

THE BELL RINGER

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Conference of the Central Atlantic States
Association of Food and Drug Officials

Summer 2017



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Congratulations to one of our own, **Jack Welte**, who received the "CASA Award" at the Annual Training and Educational Seminar in May 2017, at Saratoga Springs, NY. "This prestigious award is given to a person who has demonstrated outstanding service to CASA and/or has made valuable contributions to the field of food, drug, cosmetic, public or environmental health, law administration and/or enforcement. Recommended nominees are considered for the award based upon continuous and outstanding achievements within a ten-year period preceding consideration of the nominee."



We are honored and proud to recognize Jack, who has worked tirelessly for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture since 1977. His duties included poultry and egg inspections, and food inspections for the bulk of his career. Jack has educated so many in industry, regulatory and consumer groups to include non-profits in areas of

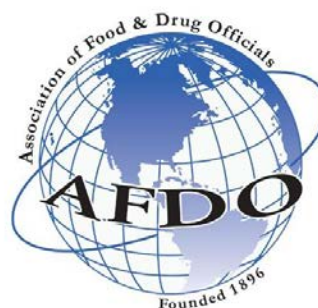
food safety such as: Seafood HACCP; Shellfish, to include specialized processing such as modified atmosphere packaging, sous vide at the retail level, and use of acid phosphatase to detect heat treatment in shellfish to verify cooking; and handling emergency food service operations. Jack is also certified by AFDO as a Train the Trainer in Seafood HACCP and Shellfish HACCP. Additionally, while working in the Seafood HACCP Program, Jack developed the PA Market Seafood CD containing numerous photos for both finfish and shellfish identification. The CD was used for education on processing and establishing a seafood identification base for the PDA lab to assist in detecting species substitution and fraud. Further, he assisted FDA in establishing a protocol on the use of acid phosphatase to establish a method to detect proper cooking and worked with Penn State University in the validation of the equipment used.



Jack has been a longtime member of the Philadelphia Conference of CASA and served as our President in 2012 and 2013, and Past President in 2014. He has served on our Education Committee for well over fifteen (15) years and has been a speaker for many Food Safety topics for our quarterly training sessions. Further, because of all of Jack's professional contacts, he has been instrumental in recruiting many of our speakers over the years. Again, congratulations to Jack for receiving this award, and thank you for your regulatory service and dedication to CASA.

Our next training meeting is scheduled at **Procacci Bros, in Philadelphia, PA, on September 15, 2017**. Please save the date! We are in the process of planning another informative agenda; if you have any ideas for topics/speakers, contact me ASAP at LSBonner@comcast.net.

Have a wonderful summer!



Sincerely,

Lynn Bonner, President
Philadelphia Conference of CASA

Conference News & Updates

CASA's 101st Annual Educational & Training Seminar was held May 1-4, 2017 in historic downtown Saratoga Springs, NY. The theme, appropriately, was "Race into the Future". Topics included FSMA, federal/state cooperation, food safety culture, emergency response, and hands-on food safety training. Many of the presentations can be found on the [CASA website](#). Fun activities included a game night, silent auction, and awards banquet.



The 102nd Annual Educational & Training Seminar will be held April 23-26, 2018 on Long Island in Stony Brook, NY.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Tentative training dates for future CASA educational seminars:

September 15 – Philadelphia, PA

December 8 – Treveose, PA

An agenda will be sent out approximately one month prior to the meeting. Please mark your 2017 calendars, so you can attend!

Philadelphia Conference of CASA Officers

Lynn S. Bonner, U.S. Food & Drug Administration	President
Pam Lawn, Montgomery County Health Department	Vice President
Dennis Bauer, Retired, Bucks County HD	Executive Officer
Megan Lauff, U.S. Food & Drug Administration	Treasurer
Harry Pfender, Bucks County Health Department	Secretary
Anitra Brown-Reed, US Food & Drug Administration	Member-At-Large
Nancy Wilson, Wawa, Inc.	Member-At-Large
Danielle Bytheway, NJ Department of Health	CASA Representative
Howard Rabinovitch, Retired, FDA	Past President
Caroline Friel, Wawa, Inc.	Associate Representative

We would like to welcome Dan Johnson to the Philadelphia Conference Executive Board Committee for Education and Training. Dan is a Food Investigator with FDA's Office of Regulatory Affairs. He will help coordinate and plan educational seminars.

Educational Seminars

Our SPRING EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR was held at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus Auditorium, 1175 Conshohocken Road, Conshohocken, PA 19428 on Friday March 10, 2017. FBI and USDA discussed food defense and agro-terrorism.

- Kevin Bosch and Erik Negron, Special Agents in the Philadelphia Division of FBI, presented "**Role of the FBI's Weapon of Mass Destruction Coordinator**" and "**The FBI's Threat Credibility Evaluation**". They described FBI's post-9/11 proactive approach to preventing terror events before they happen, rather than reacting after the fact. Such events could entail explosive, chemical, biological, or radioactive weapons. Mr. Bosch described the importance of recognizing suspicious activity and reporting it to law enforcement. He explained the easy accessibility of weapon-making information on the internet and chemicals at local retail stores (e.g. beauty salons and hardware stores). Mr. Bosch described some ways to detect suspicious activity (such as a customer attempting to buy pool cleaning chemicals who doesn't appear to have a pool, or a customer asking questions about concentrating chemicals). In addition, he explained how FBI partners with industry, retailers, regulators, and academia in detecting and preventing events. Mr. Negron explained how FBI responds to reports of suspicious activity. He emphasized that virtually all reports are investigated and evaluated for credibility and appropriate FBI action.
- Paul Brown, from the Compliance and Investigation Division of USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, presented "**Food Defense Surveillance**". He described approaches to protecting the food supply from intentional acts of terror. Mr. Brown explained that every step in the supply chain can be vulnerable to intentional adulteration. He presented USDA resources for food defense and promoted partnerships among regulatory agencies, law enforcement agencies, and industry.

- Kevin Spradlin, Intelligence Analyst with the FBI Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate, presented "**Food Defense**". He explained some motivations for terrorists to contaminate the food supply. He also described various modalities such as toxic industrial chemicals, biological agents, and radiological sources. Mr. Spradlin presented examples of intentional adulteration, such as a disgruntled employee at a Japanese food manufacturing plant who regularly sprayed pesticide on prepared foods. Another example involved a consumer with a history of mental illness spraying rat poison and hand sanitizer on a supermarket salad bar.
- Joshua Dortch, Staff Operations Specialist in the Philadelphia Division of FBI, presented "**Intelligence Trends in the Food Sector**". He described FBI's Guardian system which tracks and evaluates threats and suspicious activity. It also allows law enforcement agencies across various jurisdictions to share terrorism-related activities and to combine suspicious activity reports. Like the previous speakers, Mr. Dortch emphasized partnership among law enforcement and regulatory agencies to enable prompt response to food terrorism events.
- Kathleen Giles, Supervisory Special Agent with the FBI Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate, presented "**Agroterrorism**". Ms. Giles illustrated terrorist acts intended to disrupt or harm agriculture like crops or livestock. She described foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) as a potential agroterrorism agent. FMD is available to terrorists overseas and is very hearty and contagious. Introduction into livestock would cause widespread depopulation and huge economic losses. Ms. Giles emphasized that the key to agroterrorism prevention is rapid notification of law enforcement for early detection.
- Cerena Coughlin, Special Agent in the Philadelphia Division of FBI, is the Cyber Squad and Local Coordinator for InfraGard. She presented "**FBI's Partnership with InfraGard**". InfraGard is a partnership between the FBI, state and local law enforcement agencies, and the private sector (e.g. businesses and academic institutions). The initiative is dedicated to sharing information and intelligence to prevent hostile acts. Each InfraGard alliance is linked with a FBI Field Office. Coughlin emphasized collaboration and communication as the keys to protection.

Our SUMMER EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR was held at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center, 53 Academy Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060 on Friday June 16, 2017.

- The first speaker was Gary Wolf, FDA Regional Shellfish Specialist. Gary gave an overview of "**Depuration**". The Depuration process is when shellfish (mostly hard clams) are harvested in Restricted or Conditionally Restricted areas. The product is obtained from a licensed or permitted harvester to identify the actual harvest area and brought to the Depuration Plant. The shellfish are placed in indoor tanks where each tank is identified and the shellfish are placed on racks (similar to wholesale plastic bread trays) and immersed in water. The water is then circulated from each tank through a series of UV systems for a minimum of 44 hours. The UV system is tested regularly and the bulbs themselves are examined and wiped if needed to minimize any sediment that may have accumulated; this maintains the disinfection capacity of the UV system in order to sanitize the water. The plant must have a HACCP Plan and accompanying SSOP and testing records. Once

the product is depurated, the tag is applied to indicate the harvest area as a code to identify the depuration tank and process. All the original information to the harvester and harvest area are maintained by the plant. So the retail tag will not have the original harvest area but a process code.

- Gary also discussed **“Wet Storage”**. Wet Storage is the removal of shellfish from approved waters and placing them in another approved body of water or in tanks (primarily to de-sand and to increase palatability/salinity). It may increase shelf life. Some of the older molluscan shellfish tanks used in retail locations are now considered part of a wet storage system. The water is subject to routine testing to ensure the product is not contaminated. If you see one of these systems in a retail setting they must have a HACCP Plan, SSOP records, and testing. This is one reason that many of these systems have disappeared from retail stores and restaurants. The tagging process will identify the original harvest area and harvest date, but will also have a Wet Store date added to the tag. The date must include the date placed in and the date removed from wet storage.
- The second speaker was Susan Algeo of Food Safety Training Solutions in McConnellsburg, PA. Susan presented **“Food Allergen Training is Slowly Being Mandated across the U.S.”**. She discussed the 8 major food allergens and how prevention of cross contact minimizes the presence of allergens in food, as well as the training needed to identify areas of cross contact. Susan discussed allergen recalls, which are predominant and widely publicized in the manufactured food side but are at preset minimal regulation on the retail side as identified in the current Food Code. Although the Code does identify the requirements for packaged food (that which is sold at retail such as prepacked salads, sandwiches, and other foods made on site and placed in a consumer container in a Grab N' Go case), it does not identify any requirement on a menu or the declaration of allergens in the facility. However, many restaurants are proactive in providing this information to the customer. In facilities that represent that a certain allergen is not used (such as gluten free), then an allergen control program should be established and monitored with appropriate employee training. Susan also discussed increasing allergen sensitivity such as adding a very small amount of an allergen to the diet to change the immunoresponse. Many children may “grow” out of the sensitivity, but some people have it for life.
- The next speaker was Dustin Salvaggio of Julabo USA in Allentown, PA. The company produces Fusion Chef products for **“Sous Vide Processing”** in commercial kitchens and restaurants. “Sous vide” is the French translation for “under vacuum”. The products lose no volatile organic compounds (e.g. aroma, color, flavor, and taste) and no nutrients are lost in this process. The foods may be batch cooked for later use, with extended shelf life and no decrease in quality. However, as the products are vacuum packed, very strict temperature guidelines and specialized equipment must be used and a HACCP plan and/or variance as required must be in place prior to beginning operation. Vacuum packing must be done in clean and sanitized equipment and properly dated with use-by of no more than 30 days from packaging. The product is usually cooked in a circulated hot water bath at a precise temperature. The product is then tested with a special probe thermometer that has self-sealing tape applied to the exterior of the vacuum packed product for internal temperature verification and to maintain vacuum. The vacuum packed products are rapidly cooled (e.g. in an ice bath or blast chiller) within 90 minutes and placed in a cooler with a Continuous Monitoring Device to indicate that the product has not exceeded 38 degrees F for control of *Clostridium*

botulinum and *Listeria monocytogenes*. The products may be re-thermalized (removed from packaging for searing or other cooking method to provide for rapid service to customers).

- The last speaker was Russel Vandermark, FDA Import Specialist, who presented “**FDA Import Seafood Requirements**” under the Seafood HACCP regulation. Russ discussed applicable Critical Control Points and who is required to maintain relevant documentation (e.g. the customs broker). He defined the Importer of Record and described Detention without Physical Examination, the Import Alert List, and the Prior Notice requirement for imported foods.

‘Tis the Season for BBQ

Summer means picnics, cookouts, and other outdoor parties! But eating outdoors in warm weather presents a food safety challenge. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 41°F and 135°F, so summer heat makes the basics of food safety especially important.

Fortunately, there are a lot of steps to take to keep family and friends from becoming ill:

1. Wash hands.
2. Keep raw food separate from cooked food.
3. Marinate food in the refrigerator, not out on the counter.
4. Cook food thoroughly.
5. Refrigerate and freeze food promptly.
6. Keep hot food hot.
7. Keep cold food cold.

Source: [Barbecue Basics: Tips to Prevent Foodborne Illness](#)



Editor's Note

Share your interests, information, and announcements with your fellow professionals. If you take great notes, contribute to the Bell Ringer and recount your training or meeting adventures. Please email: George.Zameska@pastertraining.com or Matthew.Noonan@fda.hhs.gov.

Space is available for advertising in the Bell Ringer.

We look forward to your feedback and participation.