

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food and Feed Safety Division**

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Version #: 2	Effective Date: 1/9/2017
Title: <b>Investigation Documentation and Annual Investigations Summary SOP</b>	

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**1. PURPOSE**

This document describes post-response activities including the maintenance of findings and records along with the creation and distribution of final reports, annual summaries, and recommendations for FOOD-RELATED INCIDENTS.

**2. SCOPE**

This document pertains to FOOD-RELATED INCIDENT investigations conducted by the Food and Feed Safety Division (FFSD) of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). FOOD-RELATED INCIDENTS may include but are not limited to foodborne illness outbreaks, food facility contamination events, product recall follow-up, and natural disaster response. For foodborne illness outbreak investigations involving illnesses of Minnesota residents, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is responsible for creating, storing, and disseminating the official outbreak summary. The Investigation Summary may provide supporting information, but is not the full, complete summary of record for foodborne illness outbreak investigations involving illnesses of Minnesota residents. This procedure also does not apply to inspection program led reinspection or follow-up inspections or specific compliance actions. These actions are documented in compliance summary documents and within inspection reports.

**3. BACKGROUND**

The Rapid Response Team (RRT) is the primary investigations and response management unit for FOOD-RELATED INCIDENTS involving food products made, stored, or sold in Minnesota. The RRT is also involved in responding to food and feed emergencies that surpass the routine capacity of any one FFSD program to respond. Summaries of all RRT responses are created every calendar year. These annual summaries provide investigational information to other agencies and entities, help demonstrate the impact the RRT has on protecting food safety in Minnesota, and provide one mechanism for response trend analysis. For additional guidance on annual FOOD-RELATED INCIDENT trend analysis and identifying lessons learned from responses, see *RESP.50.13 – Foodborne Illness and Investigational Data Analysis and Lessons Learned SOP*.

**4. RESPONSIBILITY**

**RRT Coordinator** – The RRT Coordinator is responsible for completing the annual summary each calendar year or delegating the work to be completed in a manner consistent with this SOP. The RRT Coordinator is also responsible for reviewing the annual summary for completeness and accuracy, and disseminating the summary to other agencies upon request.

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**RRT Investigator/Analyst**– The RRT Investigator/Analyst is responsible for completing the annual summary or assisting in the completion of the annual summary as delegated by the RRT Coordinator.

**Response, Training and Outreach (RTO) Supervisor** – The RTO Supervisor is responsible for reviewing the annual summary for completeness and accuracy.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

**Annual Summary** – A collection of all Investigation Summaries and recommended “next steps” for each closed RRT investigation for the calendar year in a single document.

**Environmental Assessment:** On-site food product or food processing environment investigation, conducted in conjunction with investigations as needed to assess and rule out the potential that the contaminant of concern was introduced at a particular point in the distribution or production system. This is achieved by identifying contributing factors and environmental antecedents.

**Food-Related Incidents** – means and unintentional or deliberate contamination, threatened or actual, of food that may occur at any point in the production system and may cause food-related illness, injury, outbreaks, and HAZARDS. Examples of food related incidents include but are not limited to foodborne illness outbreaks and food tampering.

**Hazard** – means any biological, chemical, or physical agent in food that is reasonably likely to cause illness or injury in the absence of its control.

**Investigation Summary** – A document used to capture the nature of the problem and summarize the actions taken in response. The Investigation Summary is MDA RRT’s official record of the response and serves as the MDA FFSD’s final report of the response once the investigation is closed.

**RRT Investigation** – Any type of FOOD-RELATED INCIDENT that involved the MDA RRT to either lead or assist. These include, but are not limited to, foodborne illness outbreaks, food facility contamination events, product recall follow-up, and natural disaster response.

## 6. PROCEDURES

### 6.1 Investigational Documentation Maintenance and Final Report Distribution

#### RRT Coordinator

- 6.1.1** Ensure all investigation-related documentation is maintained on the RRT SharePoint site in accordance with the current data practices retention policy.
- 6.1.2** At the close of each investigation, assist RRT Investigator/Analyst in identifying “next steps” for each investigation, to be included in the Investigation Summary. Next steps based on each investigation may include, but are not limited to, suggested sampling assignments for routine surveillance sampling, future follow up with the facility based on an environmental assessment, opportunities for outreach, industry education, public awareness activities, and suggestions for staff training.
- 6.1.3** Distribute final program investigation report(s), including an ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT if completed, to relevant MDA staff and local, state, and federal

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partners; and to agencies such as the Minnesota Department of Health that are responsible for reporting contributing factors and antecedents to CDC.

RRT Investigator/Analyst

- 6.1.4** Maintain program investigation and environmental assessment findings and reports on the RRT SharePoint site and in accordance with the current data retention policy. Documents relevant to the investigation are stored in the Investigation Library on the RRT SharePoint site. The library should also contain the Investigation Summary, which includes key information related to the event.
- 6.1.5** At the close of each investigation, assist RRT Coordinator in identifying “next steps” for each investigation, to be included in the Investigation Summary. Next steps based on each investigation may include, but are not limited to, suggested sampling assignments for routine surveillance sampling, future follow up with the facility based on an environmental assessment, opportunities for outreach, and suggestions for staff training.

**6.2 Annual Summary Development**

RRT Coordinator

- 6.2.1** Assist RRT Investigator/Analyst as needed with location and collection of investigational and response documents from the calendar year.
- 6.2.2** Complete an RRT Annual Summary for the calendar year by pulling all Investigation Summaries and outlined “next steps” into a single document.
- 6.2.3** Review the RRT Annual Summary for accuracy and completeness before submitting to the RTO Supervisor for review. The RRT Annual Summary shall be completed within 60 days of the end of the calendar year.
- 6.2.4** After review and approval by the RTO Supervisor, verify the completed RRT Annual Summary has been uploaded to the RRT SharePoint site.

RRT Investigator/Analyst

- 6.2.5** Locate and collect investigational and response documents from the calendar year. Each investigation or response involving the RRT will have an Investigational Summary that includes key information about that event.
- 6.2.6** Assist in completion of the RRT Annual Summary for the calendar year of interest.
- 6.2.7** Review the completed summary for accuracy and completeness before submitting to the RTO Supervisor for review. The RRT Annual Summary shall be completed within 60 days of the end of the calendar year.
- 6.2.8** After review and approval by the RTO Supervisor, upload the completed RRT Annual Summary to the RRT SharePoint site.

RTO Supervisor

- 6.2.9** Review the completed summary for accuracy and completeness and make edits as needed. Submit edited/approved copy to RRT Coordinator and RRT Investigator/Analyst for posting to the RRT SharePoint site.

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**6.3 Annual Summary Distribution – All RRT Staff**

**6.3.1** Share the RRT Annual Summary and recommendations (when available) with relevant MDA staff and local, state, and federal partners.

**7 RELATED DOCUMENTS (includes References, Attachments)**

*RESP.50.13 – Foodborne Illness and Investigational Data Analysis and Lessons Learned SOP*

**8 EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS NEEDED**

N/A

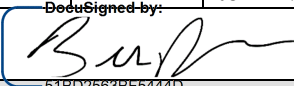
**9 SAFETY**

N/A

**10 CIRCULATION**

This policy will be circulated to the following individuals: the RTO Supervisor, RRT Coordinator, RRT Investigator, and any other designated RRT staff. The current version will be stored electronically on the FFSD document control site.

**11 APPROVAL/DOCUMENT HISTORY**

Document History		
Version #	Status (I, R)	Change History
1	R	Previous name FOOD.50.10 – RRT Annual Investigations Summary SOP transferred to the Response (RESP) Unit. Updates made due to division structure changes from DFID to FFSD.
2	R	Updates to include addition of RRT Investigator to responsibilities; added definitions of environmental assessment and food-related incident; addition of RESP.50.13 SOP as reference; renamed section 6.1 to “Investigational Documentation Maintenance and Final Report Distribution” and addition of “next steps”; removal of itemized list of investigation summary since it is not relevant to annual summary; updated name to “Investigation Documentation and Annual Investigations Summary SOP”.
Document Signed by: 		1/9/2017
Approved By:		Date
Approved By:		Date

I = Initial document; R = Revised document