

NEVADA FOOD SAFETY TASK FORCE

Minutes of May 22, 2002
Initial Meeting

The first annual meeting of the Nevada Food Safety Task Force was held at University of Nevada Reno Jot Travis Student Union Alumni Room on May 22, 2002 at 9:00am.

A brief history of the development of this first meeting and overview was presented by Jerry Caird of the Nevada State Health Division.

Dr. Stanley Omaye from UNR Department of Nutrition welcomed the Food Safety Task Force and gave a presentation on food safety sponsored by his department. The three (3) main areas of focus are Community, Regulatory and Academic.

□ The Task Force Stakeholders present:

Bryant Gilkeson, REHS Supervisor, Washoe County Health Department

John Roberts, Atlantis Casino Resort, Food Safety Coordinator
Sierra Food Service Sanitation Instructor

John Poulson, QA Director, Smith's Food and Drug Center, Inc.

Mark Bergholdt, REHS, Clark County Health District

Anna Vickrey, Nevada Dairy Commission, Milk & Dairy Foods Inspection

Daren Winkelman, County Health Officer, Carson City Health Department

Stephanie Van Hooser (for) Dr. L. D. Brown, Nevada State Health Laboratory

Mark Smith, Microbiologist, NV State Agriculture Div., Bureau of Animal Industry

Rick Sowadsky, NV State Health Division, Bureau of Disease Control

Jerry Caird, REHS, NV State Health Div., Bureau of Health Protection Services

Van V. Heffner, President, CEO, Nevada Restaurant Association

Marsha Henry, Owner/Chef, The Sand Trap Restaurant

Kathy Stewart (for) Norma Thiel, R.D., NV State Health, Licensure & Certification

Stanley T. Omaye, Ph.D., Professor, UNR Department of Nutrition

□ Task Force Stakeholders Absent:

Paul Lee, Executive Chef, Lake Tahoe Harrah's Casino

Jim Pierce, REHS, President, NV Environmental Health Association

Mickey Riva, RD, CPFM, NV Dept. of Education, Nutritional Education Programs

- Kathryn (Katey) Kennedy – FDA, filling in for John Marcello, Presented information on The Food Safety Initiative, the objectives and priorities, the reporting requirements and support for the program through the federal grant.

Objectives were divided into eight (8) categories:

1. Agency Rules and Responsibilities
2. Capacity and Resource Means
3. Outbreak Coordination
4. Information Sharing
5. Data Collection
6. Communication and Education
7. Laboratory Operation and Coordination
8. Adopt and Implement Food Code

- Presentation by Joe Yearous, DVM from the USDA on the Food Service Inspection System (FSIS) Program.

- Questionnaire results were presented by Dave Evans, REHS, Health Protection Services, Fallon Office. The results were such:

1. (Highest priority) Recommend a proposal to require standardized training and certification for food establishment employees.
2. Review and recommend proposals for changing existing food establishment regulations.
3. Recommend methods to standardize food establishment inspection formats throughout Nevada.
4. Develop and recommend methods for improving multi-jurisdictional foodborne illness outbreak investigations throughout Nevada.

Other subjects suggested were: Training and certification for inspectors
Education and outreach programs
Monitoring and tracking foodborne illness

- Stakeholder's perspective on food safety was discussed.

Mr. Van Heffner commented that he believes there should be another area of focus to add to the 3 presented by Dr. Omaye, and it would be Industry, since he feels that should be separate from the Community.

Mr. Rick Sowadsky stated that physicians have no concept of foodborne illness. Their advice is that it would go away in a few days and therefore many cases go unreported to the various health departments.

Kathy Stewart reiterated that foodborne illness in nursing homes in Northern Nevada is a serious problem because of the fact that people are chronically ill and aging. She knows that kitchen staff definitely needs training and food safety education.

Katey Kennedy suggested we just continue to brainstorm ideas and see if there are anymore priorities or critical issues that need to be discussed and added to the list.

Dave Evans talked about Assemblywoman Marsha DeBragga's letter of interest in the goals of the food safety task force. He also brought up the fact that we don't have Nevada producers able to sell to Nevada markets.

Jerry Caird suggested that each task force stakeholder send out a questionnaire to their staff, colleagues or clients for their ideas on promoting food safety issues.

John Roberts suggested there be more of a cooperative working relationship between industry and regulators instead of adversarial. To eliminate barriers between the two representatives and have a cooperative work environment.

Marsha Henry suggested that there be standardized inspections and regulations throughout all agencies in the state, so industry people can know that their staff are properly trained.

Van Heffner suggested we look into setting up more food server training for industry as an additional way to promote food safety.

- Anna Vickrey gave a presentation on Food Safety, Security and Counter-terrorism from a seminar she attended.
- Katey Kennedy suggested multi-voting be conducted by every task force stakeholder by marking three votes for their priorities on the eight categories that were posted. Communication and Education received 20 votes as the highest overall priority.
- Jerry Caird asked that the task force establish expectations and determine what the vision statement will be.

A suggestion was made that a simple vision statement could be that The Nevada Food Safety Task Force provides a forum for representatives to gather and discuss food safety awareness.

Participants discussed the vision statement they were trying to produce.

- The vision statement was finally agreed upon to be: **The Nevada Food Safety Task Force provides a collaborative forum to enhance awareness and promote food safety and security.**
- Jerry Caird stated that more industry representatives are needed to contribute as task force members.
- It was suggested that members from a producers association and/or individual producers be contacted for interest in the task force.
- Future meeting places and times were discussed. It was decided that names of interested people be sent to Jerry Caird by June 14. In addition, a June 28 deadline was set for Jerry to receive information and ideas for the next meeting's agenda. It was decided to have another meeting before July 30, tentatively July 24.
- Suggestions were made to establish a chairperson and vice chairperson at the next meeting.
- It was suggested that a website link be established for the Food Safety Task Force if funding were available and approved from another source.
- It was suggested that a community outreach activity be established.

The meeting concluded with those that had travel expenses to file their claims with Jerry Caird.