

AFSAC Meeting Minutes April 8th, 2015

In Attendance

Tony Barrett – Municipality of Anchorage
Katie Bante – Tanana Conference
Melissa Chlupatch – NANA Management Services
Jeff Hickman – Municipality of Anchorage
Dr. Brian Himmelbloom – Kodiak FITC
Steve Lacey – Fred Meyer
Lorinda Lhotka – DEC/FSS
Randy Pfeuffer – DEC/FSS
Ginger Provo – Section of Epidemiology
Sarah Stanley – Doyon Universal
Dan Tew – Yum! Brands

Opening Remarks & Program Updates – Lorinda Lhotka

- The Governor's budget proposal, including a reduction totaling \$869,300, which directly impacts FSS, will significantly affect funding for personnel and other program expenditures.

Positions affected:

1. 4 Environmental Health Officers.
2. 1 Environmental Health Manager.
3. 1 Environmental Health Technician.
4. 1 Publications Specialist.
5. 1 Office Assistant.

Accounting for six positions that are currently vacant, and will remain unfilled indefinitely, only two positions have been actually cut.

Other Program expenditures affected:

1. Closing of Valdez field office.
2. Inspections of high risk facilities will remain unaffected, but low risk inspections of pools and spas, barbers and hairdressers, and public facilities will be discontinued.

3. Monitoring of food recalls via the recall website will continue, but press releases will no longer be issued.
4. Public outreach expenditures will be discontinued.

A management team meeting will be held on 4/9 in order to determine new program priorities. Any suggestion from AFSAC, UAF Cooperative Extension, and the food industry are welcome.

- A recent FDA pre-standardization training was jointly attended by FSS and Municipality of Anchorage staff. The training which was conducted partly in a class room and in the field has received very positive feedback by the participants.
- A CIFOR training workshop, which will be attended by FSS and EPI, will be held in May.

Section of Epidemiology Updates – Ginger Provo

- Very few incidences of foodborne illness have been reported in recent months.
- A training focusing on botulism was recently conducted with Bethel tribal leaders.
- A recent norovirus outbreak involving approximately 30 North Slope camp workers was quickly contained.
- Efforts are continuing to compile data of foodborne illness outbreaks to be utilized as a tracking tool.
- The EPI norovirus webpage is in the process of being updated.

Fred Meyer FAST Alert & Recall Procedure Presentation – Steve Lacy

- The Food and Safe Temperatures Alert (F.A.S.T. Alert) is an automated system designed to monitor refrigerated food temperature readings. A wireless temperature sensor contained within the warmest part of a cold holding case, which interfaces with routers installed throughout the store, provides temperature readings, transmitted in thirty minute intervals to in-store personnel, alerting them of unsafe temperatures, and allowing them to determine whether the temperature fluctuation is a result of mechanical or human error. The constant alerts ensure that corrective actions and equipment troubleshooting are addressed in a timely fashion.

- Fred Meyer receives alerts regarding recalled products in a variety of ways, including, press releases, information forwarded directly from manufacturers, and notifications from state agencies. An automated system forwards this information from the parent company (Kroger) headquarters in Cincinnati to divisional offices, then directly to stores, where the recall is issued and the product is removed.

Food Establishment Recognition Program Update – Lorinda Lhotka

- To date, 24 facilities have applied to take part in the S.A.F.E. (State of Alaska Food Safety Excellence) program and 6 have been approved.
- A press release detailing the S.A.F.E. program is pending.

World Health Day Update – Randy

This year's theme was Food Safety. Randy set up Germ City at Knik Elementary School in Anchorage. 450 students entered it 25 at a time and greatly enjoyed learning about hand washing.

Member Updates

Tony Barrett:

Tony will be meeting with representatives of Anchorage's food industry to discuss re-writing the food code in an effort to eliminate its confusing aspects.

Melissa Chlupatch:

Melissa is still actively promoting a traditional food initiative to legislators and seeking methods to safely process seal oil in an effort to make it available to long term elder care and other native healthcare facilities.

Dr. Brian Himmelbloom:

- Dr. Himmelbloom will be working with UAA Cooperative extension in an effort to also develop safe methods of processing seal oil.
- He conducted a workshop in March focusing on the processing and preservation of local foods.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday 7/8 at 10:30 am