

Food Protection Trends Management Committee

Members Present: Sampathkumar Balamurugan (Chair), Jovana Kovacevic (Vice Chair), Teresa Bergholz, Larry Beuchat, Catherine Cutter, Jessica Danzeisen, Yaohua Betty Feng, Dale Grinstead, Sharlanda Khosravi, Matthew Moore, Carrie Rigdon, Joshua Scheinberg, Manan Sharma, John Spink, Laura Strawn, Leslie Thompson-Strehlow, Gretchen Wall, Daniel Weller.

Visitors: Judy Luther (Consultant), Qierui Zhang (Elsevier).

Board/Staff Present: Maria Hoffman.

Total Number of Attendees: 20.

Meeting Called to Order: Sunday, July 26, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

Chairperson: Dr. S. Balamurugan (Bala), Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Recording Secretary: Dr. Jovana Kovacevic (Vice-chair), Oregon State University.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Chair S. Balamurugan at 1:00 p.m. Members and guests introduced themselves.

2. Appointment of Recording Secretary

By unanimous consent, Jovana Kovacevic was appointed Recording Secretary for the meeting.

3. Additions/Modifications to the Agenda and Approval

The Chair called for additions or modifications to the agenda. None were proposed, and the agenda was adopted as circulated by unanimous consent.

4. Welcome to New *FPT* Leadership and Committee Members

The Chair welcomed new committee members and thanked all members for their continued service to *Food Protection Trends (FPT)*.

Members whose terms ended: Mi-Kyung Park, Angela Anandappa, Martin Martinez, Efstathia Papafragkou, and Adam Baker. The committee thanked them for their service.

New members: Yuqian Lou, Carrie Rigdon, Ernest Bonah, and Sharlanda Khosravi. The committee welcomed them.

5. Minutes from the 2025 Committee Meeting

The Chair called for corrections to the minutes of the 2025 committee meeting. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as distributed.

6. Executive Board Report – Dr. Manan Sharma

- Attendance at the 2026 Annual Meeting is expected to exceed 3,000 participants.
- A large exhibitor presence is on site; members were encouraged to visit the exhibit hall.

- Members were encouraged to recruit colleagues who are not yet IAFP Members. Membership is \$80 in the United States, with reduced rates in other countries. Members were also encouraged to join their local affiliates.
- IAFP Europe is moving to a biennial schedule. The next European meeting will be held in April 2027 in Copenhagen.

7. Executive Director Report – Dr. Manan Sharma

No specific report was presented, but items relevant to the committee were incorporated into the Executive Board report provided by Dr. Manan Sharma. Members were reminded that the IAFP business meeting is open to all; no items were scheduled for a vote.

8. Scientific Editor Report — Dr. Catherine Cutter

- Scientific report was shared with the committee prior to the meeting. Cathy provided brief overview.
- Submissions: *FPT* received approximately 130 submissions last year. Submissions are down by roughly 28 this year, to approximately 101.
- The proportion of general interest papers has increased relative to previous years.
- A backlog had developed in which accepted papers waited 6–9 months to appear in print. That backlog has now been cleared. Several issue volumes were expanded by one to two papers, both general interest and research papers, to catch up.
- Current turnaround to first review is approximately one month.
- The next issues to be published are March–April and May–June.
- The Editor has worked with authors on formatting and on aligning manuscript focus with the scope of the journal.
- Authorship remains predominantly academic, with contributions from government and industry.

9. Old / Ongoing Business

9a. Creation of an Associate Editor Position for *FPT*

The principal item carried over from the 2025 meeting was approval of an Associate Editor position. The committee discussed the term structure and transition plan:

- Both the Editor and the Associate Editor serve four-year terms, with the Associate Editor succeeding to the Editor position.
- Dr. Cutter's service reaches its term limit in 2027. Because no Associate Editor position previously existed, the committee recommended and the board approved that her term be extended through 2028 as a special circumstance.
- The extension provides one year in which the incoming Associate Editor shadows the Editor before assuming the Editor role in 2028. The Associate Editor position would then be advertised again.

The committee reached consensus on this transition plan without objection, and it is forwarded to the Executive Board as a recommendation.

9b. Update on Publication Model and Access — Judy Luther

- DOIs have been assigned to *FPT* content over the past two years.

- The next step is enabling XML to link content and references, making FPT material more discoverable and accessible.

Q: The Board approved additional articles — what was the size of the increase?

A: One to two additional papers were added per issue to clear the backlog. No permanent increase is planned.

Q: If the journal is not printed, does an article limit per issue still matter?

Without objection, the Chair was directed to seek clarification from the Executive Board on whether a per-issue article limit remains necessary.

9c. Discussion of Invited Articles

- Responsibility for soliciting invited articles has fallen primarily to the Editor. The committee agreed that both the Editor and the Associate Editor can play a role in identifying candidates.
- Invited content should complement the membership — *FPT* functions as a members' magazine rather than a strictly scientific journal.
- Limited solicitation occurred last year because of the backlog. The committee aims to be more proactive and involved this year. Members with ideas were asked to contact Dr. Cutter directly.
- Topics currently in progress include third-party laboratory practices and regulatory requirements in different countries. These need not be large review papers.
- Gretchen Wall noted that a quarterly email goes out to this group soliciting ideas.
- Daniel Weller suggested leveraging current and emerging issues, for example, *Cyclospora* in leafy greens and *Salmonella* in shell eggs outbreaks.
- Larry Beuchat asked whether this approach would bypass peer review. Dr. Cutter confirmed it would not: invited articles still receive two reviews.
- Daniel Weller asked whether a smaller group could assist. The committee agreed that *FPT* Management Committee members can serve as reviewers; Carrie Rigdon, Gretchen Wall and Daniel Weller volunteered.

10. FPT Award Recipients

Exceptional Reviewer: Dr. Christine Bruhn, University of California–Davis (retired). Dr. Bruhn is not attending this year. She has been notified, and the award is published in the online program and will be recognized again in November.

Kudos to Most Cited (2020), Most Viewed Peer-Reviewed, and Most Viewed General Interest Articles: All recipients have been notified and several are attending the meeting.

Reception: Recipients and the editorial boards will be celebrated at the *JFP* and *FPT* Editorial Board Reception today in Great Hall BC. (4:30–5:30 p.m.)

11. New Business

11a. Promotion of Published Content — Short Video Summaries

- The committee discussed producing short video summaries (approximately three minutes) featuring published authors, to highlight published content, particularly general interest articles, and to promote committee engagement.

- IAFP already produces video content; the proposal is to extend that capacity to *FPT* promotion, subject to author willingness to participate.
- Dan Weller provided information that CDC communications staff can be a possible additional resource for papers with CDC authors.
- The committee reached consensus in support of the proposal without objection, and it is forwarded to the Executive Board as a recommendation.

11b. Associate Editor Position Announcement

- The Associate Editor position description has been drafted.
- An announcement will be emailed to the full IAFP membership this week. Members were encouraged to consider applying; the editorial system works well and the process is straightforward.
- The Associate Editor is expected to be in the role before the next IAFP Annual Meeting (i.e., January 2027).

11c. Food Fraud Prevention as a Content Area – Dr. John Spink

- Food fraud prevention authors report difficulty finding publication outlets, and there is a notable gap in the published literature; many working definitions are approaching fifteen years old.
- Practitioner questions include which tests to perform and where to have them performed. A recurring theme was how the field can help industry define its needs so that scientists and laboratories can better supply the required information, and what current trends and practices look like.
- Dr. Cutter suggested working with the relevant PDG to develop content, a roundtable or panel discussion could be synthesized into a general interest paper, or developed as a review paper. Opinion pieces were also identified as a good fit for *FPT*.
- PDGs will be encouraged to pursue these topics.

Recommendations to the Executive Board:

The following recommendations were adopted by the committee by unanimous consent and are forwarded to the Executive Board:

1. Scientific Editor term extension and succession: Extend Dr. Catherine Cutter's term as Scientific Editor through 2028 as a special circumstance, to allow the incoming Associate Editor a one-year shadowing period before succeeding to the Editor role, after which the Associate Editor position will be advertised.
2. Clarification on issue length: Confirm whether a per-issue article limit remains necessary now that *FPT* is not published in print.
3. Video promotion of published content: Approve production of short (approximately three-minute) video summaries featuring published authors, leveraging IAFP's existing video production capacity, contingent on author willingness.

13. Action Items

1. Committee members: send invited article topics and author suggestions to Dr. Cathy Cutter.
2. Editor: send a quarterly email soliciting article ideas from the committee.

3. IAFP staff: finalize Associate Editor position timelines and distribute the announcement to the IAFP membership.
4. Gretchen Wall and Daniel Weller: serve as reviewers for invited and general interest content, with additional committee members as needed.
5. Chair/Editor: carry the recommendations forward to the Executive Board.
6. Editor: engage the relevant PDG(s) regarding food fraud prevention content for *FPT*.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:30 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Sunday, July 18, 2026, Kansas City MO. Virtual Meetings throughout the year.

Chairperson Name: Sampathkumar (Bala) Balamurugan.