

Food Safety Culture PDG

Attendees: Laura Dunn Nelson (Chair), Melody Ge (Vice Chair), Brian Perry, Liang Bennett, Brandon Voga, Peyton Haynes, Loni Rogers, Andrew Clarke, Neil Bogart, Robert Price, Nikkie Vazquez, Rachael Blevins, Jonathan Basha, Cheryl Enlow, Jason Weis, Stephen Grove, Katherine Qu, Nikita Jackson, Alison Cousins, Mangesh Palekar, Emma Samuel, Nic Sharman, Fred Soderstrom, Annie Piepenhagen, Julie Simcox, Ikechukwu Oguadinma, Brian Izdepski, Helen Taylor, John Boyce, Victoria Burgess, Stephanie Weinand, Bertrand Emond.

Number of Attendees: 100+.

Meeting Called to Order: 3:15 p.m. Eastern Time, Sunday, July 31, 2022, David L. Lawrence Convention Center Room 406.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Ikechukwu Oguadinma, Student Liaison.

Old Business: The food safety culture PDG activities for 2021-2022 were briefly discussed including highlights of accepted symposia for conference and overview of webinar series.

New Business:

Talk by Lone Jespersen: Cultivate

Lone Jespersen started her talk by asking if members of the audience were aware of or actively implementing a food safety plan or a food safety culture plan in their various organizations. She highlighted some cultural assumptions about food safety and reasons for these assumptions including knowledge, sub-cultures within organizations, psychological heuristics, and biases. Lone ended her talk by stating the importance of cross-functional involvement in food safety including CEOs, finance teams, sales teams, and product development teams. She stated, "Everybody is responsible for food safety," and ended by announcing a food safety research group to meet on October 12th, by 9:00 am, location TBD. Additionally, Dr. Jespersen will be presenting as part of the Food Safety Culture PDG webinar series later this fall.

Update by Neil Coole on PAS 320: BSI

Neil gave an update on the progress of the PAS 320 guidance document to drive culture change within organizations. The discussion to develop this guidance initiated at the round table session at IAFP 2019 in Louisville, Kentucky. The first, second and third drafts of the document have been developed and the final steering group is projected to meet in September 2022. According to Neil, the PAS 320 publication is projected to be released in December 2022 or Q1 2023.

Talk by Bertrand Edmond and Laura Nelson: Campden/Intertek Alchemy

Bertrand and Laura gave an update on a 2022 global food safety training survey in a talk titled "Our Industry's current food safety culture journey." Laura gave some highlights about the survey. According to Laura, there were over 2,000 responses gathered from the survey (2,118) of which 81% agree to having some knowledge of food safety culture, 13% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 22% were confident that employees have authority to act if there is a risk that food safety might be compromised. Bertrand emphasized the use of technology in making food safety trainings more on demand. The two speakers both recommended more effective trainings with built in reinforcement and recognition. Both speakers will be presenting as part of the Food Safety Culture PDG webinar series later this fall.

Interactive session by Melody Ge and Andrew Clarke: Starkist/Loblaws

Melody and Andrew gave responses to several questions in an interactive session. Melody and Andrew spoke about a wholistic approach for vendors, the absence of a real plan for food safety culture and the need for a wholistic management of food safety culture across companies including increasing awareness among stakeholders. Truthful communication was highlighted as a way to improve collaboration between retailers and industries to enhance food safety cultures.

Breakout sessions

There were breakout sessions consisting of 5 different groups that discussed critical Food Safety Culture questions.

Group 1: We need management support! How can we engage them as a partner in our food safety culture journey of improvement?

Group 1 emphasized the need to speak the language of management as a way to improve engagement. They highlighted the need to look at audit metrics and the use of scare tactics to drive improvement in food safety culture.

Group 2: How can we better collaborate with operations to achieve their support on food safety culture initiatives?

Group 2 emphasized the need to speak the language of operators, both the literal language of members of the team and technical language of operations. They highlighted the need to communicate the importance of audits and food safety culture and breaking down barriers between different teams.

Group 3: What approaches can we apply to address pockets of low culture maturity (for example specific lines, specific shifts, specific plants) within our organizations?

Group 3 highlighted the need to work on team morale through effective communication, identifying areas of strength and placement and leadership by example.

Group 4: How do we engage other departmental leaders as “co-champions” to distribute the food safety culture responsibilities and the long-term improvement journey?

Group 4 emphasized the need to break the silos through communication and identifying the champions. They highlighted cross-functional walkabouts, having an executive sponsor and bringing in external catalysts.

Group 5: How can we leverage our training and development tools to better retain our frontline employees and therefore drive more consistent food safety behaviors?

Group 5 highlighted the importance of designing tools that are task-oriented and easily repeatable. They emphasized the need to coach and develop employees and to understand the factors that drive employee motivation. A recommendation was to use animations in training tools.

The deadline for Vice Chair nominations was set for May 2023.

Recommendations to the Executive Board

1. We respectfully submit a recommendation to the Board to schedule our Food Safety Culture PDG meeting so it does not overlap with Food Safety Education and Developing Food Safety Professionals. We had considerable feedback on the meeting schedule challenges and experienced a large portion of our members exiting our meeting so they could join a portion of the other meetings.

2. Additionally, we had several PDG members that joined us but were not scanned during the transition from the prior PDG. This potentially makes it difficult to share our meeting outcomes with the interested members. Perhaps we can have a scanning attendance system (phone app) executed by the student liaison?

Next Meeting Date: Sunday, July 16, 2023, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:03 p.m. Eastern Time.

Chairperson: Laura Nelson.