

Viral and Parasitic Foodborne Disease PDG

Names of Attendees: Maria (Sonia) Almeria (Chair), Matthew Moore (Vice chair), Joseph Antonucci, James Arbogast, Samoa Asigau, Sherry Bansal, Rosie Beaulieu, Shannon Bennett, Yannick Bichot, Nigel Cook, Alexandre Da Silva, Sapphira Darmawan, Brenna DeRocili, Gayatri Dhulappana, Mauricio Durigan, Laura Ewing-Peebles, Patrick FACH, Irene Falco, Jeffrey Farber, Natasha Ferney, Hannah Ferouz, Kristen Gibson, John Grocholl, Sanjay Gummalla, Jack Guzewich, Rachel Hazen, Laura Howard, Ingrid Huntley, Tim Jackson, Julie Jean, Suzanne Jordan, Mariya Julien, Chyer Kim, Comfort Kwamikorkor, Deja Latney, Alvin Lee, Susan Leonard, Quanhong Li, Rob Limburn, Ly Mai, Gary Maloncon, Sonia Marotta, Florence Martel, Karen McWilliams, David Medin, Courtney Mickiewicz, Razieh Sadat Mirmahdi, Paul Morin, Nikos Natsaridis, Georgios Papageorgiou, Alba Perez-Cataluna, Sophie PIERRE, Karen Pietrzen, Charlène Plénière, Gale Prince, Marianna Rhatigan, Guy Robinson, Gloria Sanchez, Annette Sansom, Monica Santin-Duran, Manan Sharma, Diana Stewart, Gabriella Strocko, Irshad Sulaiman, Cassandra Suther, Sue Teegardin, Francis Torko, Jean-Philippe Tourniaire, Grace Tung, Angela Valadez, Amy Wise, Katherine Woo, Jacqueline Woods, Suhao Yin, Christine Yu, Anthony Zoropogui.

Total Number of Attendees: 75.

Meeting Called to Order: Sunday, July 26, 2026, 8:30 A.M.

Minutes Recording Secretary: Matthew Moore.

Old Business:

The minutes from the IAFP 2025 PDG meeting were reviewed and approved with no modifications.

New Business:

Dr. Manan Sharma, IAFP President-Elect, provided an update from the IAFP Executive Board. He reported that more than 3,000 attendees had registered for IAFP 2026 and encouraged new students and colleagues to become IAFP members. He noted that the acceptance rate for submitted symposia and roundtable proposals this year was 33%, and emphasized prioritizing the quality of submissions over the quantity of sessions submitted by the PDG. He reported that IAFP Europe has moved to an every-other-year format and encouraged PDGs to submit session ideas for the 2027 European Symposium. Members were directed to the IAFP website for information on committee and volunteer opportunities, reminded to download the meeting app if they had not already done so, and informed that Room 202 in the Convention Center was designated as a Quiet Room. Dr. Sharma noted that involvement in local or regional IAFP Affiliates is a good way to network and develop leadership skills, and the PDG thanked the LSU Food Safety Group for their work supporting the meeting. The PDG also announced plans to hold an election for a new Vice Chair in spring 2027, prior to the 2027 Annual Meeting, and issued a call for volunteers.

Chair Dr. Sonia Almeria provided additional announcements, including a review of the IAFP Anti-Trust Guidelines and a summary of accepted sponsored and co-sponsored symposia and roundtables, as well as posters and technical sessions relevant to the PDG. Three Brief Research Updates were presented to the group. Dr. Gloria Sanchez (CSIC, Spain) presented "Hidden Threats: Emerging Viruses in the Food Chain," noting that norovirus carries the highest economic impact among enteric viruses, that early concerns about detecting COVID-19 in food were ruled out, and that avian influenza (H5N1) has been detected in raw milk. Dr. Guy Robinson

(Cryptosporidium Reference Unit, Wales, UK) presented "Exploring the Population Structure and Epidemiology of *Cryptosporidium parvum*," describing spring and fall case spikes and MLVA group profiles correlated with overseas travel or consumption of farm-stand products, including a group associated with a spring spike and animal contact at petting zoos, a group present year-round, and a group associated with an autumn peak with no identified exposure source. Dr. Monica Santin presented "*Cyclospora cayetanensis*: Five-Minute Fast Facts," noting an estimated 10 million annual cases, an ongoing multistate U.S. outbreak initially linked to Taco Bell lettuce that has since expanded to other states, an FDA finding that a supplier sample result was a false positive, the biology of oocyst shedding and infectivity, and the replacement of the 18S PCR assay with the Mit1C qPCR assay for detection.

In preparation for IAFP 2027, to be held July 18–21, 2027, in Kansas City, Missouri, the PDG discussed potential roundtable, webinar, and symposium topics through five breakout groups. Suggested topics included a one-health approach and gap analysis for foodborne virus control; challenges in surveillance of viruses and parasites in foods, including limited access to virulent strains for research; improving communication and knowledge-sharing between industry and regulatory offices; advances in virus recovery methods; research with direct application to public food safety recommendations, such as freezing produce to reduce parasite risk; strategies for quantifying contamination severity in raw produce; appropriate and careful use of artificial intelligence in this field; the influence of regional culture and practices, such as farm petting zoos, on parasite spread; comparisons of virus versus parasite transmission vehicles; and lessons learned from ongoing outbreaks such as the *Cyclospora* outbreak, including a proposed roundtable on outbreak communication, the effect of social media and news coverage on produce consumption and consumer purchasing behavior, methodology sharing for detection, use of surrogates in control-strategy analysis, and sequencing and genotyping approaches. Additional topics discussed included vaccine and vaccination policy in food production and service, and inactivation methodologies for viruses and parasites.

Numbered List of Recommendations to the Executive Board: None.

Next Meeting Date: July 18–21, 2027, Kansas City, Mo.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:00 A.M.

Chairperson Name: Dr. Maria (Sonia) Almeria.