

Animal and Pet Food Safety

Names of Attendees: Michele Sayles (Chair), Deepa Thiagarajan (Vice Chair), Christopher Archer, Jyoti Aryal, Mark Bauter, Ledon Black, Alana Bryant, Ariel Buehler, Hanyu Chen, Mary-Grace Danao, Jennifer Dorick, Zhujun (Abby) Gao, Beilei Ge, Halle Greenbaum, Megan Hall, Jon Hammond, Vannith Hay, Minghao He, Junjia He, Lauren Howell, Jace Jordan, Chyer Kim, Rob Kooijmans, Tonali Lara-Ramos, Ana Lima, Christian Lozano Guzman, Leticia Mallmann, Anne-Marie Masella, Tyler Mattson, Isabella McGrath, Gerald Miller, Amie Minor-Richard, Tomas Moita, Amit Morey, Jason Neal-McKinney, Yhuliana Nino Fuerte, Richard Otwey, Laurentina Pedroso, Suresh Pillai, Aaron Pleitner, Vasuki Ramakrishnan, Jimmy Robert, Janet Rowat Kraiss, Claire Savage, Anru Shen, Laurie Steed, Savannah Stewart, Christopher Thomas, Celina To, Tamra Tolen, Cole Vaughan, Neha Wavare, Beth Wittenauer, Romy Yu, Bonnie Zhu.

Total Number of Attendees: 54.

Meeting Called to Order: Sunday July 26, 2026, at 1:08 PM EST.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Madhuparna Deb.

Old Business: Approval of 2025 Meeting Minutes: 2025 meeting minutes were approved and submitted. Antitrust statement was acknowledged and pricing guidelines confirmed to be in effect.

Membership and Participation Updates: The PDG membership reached approximately 3,000 members, an increase of 1,000 from the previous year. The acceptance rate for 2026 symposia was 33%, one of the highest across PDGs.

IAFP Deadlines: IAFP European Symposia and Roundtables is now held in alternates years with a submission deadline of **September 21** and North American deadline is **September 29**.

New Business:

Dr Deepa Thiagarajan did a quick overview on potential topics for webinars and submissions for symposium and round tables, for 2027 conference. She will share google link to collect ideas.

Dr Sayles and Dr Thiagarajan proposed every other month listening sessions, with one in August and two in September as we ramp up preparation and submissions.

2026 Accepted Symposia: Two symposia were accepted. (1) Monday, July 27 at 3:45 PM: Mycotoxins symposium covering new regulatory action levels, AI predictive modeling, and management approaches featuring speakers from Pet Food Institute, NASA, World Food Program, and technology providers. (2) Wednesday: Two-hour session on insect proteins and novel ingredient safety risks titled "Debugging Pet Food Safety" with speakers from FAO, National Insect Protein Association, and CDM. Four rejected submissions from prior year will be repurposed as webinars or rolled to 2027. Last year's webinar achieved record attendance of approximately 300.

Jason (FDA): FDA Reorganization and Compliance Updates: ORA was dissolved with inspections moved to the new Office of Inspections and Investigations. Compliance functions are now within CVM's Office of Surveillance and Compliance. A dedicated animal food inspectorate was created with two inspectorates now solely focused on animal food (previously <25% of inspector time). Current biological hazard focus areas: *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli*, *Campylobacter*. Chemical hazard focus: PFAS and mycotoxins.

Megan Hall (FDA): Regulatory updates on FDA reorganization and compliance priorities for animal food safety. FDA Pre-Market Animal Food Ingredient Pathways (DAFI).

Technology Presentations:

Celina To (BioMerieux): PCR-based root cause analysis typing for *Salmonella* and *Listeria* with sub-2-hour turnaround and facility-level strain resolution.

Tyler Mattson (Synexis): Continuous hydrogen peroxide technology generating low-level H₂O₂ gas 24/7 to fill sanitation gaps between facility cleaning events.

Dr. Alana Bryant (Diamond Pet Foods): Handheld biofilm detection gun using UV fluorescence to identify and target biofilm-prone areas for remediation.

Ariel Buehler (General Mills/Blue Buffalo): Pet Food Institute update on industry trends and safety initiatives.

Dr. Michele gave the updates on the Pet Food Alliance: The alliance is approximately 8 years old with membership grown from 20 to 300-400 across the rendering-to-pet food supply chain.

Recommendations to the Executive Board: none.

Next Meeting Date: July 18 – 21 in Kansas City, Missouri.

Chairperson Name: Dr. Michele Sayles