and the egg suppliers.
 - iv. E. coli linked to raw milk
 - 1. There have been two outbreaks linked to the consumption of raw milk in Iowa, after the raw milk bill passed
 - i. SOPs and Work Instructions have been updated
 - i. The RRT Public Information Procedures was updated
 - j. After Action Review (AAR) Templates and Surveys
 - i. Iowa RRT plans to conduct hot washes and/or AAR surveys to collect feedback regarding partial activation responses, exercises or training
 - ii. AARs will continue to be completed for full activations
 - iii. The intent is to create an agenda/checklist and survey that can be duplicated for partial activation responses to collect feedback from all participants in an effort to improve future response activities
 - k. Training plans – focus on training staff in emergency response courses and EATS 101 and 102 from CDC
 - l. Upcoming meetings
 - i. Midwest is Best, November 19-21, 2024 in Minneapolis
 - ii. InFORM in St. Louis, February 11 & 12, 2025
 - iii. Combined RRT/MFRPS meeting to be held virtually February 24-28, 2025



7. **DIAL Update** – Mark Speltz, DIAL

a. 2024 Legislation

- i. SF2391 Misbranding of meat products and egg products; created two new Iowa Code chapters (137E – Meat Products, and 137A – Egg Products)
 1. New definitions were created
 - a. Manufactured-protein food product (cultivated, insect-based, plant-based); identifying meat term and qualifying term
 - b. Fabricated-egg product; identifying egg term and qualifying term
 2. Misbranding and Prohibitions
 - a. Labels for manufactured-protein products or fabricated-egg products must contain both an identifying term and a qualifying term. If they do not, they are considered misbranded.
 - b. Prohibits a food processing plant from selling or offering for sale a misbranded meat or egg product
 3. Violations and penalties are assessed – must be credible complaints. A stop order or embargo may be issued. Food processing plants found in violation are subject to civil penalties.
 - a. The Department shall not suspend or revoke a food processing plant license for violations of the new chapters, 137E or 137A.
- ii. HF2426 Hotel inspections – update to the existing chapter
 1. Repealed the requirement for biennial inspections
 2. Requires inspections of hotels upon receiving a complaint

b. FY24 Field Activities

- i. DIAL completed 10,069 inspections
- ii. 839 consumer complaints were investigated, with 39 foodborne illness outbreaks investigated in calendar year 2023
- iii. 200 environmental samples were collected by manufactured food program staff
- iv. Two food recalls were initiated, with 48 recall audit checks completed
- v. 11 warning letters were issued, 46 imminent health hazards mitigated
- vi. There were 56 industry and community outreach activities completed. These include presentations and workshops conducted by DIAL staff.
- vii. The voluntary compliance rate is 99.1%



- c. Mark described the retail and manufactured food program standards. Iowa is in conformance with 19 out of 19 standards.
- d. On September 1, 2024, DIAL picked up 5 Northwest Iowa counties for inspecting in the former Buena Vista Health Department territory. One inspector has been hired and is undergoing training.
- e. Iowa Administrative Code – Red Tape Review
 - i. Mark explained Governor Reynolds required state Departments to review their codes to eliminate redundancies and streamline the codes.
 - ii. DIAL has one chapter completed and in effect, IAC 481.34 Home Food Processing Establishments
 - iii. Two chapters, IAC 481.30 Food Establishments, Food Processing Plants, Hotel – Administration, and IAC 481.31 Food Establishments and Food Processing Plants – Inspection Standards, are drafted and in the queue for final review and public comment.
 - iv. Two chapters, IAC 481.35 Contractor Requirements, and IAC 481.37 Hotel Inspection Standards, are due to be drafted by September 2025.
- f. SAFHER update
 - i. Food safety licensing and inspection data system modernization
 - ii. Procurement is approved
 - iii. Implementation planned spring 2025
 - iv. The slide has a link to learn more about SAFHER
 - v. Iowa was chosen as the only human food pilot state. Pennsylvania and Colorado are the pilot states for animal food.
- g. Retail Food Program Standards Grant – expires this year, looking to renew it this year to enhance capacity building and training. The application is due November 20, 2024.
- h. Iowa is one of 10 states with an established domestic mutual reliance partnership agreement (PA) with FDA. It means the work we do counts towards FDA’s work, and we accept their work as ours.
 - i. Mark explained we meet with FDA every year to determine deliverables and discuss the progress we make in the agreement.
 - ii. There are eight goals in the PA, including:
 1. Data/information sharing
 2. Inventory
 3. Work Planning
 4. Inspections, compliance and enforcement
 5. Training of field staff
 6. Outbreaks and emergency response



7. Industry and consumer education

8. Metrics

i. Audience questions

i. One person asked what is a fabricated egg product? Mark said it could be a product made in a lab, or it could be plant based. That is not defined in the code as the manufactured meat product is defined, not really any examples.

ii. One person asked if the hotel code will address vacation rentals/VRBOS/extended stays/AirBNBs. Mark said it needs to be in statute, not the code, to make it up to date. The code was written before technology so the language addresses brick and mortar buildings and outdated references. He said we can only do so much in rule, if the statute has not been updated. Lobbies are virtual now – you check in on your phone, and the statute does not address that.

8. **Partner Sharing** – Task Force Members

- a. A member of the Iowa Restaurant Association introduced herself. She said they are in the second year of a grant offering alcohol safety courses.
- b. A member of Fuel Iowa introduced himself. He represents convenience stores in Iowa, and any grocery stores which offer fuel to customers. He said they partner with an organization in MN that has a trade show. He said they help support small businesses. He said he would like to find ways to partner with the Task Force, such as sharing information or training opportunities.
- c. A member of the State Hygienic Lab provided updates. He said the lab is a FERN lab with FSIS. They are waiting for a new lab to be approved for pathogen testing. They are switching to a new database so reports will be transmitted differently. Testing methods are changing, old methods will no longer be used.
- d. Merri Cross read an email from FDA asking for public comment on export certification, due by January 7, 2025

9. **Closeout** – Michelle Boyd – see the slide

- a. Meeting adjourned 3:35 pm

Merri Cross, DIAL

Iowa Food Protection Task Force Board Secretary

NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING TO BE HELD SPRING 2025