

MINNESOTA FOOD SAFETY AND DEFENSE TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2024

Today's meeting was held in Room B144, Orville L. Freeman Building, 625 Robert Street North St. Paul and via Microsoft Teams Video Conferencing platform.

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM.

Members present included: Amy Johnston, Jamie Kirkpatrick, Angie Wheeler, Julia Selleys, Chris van Twuyver, Steven Foster, Ruth Meirick, Erin Mertz, Carrie Rigdon, Stanley Osuagwu, Lolly Occhino, Tom Webber, Patrice Bailey, and Luke Meier.

Visitors present included: Keri Plude, Amy Zagar, Sadie Gannett, Jeff Luedeman, Julie Wagendorf, Meghan Melheim, Michelle Medina, Steve Barthel, Alida (Sorenson) Siebert, Mathew Gerths, Natasha Hedin, Evan Powell, Jennifer Stephe, Nicole Baysal, Anna Clarke, Dionne Meehan, Kip Fondrick, Chris Gindorff, Jayson Karas, Michelle Strand, Dan Opsahl, Melissa Holtz, Katherine Simon, Jane Knott, Heidi Varberg, Gabriel Wilson, Barb Schroeder, and Megan Jansa

1. Dates and links

- [Apply to become a member of the Food Safety and Defense Task Force - Food Oriented Consumer Group Representative](#)
- [University of Minnesota HACCP, Sanitation, and Auditing Workshop](#)
- [FDA Supplement to the 2022 Food Code](#)
- [AURI's Virtual Assistant - AVA](#)
- [Product Standards and the Salmonella Framework for Raw Poultry Products](#)
- [Initial and Renewal Process Minnesota Certified Food Protection Manager \(CFPM\)](#)

2. The minutes from the May 2024 meeting were accepted with no comments.

3. Member and Visitor Updates

Ruth Meirick (Minnesota Farm Bureau): The Minnesota Farm Bureau State Annual Meeting is coming up November 22 – 23 and will be in Minnetonka, Minnesota. Ruth recently attended the FBI Ag Threats Symposium. Trade secrets, farm visitors, and ransomware in small ag companies were a few of the topics on the agenda. It might be worth reaching out to them for future presentation ideas.

Julia Selleys (Hennepin County): A new public health director has started with the program. They will begin hiring for the City of Wayzata in January and they are also working on a cannabis ordinance.

Angie Wheeler (Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)): Angie shared that MDH has a new online portal for renewing Certified Food Protection Manager credentials. More information can be found on their initial and renewal process webpage – link provided above.

Carrie Rigdon (Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)) – Carrie shared an upcoming webinar opportunity from AFDO called Fresh Take Fridays. The next one will be on Nov. 22 and will cover handwashing evidence.

Jennifer Stepes (Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)): The Dairy and Meat Inspection Division (DMID) has recently completed updating its Meat Program webpages. Jennifer also shared an upcoming HACCP, Sanitation, and Auditing Workshop hosted through the University of Minnesota. A link to purchase tickets is provided above.

Kim Carlton (MDA): Kim is the Program Manager for the Retail Food Inspection Program within the Food and Feed Safety Division at the MDA. She shared that the FDA recently released a supplement to the model food code. Minnesota’s code was last updated in 2019.

Chris van Twuyver (Food and Drug Administration (FDA)): Chris provided that the HAF1W is now called the Office of Human Food Inspectorate (OHFI) Central Division 3.

Jamie Kirkpatrick (Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)): Will be hosting public meetings in December on Salmonella as an adulterant. A link to the public meeting is provided above. They are also working on two recent Listeria recalls.

Lolly Occhino (Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)): In October, AURI launched a free virtual assistant named AVA (website provided above). AVA is an AI technology using curated data from AURI. AURI also received a one-time appropriation to assist small business owners around food safety and are working with a consultant on Phase II of the project.

Luke Meier (North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters (NCSRC)): Luke shared that their 8-hour awareness training for end users is complete and free for end-users.

4. **MDA Food Licensing Modernization**

Jeff Luedeman, Assistant Division Director of the Food and Feed Safety Division at the MDA shared a potential food licensing model. His presentation slides are attached. Additional items to address at the next meeting (or in the interim if available) included:

- What stakeholders didn’t like and how addressing those issues was built into the

model?

- What are the new system's risks, cons, and challenges?
- What are the clear benefits to the greater population?

It would be good to share the final reports from the Improve Group with the task force when they are available.

5. Task Force Admin Discussion

Membership

Six new members were recently appointed. There is still one open vacancy for a Food-Oriented Consumer Group Representative. A link is provided above for anyone interested in applying.

The task force is seeking a new Chair and Co-Chair. These positions should be filled by someone in the food industry or academia according to the Terms of Reference. Nominations will be taken at the next meeting and expectations of these positions will be shared in advance of the meeting.

Survey Results

Natasha shared some of the results and trends from the Needs Assessment Survey with the group. Thoughts and comments regarding the results included:

- It would be helpful to share the FSDTF mission statement and statute drivers with the group at each meeting for shared awareness.
- The group could consider a cohosted cross-pollination of Minnesota Food Defense-related groups. This could create more visibility for the task force, and it would be good to hear what other groups are talking about. Many liked this idea with a clear tie-in with the desire for food safety focus and resource development.
- Resource development listed as a top priority – what does that mean exactly? There are a lot of resources already out there. Perhaps this could be a shift into legislative recommendations.
- Some like member updates, even though it was ranked low for others.
- At the next meeting, the group should look at the “big buckets” of potential changes: format, subcommittees, terms of reference requiring changes, statute, special meetings, and open meeting law for additional discussions.

Natasha will share the full results of the survey before the January meeting.

6. Potential Agenda Items for January

- Food Innovation Team – 2-year report
- Food Safety Preventive Control Alliance – Human Food Curriculum version 2.0 (might be an option for an update on the change)
- Presenter to talk about public/private partnership for food traceability