

International Foods Protection Issues PDG

Attendees: Akhila Vasam, Alvin Lee, Brad Taylor, Caroline Smith DeWaal, David Tharp, DeAnn Benesh, Diego Darquea, Elisabetta Lambertini, Elizabeth Demmings, Hasan Nur, Ian Jenson, Isabel Walls, James

Cook, Jason Wan, Jeff Farber, Emilio Esteban, Kang Zhou FAO, Kristen MacNaughtan, Linda Leake, Lisa Benjamin, Marcel Zwietering, Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Pamela Wilger, Peter Ben Embarek, Robert Brackett, Rose Omari, Rosetta Newsome, Santos Garcia, Vidya Ananth, Yuhuan Chen, and Yvonne Masters,

Board/Staff Present: Emilio Esteban as Board liaison for Roger Cook, Dina Siedenburger, and David Tharp.

Number of Attendees: 30.

Meeting Called to Order: 3:05 p.m. Eastern Time, Tuesday, June 15, 2021.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Marcel Zwietering, Vice Chairperson.

Ian Jensen (outgoing chair) opened the meeting, welcoming PDG members and guests and made general introductions. Ian handed over the chair position to DeAnn Benesh and introduced Marcel Zwietering as incoming vice-chair. DeAnn thanked Ian for his leadership. Marcel introduced himself.

Emilio Esteban presented the announcements from the IAFP Executive Board; This was a challenging year, but many things did go well, the association is doing well, we have a good group of people. It would be good to organize meetings and activities also throughout the year, teleconferences, webinars, etc. Please bring forward ideas and where possible IAFP staff can help. A Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Council has been created, people interested in being active in this council are requested.

DeAnn reviewed and reminded the participants of the Antitrust guidelines.

Old Business: The minutes of the 2020 PDG meeting were accepted as printed in *FPT* and posted on IAFP Connect. (Motion to accept—Caroline Smith DeWaal, seconded by Pamela Wilger). Minutes accepted.

Review of Symposia/Roundtables Submitted for the 2020 Annual Meeting by the PDG (or in collaboration with other PDGs) Seven submissions were accepted: 3 symposia (S1, S25, S51), and 4 roundtables (RT4, RT6, RT11, RT12). Presentation dates and times were highlighted in the IAFP 2021 agenda.

Presentations: Three presenters provided different global perspectives on safe food supplies: Kang Zhou (FAO)—presented on “Recent work of JEMRA and FAO on food safety.” Food Safety results in a great public health burden but additionally gives 110-billion-dollar loss. It is a human health issue, but also trade and economic issue. “If it is not safe it is not food.” JEMRA (joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment) was established in 2000. This group gives scientific advice and holds expert meetings based on questions of CODEX.

Recent activities were: Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* in meat and dairy products (June 1–26 2020, 18 experts); *Listeria monocytogenes* in RTE foods attribution characterization and monitoring (October 2020– November 2020, 18 experts)

This year there will be meetings on: Water in fishery and dairy products (June 14, 2020–July 2, 2021); Hazards in fresh fruits and vegetables (summer 2021); Allergens (one in 2020 one in 2021)—looking at new criteria: prevalence, potency, severity; Food safety day: Safe food now for a Healthy Tomorrow was held June 7, 2021.

Reports published on topics were numbers: 36 (Microbiological Risk Assessment—Guidance for food); 29 (Microbial safety of lipid-based ready-to-use foods for management of moderate acute

malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition—Second report); 25 (Risk-based examples and approach for control of *Trichinella* spp. and *Taenia saginata* in meat); 20 (Risk assessment tools for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and *Vibrio vulnificus* associated with seafood); plus an FAO guide on risk ranking food safety risk at the national level;

Peter Ben Embarek (WHO)—presented on the work of WHO and Food Safety: WHO merged the department of nutrition and food safety and zoonoses. WHO developed COVID documents that were widely used: one for authorities and one for industry. Updates will come out in a revised version the end of this month. There is a guide document on reducing public health risk in public food markets, focussing on trade of wild animals: “Keep wild animals away from the market.” There has been a lot of attention of investigation of COVID source, from the market, but also other scenarios were evaluated. The lab source is less likely but could have occurred.

Further strategies were developed to improve food safety, with 5 strategic priorities: strengthening food controls; responses to global changes; increase use of information for decisions; strengthen engagement and communication; promote safety both at domestic scale and international trade

A new handbook was released on the estimation of the burden of foodborne disease.

There will be a webinar on foodborne burden on June 29, 2020, 13.30-15 CET.

Kristen MacNaughtan (BMGF: Gates foundation)—presented on advancing food safety: reflections and opportunities. The foundation envisions a world in which every person has the opportunity to live a healthy productive life. This requires healthy agricultural systems, children’s health, etc. For this, an inclusive agricultural transformation is needed (increase productivity, small holder income, improve nutrition, empower woman). All aligned with FAO’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG2): zero hunger. Diets are often poor. Earlier much focus was on aflatoxin mitigation. After the burden of disease estimates, focus is more general on also decreasing other hazards, mitigating risks, improving policy and the regulatory environment. It is needed to achieve for this goal to have quality, availability, utility of food safety data, and evidence and access to nutritional foods by improving food safety, improving national and state level resource allocation and policies. There is cooperation with the UK department of development. It started with aflatoxins and moved more now to pathogens. The focus on 7 countries and at *Salmonella*, EHEC, *Campylobacter*, *Brucella*, and *Listeria*.

There is attention for understanding the incentives of vendors and of consumers, but also includes modelling strategies, to predict impact of control options and risk-based regulation and policy. An Africa food safety index has been created, which consists of a Food Safety Systems Index, a Food Safety Health Index and a Food Safety Trade Index.

Furthermore, lab infrastructure, education, and actionable knowledge are pertinent. Future developments are foreseen for: data and surveillance, metrics, diagnostics and surveillance, surveillance platforms, metagenomics and NGS. Bioinformatic networks, hazard monitoring in a risk-based framework: low cost point of use diagnostics, data transparency and open data are additional aspects. Metagenomics is a great technique but also has challenges: especially relating to sensitivity.

Detection is great, but without being risk-based, it can also be dangerous. The can equally be said for open data—great from one side but has its dangers too.

Policy and governance inter-ministerial and sectoral alignment, informal domestic markers, codex and private standards, regional trades, climate and food safety are important issues. Also relevant for future are climate and changes to child malnutrition: volatility in production and prices, perishable food and spread of pathogens and diseases. Food safety clearly needs to tie into the agenda. Relevant consideration are also the perception of safety and trust, consumer knowledge and understanding, market actor incentives to implement knowledge and training. And this, while actual food safety data are quite limited. Kristen’s overview was well received and PDG members mentioned that many experts from IAFFP could be helpful in this domain.

New Business: Proposal suggestions for 2022: Ian Jenson: Food systems; Allergen assessment (Kang); Covid and the food supply; Jeff Farber: neglected and emerging zoonoses: *Brucella*, Parasites, Lessons learned from COVID, Harmonised definition of RTE foods: (e.g., in frozen food), Mycotoxins; Webinars or RT on RTE (difference in definition of CODEX FSMA) could be taken up by Pamela and Alvin. The subject seems to be maybe best for a RT due to the lively discussions on this subject; Pam Wilger: Natural disasters and how to impact food safety, for example mycotoxin (but also seafood toxins); Caroline Smith de DeWaal: Community sourcing surveillance systems (PODD in Thailand and Ayradata in Tanzania); A compilation of all suggestions will be sent out via IAFP Connect to gather input, people support and additional ideas to drive development of sessions for submission. *Deadline for proposals: 5 October 2021.*

Food Regulatory System Summaries: country pages. Ian explained his original idea. Results of the polls taken on this topic by IAFP PDG and Food Law PDG members to gauge interest were presented. There is sound interest to begin the project, and additional people are needed to help get the project started.

Jeff Farber, Alvin Lee, Caroline Smith DeWaal and Elizabeth Demmings offered their support to the project. A note will be sent out via IAFP Connect to gather additional support and input.

Activities between meetings: IAFP Connect—exchange on ideas for proposals and other information can be exchanged by IAFP Connect: Webinars—please consider ideas for organising webinars. One suggestion was to edit the recording of today's 3 speakers and issue as a webinar for the larger IAFP membership; Articles for *FPT* (or *JFP*)—also consider ideas for articles. The Regulatory System Summaries could perhaps be submitted as educational pieces for *FPT*; Mentor program—consider signing up to be a mentor (or mentee). Information is on the IAFP website. Pam Wilger spoke about her positive experience being a mentor the last several years.

Recommendations to the Executive Board:

1. Recommend approval of Marcel Zwietering as Vice Chair of the International Food Protection Issues PDG.
2. Keep the hybrid option open for future conferences (including the regional conferences such as the EU symposium).

Next Meeting Date: July 31–August 3, 2022, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:02 p.m. Eastern Time.

Chairperson: DeAnn Benesh.