

Applied Laboratory Methods PDG

Names of Attendees: Julie Weller (Chairperson), Aaron Huckabee, Abdullahi Idris Muhammad, Adrienne Klijn, Aldo Xoxocotla Sánchez, Alex Brandt, Alex Tudor, Amy Siceloff, Ariel Buehler, Astrid Cariou, Austin Cary, Bastian Barthabure, Brad Stawick, Brandon Gartman, Brooke Schwartz, Cameron Parsons, Catharine Carlin, Catherine Stewart, Chi-An Lee, Christophe Quiring, Conrad Redlitz, Daniel Demarco, Daniel Smieszek, Dhananjai Muringattu Prabhakaran, Diana Stewart, Douglas Marshall, Dr. Snehal Jadhav, Edith Zambrana, Ellen Mendez, Emily Feldpausch, Emilio Esteban, Enric Seseras, Erica Miller, Erin Dreyling, Evan Chaney, Frederic Pastori, Gabriel Sanglay, Hany Anany, Irshad Sulaiman, Isabel Walls, Jeffery Kornacki, Jennine Cannizzo, Jerome Combrisson, Jesse Miller, Jens H. Kjaer, Jon Hammond, John Jarosh, John LoPorto, Joseph Meyer, Julie Weller, Karen Pietrzen, Kristen Hunt, Krzysztof Brzezinka, Lauren Hamilton, Laurie Post, Leslie Thompson-Strehlow, Leticia Mallmann, Luvie Sturghill, Mai Lan Tran, Martin Duplessis, Maryan Serour, Megan Jensen, Melanie Downs, Micah Greenzweig, Michelle Iannucci, Mike Clark, Morgan Welch, Nadia Le Den, Neha Shantanu Wavare, Patrick Fach, Purnendu Vasavada, Rachel Anderson, Ray Elementi, Rocelle Grabarek, Roger Hooi, Ryan Maus, Sarita Raengpradub, Shiwei Xu, Sid Fuller, Sophie Pierre, Stacy Stoltenberg, Sydney Blanks, Tracy Nowaczyk, Vanessa De Vasconcellos, Veronica Kays, Vik Dutta, Wayne Muraoka, Youngmin Park.

Total Number of Attendees: 90.

Meeting Called to Order: Sunday, July 27, 2025, 10:30 A.M.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Erica Miller, MS.

Old Business: Daniel DeMarco called the meeting to order at 10:30 A.M. and began reviewing the IAFP Anti-trust guidelines. After, he introduced the prior committee and the new committee Members while also recognizing the 2025 IAFP Executive Board.

The student liaison still has not been assigned yet to the ALM PDG. The 2024 PDG minutes were approved, and the 2024 recommendations and board responses were reviewed.

Dan reviewed the *Journal of Food Protection* call for review of topics of interest to help edit and publish to increase foot traffic to the journal. The journal has increased in the impact factor and the goal is to continue with that trend.

New Business: Julie Weller took over to review new business after Dan completed the discussion with old business. Julie began reviewing the executive board updates which included: Member attendance this year, continue to encourage participation in IAFP, IAFP's new approach to a tiered system, and ensure you are receiving communication from IAFP. The PDG was encouraged to visit the exhibit hall and stop by the welcome booth if it is your first time visiting. IAFP is launching a podcast this year and utilizing AI to generate closed captions.

Julie reviewed proposal acceptance from 2024 to 2025. For primary sponsors, the ALM PDG went from 28% acceptance to 58% acceptance. For secondary sponsors, the ALM PDG went from 43% to 61%. This can be attributed to the quality of proposals being the focus compared to quantity submitted or included in the proposal. Julie also reviewed the proposals that will be presented and encouraged attendance.

The IAFP app was reviewed and noted to keep up with this to be able to keep up to date with information and any changes that occur.

Webinar proposals were reviewed and promoted to submit. If there was a roundtable or symposium that was rejected, there could be viable and relevant content that could be useful for Members. There is increased attendance for webinars compared to a roundtable that is held in person. The webinars are archived on the IAFP website and available at any time for IAFP Members. When the webinars were free for viewing in June 2025, there were over 16,000 views

in 2025 compared to 9,000 views in 2024. The increase in views can continue with perpetuated content creation.

Julie began speaking about the validation and verification interest group. The group remains open to new Members to assist with the different subgroups. The group was created to address gaps between matrices observed in the lab compared to the matrices decided upon by the test developers. There have been multiple publications that have come from the group from 2019 through 2022 and then in 2023 the group created four subgroups: method considerations, inoculum protocols, webinars, and the laboratory best practices.

Julie handed it over to David Legan to discuss the method considerations subgroup. This subgroup has five published articles, and one was released in press. The subgroup received an award for the "Most-Viewed *FPT* General Interest Publication." The next publication will come out in the September/October 2025 edition of *Food Protection Trends*. Laurie Post began speaking about the general interest article in progress which is about molecular confirmations. The group is also collaborating with the IAFNS committee for publications.

Julie covered the discussion about the inoculum protocol subgroup which is working on an article for release, "Are Your Microbial Cultures Stressed? Preparing Target Inoculations and Good and Environmental Matrix Studies." This article's goal was to create a structured framework to correctly design studies that are robust, reliable, and fit for purpose. Julie also covered the webinar subgroup for Amanda Brookhouse-Sisney. There was a webinar completed on April 24, 2025, that ties into the inoculum preparation subgroup. The next webinar covers statistics and if anyone is interested in joining, they should contact Amanda Brookhouse-Sisney or Pat Bird for involvement.

David Legan began discussing the final subgroup which covers laboratory best practices. The group has been assembled for 1.5 years and they final settled on a goal and purpose for the group which is to relay how as a lab user to build a better relationship with a lab and vice versa. There is a manuscript being constructed for submission to *Food Protection Trends* Journal, "Powerful Partnerships Promote Pathogen Prevention."

Julie came back to the front stage and called for people from the ALM PDG to get involved in the subgroups. The subgroups create content on a volunteer basis. Anyone can reach to David Legan, Amanda Brookhouser-Sisney, or Laurie Post.

Once the subgroup discussions concluded, Veronica Kays from AOAC International presented current updates to the AOAC Microbiological Standards and current revisions to Validation Guidelines Appendix J. Veronica discussed who the key stakeholders were to this endeavor, the subgroups and their roles. Qualitative detection methods-cultural bacteria, analytical confirmation, and quantitative methods were the sub-groups that were chosen by the panel to be priorities. There were QR codes provided to be able to join the subgroups and to join SPADA for metagenomics sequencing.

After the AOAC updates concluded, Daniel DeMarco handed out ALM PDG Hero Award to both David Legan and Laurie Post for their contributions to the PDG. Julie then discussed the frequency in which the group should meet. Input was called upon to be able to give the best value from the PDG. The current topic ideas are technical presentations, invited speakers, and career highlights. Next year's dates for IAFP were shared and the deadlines for symposia submissions and abstracts.

Julie reviewed the guidelines for symposia and roundtable submissions and reiterated the importance of the quality of the submission and not the quantity of submissions. The discussion then turned to call upon the various proposal ideas to flush out.

The first proposal came from Jeffrey Kornacki to discuss the potential of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and relation to Crohn's disease, the challenges, methods, and the pre-harvest and post-harvest control of this. The next proposal came from Adrienne Klij who suggested partnering with IAFNS to discuss spores and methods. Erin Dreyling suggested a session discussing *Salmonella* and the potential different approaches to identification and risk and shifting to virulence and serotyping. Greg Siragusa suggested to discuss lag phase: where we were and where we are now to entice bacteria out of the lag phase faster to overcome some of the hurdles. Melanie from the University of Nebraska suggested continued discussions on allergen topics. There is an end user guidance for matrix validation and verification and the application of allergen methods and to review the guidance. FAO and WHO are holding a consultation in the fall to discuss risk assessment for gluten, which could be of relevance. Dan DeMarco suggested a topic about how to handle BSL-3 agents in a BSL-2 lab and how labs handle virus testing for confirmation in food labs who are not routinely set up for these activities. Jeff Kornacki and Greg Siragusa volunteered to help flush out the idea further. Alex Grant suggested a symposium to discuss the statistical differences between different quantitative methods for *Salmonella* enumeration. Isabel Wells had a couple suggestions to discuss which included: variables for *Campylobacter* detection, better ways to predict *Listeria monocytogenes*, and quantifying allergens. Sanjay Gummalla suggested discussing the sampling procedures, its relevancy to food safety and risk assessments. The last suggestion came from David Legan to review the list sent out by *Food Protection Trends* to see how suggestions intersect. Julie suggested a follow up to continue working on these ideas to not miss the submission deadline.

The recommendations were the last thing discussed and listed below. No questions were raised after recommendations and the meeting concluded at 11:40 A.M.

Recommendations to the Executive Board:

1. The ALM PDG recommends Amanda Brookhouser-Sinsey for Vice Chair.
2. The ALM PDG recommends to the board to start an award with the intention of recognizing the dedication and efforts of individuals within the various PDG groups. Identifying these individuals may include the visibility, publications, or cross involvement within PDG groups.
3. The ALM PDG recommends creating an icon within the IAFP app that links directly to the web-browser and auto-populates the web-browser.
4. The ALM PDG recommends a “feedback” loop/survey after presentations. An example would be a QR code linked to the host’s email and allows direct communication to provide something similar to feedback or allow communication for further idea development to keep topics moving forward.
5. The ALM PDG recommends creating a track of symposia based on sponsored PDG, as much as possible. An example would be having 5 ALM PDG-sponsored symposia or roundtables in a sequential order and not overall to the greatest extent possible.

Next Meeting Date: Sunday, July 26, 2026, New Orleans, LA.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:40 A.M.

Chairperson Name: Julie Weller.