



THE FLASH!

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Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

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Spring 2000

Message From The President

I wanted to share with the membership some thoughts that have commanded my professional attention since the last WAFDO FLASH newsletter. It has been a time that I have reflected on my role as a member of AFDO and WAFDO.

It first centered on money, as I realized I had not renewed my WAFDO dues, my AFDO dues or budgeting money for the annual meetings. The sum added up to more than my weekly take home pay when I started out as a public health official 25 years ago. I then looked at what I was getting out of this "privilege" and was shocked. I was looking at it from a selfish point of view, as I had to remember that the associations were what I made of them not what they did for me.

I reflected on those that I have had the opportunity to know for the past 25 years and seeing that the rewards of this profession had been in helping others and fulfilling an obligation to provide a healthful environment for all. So I quit complaining and wrote the checks, however I renewed my effort to continue to work to make our professional organization the best I can.

Maybe some other members or potential members may be thinking the same thoughts that I had, so I want to share this story I came across that illustrates what WAFDO needs:

"Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll, xxcxpt for onx of thx kxys. I havx wishxd sxvxral timxs that it would work pxrfxctly. It is trux that thxrx arx forty six othrx kxys that function wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs thx diffxrxncx."

"Somxtimxs it sxxms to mx that AXHA is likx my typxwritxr. Not all thx pxoplx arx working propxrlly. You may say to yoursxlf, ' Wxll I am only onx pxrson. It won't makx or brxak AXHA.'

" But it doxs makx a diffxrxnce, bxcausx for AXHA to bx xffxctive, it nxxds activx participation of vxvry pxrson. So, thx nxxt timx you think you arx only onx pxrson and that your xfforts arx not nxxdx, rmxmxbxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, ' I am a kxy pxrson in this associa-tion and I am nxxdx vxry much.'"

Sicxrxly,

Cory Willis, WAFDO Prxsidxnt

Letter from the Editor

Spring is springing up everywhere in the Pacific Northwest. I hope you are all being graced with the beauty of springtime blossoms. This time of year has always inspired me to tackle new projects and test new waters. I tried a bit of investigative journalism with this issue of the FLASH by checking with some of the news sources for updates and breaking news.

The WAFDO 2000 Educational Conference is beginning to take form and Candace Jacobs has put together an impressive agenda and dynamic speakers. We are promoting the conference to non-WAFDO members in hopes of increasing our association's membership. I have electronic flyers (E-Flyers) and extra hard copy conference flyers to share with your colleagues. Let me know if you would like either or both promotional flyers.

Many thanks to Tom Vogel of the Dried Fruit Association of California for organizing and collecting contributions for the WAFDO 2000 Sunday Reception. Connie Kirby from the Northwest Food Processors Association has graciously offered to help raise contributions for the WAFDO 2000 welcoming gifts. And we are very pleased to report that FDA has approved a grant to help WAFDO cover travel expenses for some of our guest speakers. Thank you Don Voeller, FDA Seattle District State Activities Manager, for endorsing WAFDO's proposal.

I hope you enjoy the Spring 2000 WAFDO FLASH! I could not have met my publishing deadline without the help of all those who contributed articles and ideas. Thank you all!

Sincerely,

Linda Condon

Spring 2000 FLASH! Highlights

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Membership Dues Reminder

If you have not yet paid your dues for 2000 and you want the bargain member rates for the WAFDO 2000 Educational Conference, please send your dues as soon as possible to Chuck Henry, WAFDO Secretary - Treasurer.

WAFDO Membership Structure

Regulatory	- Member is engaged in official regulatory activities	\$15 / year
Retired	- Member held an active membership in the Association during employment	\$15 / year
Scholastic	- Member is engaged in research, teaching or studying issues involving food, drug, cosmetics, devices, biotechnology or environmental control	\$ 15 / year
Associate	- Member is engaged in activities other than regulatory activities	\$50 / year

Articles & Editorials Due at WSDA

The FLASH! Publication Date

April 30, 2000	May 20, 2000
July 31, 2000	August 20, 2000
October 31, 2000	November 20, 2000
January 31, 2001	February 20, 2001
April 30, 2001	May 20, 2001
July 31, 2001	August 20, 2001

WAFDO

Annual Educational Conference

September 17-20, 2000

The Seattle Hilton Hotel

6th & University Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

206-624-0500

[Sunday Sight Seeing Tour of Seattle's Majestic Countryside](#)

Scenic ride to Gilman Village in Issaquah, breathtaking view of Snoqualmie Falls, private guided tour of enchanted Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery and premium wine tasting.

[Sunday Evening Reception](#)

This year to the Top of the Hilton for breathtaking views of the Puget Sound and the Emerald Cityscape along with ample spirits and gourmet hors d'oeuvres.

[Dynamic Conference Topics: Monday 8 AM - Wednesday Noon](#)

Outbreak! Lessons Learned

Much Ado About Sprouts

Biotechnology: Allergens, GMOs and Labeling

Bioterrorism: Public Health Response Plans

Canada's Natural Health Product Regulations

US Dietary Supplement Regulations

National Food Safety Initiatives

Visit WSDA's website for conference information:
www.wa.gov/agr/fsah/food/Forms/WAFDO-Conf-9-2000.pdf

[WAFDO Awards Dinner: Tuesday](#)

Join WAFDO's salute to an honored member as we bestow the prestigious Orlen J. Wiemann Award to one of our colleagues. Also help celebrate WAFDO's scholarship tradition with this year's recipient. We'll dine at the Space Needle Skyline Level Puget Sound Dining Room where chefs are planning an exquisite event for WAFDO. Members can also ride to the observation deck for a panoramic view of the Emerald City.

[WAFDO Golf Tournament: Wednesday Afternoon](#)

WAFDO conference planners are finalizing our selection of one of Seattle's premier golf courses that will sure to challenge even those "professional" WAFDO golfers.

WAFDO will mail
conference brochures to
WAFDO members in
June 2000

Help promote the
WAFDO conference to
your colleagues.

If you are interested in the
WAFDO rates for the
Alaskan Inside Passage Cruise,
September 20 - 27, 2000,
contact Lynne Treadway at
Convention Cruises Northwest
800-275-9198

Update from WAFDO 1999 Scholarship Recipient

Submitted by Darryl Law

School is going well and I have also decided to pick up marketing as a second major. I am now graduating with a specialized degree in Resorts and Tourism in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management and a general marketing degree. I am currently in the spring quarter of my junior year and last quarter I earned a 3.95 GPA. Next year, I plan on studying abroad in Australia at the University of Queensland and will be leaving in July and getting back in December.

Other than school, I am working a good deal with the athletic department dealing with community relations and participating in the many organizations that I belong to. On the food front, in November, I earned my national restaurant association, safe serve certificate. I have also received a grant and am planning on attending the National Restaurant Association show this May in Chicago where I am representing the school in a student forum, The Stars Among Us.

My career path is no where near being determined. I have had offers from marketing firms, hotels, restaurants and their corporate entities. Currently, I have decided that my career goals need not be occupation or industry specific. Instead, I decided that whichever path I take, I want to give back to the community and conduct myself in a way so that my peers think highly of me.

WAFDO Board Members Nominated to the 2000-01 AFDO Board of Directors

By now, active AFDO members should have received AFDO's 2000-01 nominations and election information. Ballots must be signed and postmarked no later than Tuesday, May 30, 2000.

Two of WAFDO's board members were nominated to AFDO's Board of Directors:

Candace Jacobs, WAFDO President Elect, has been nominated for the Secretary - Treasurer position.

Jim Waddell, WAFDO Regional Board Member, has been nominated for the Director - At - Large position.

Here is your opportunity to increase WAFDO's presence on the AFDO Board of Directors.

Send your ballot today!

Support WAFDO's Scholarship Tradition Contribute to the 2000 Silent Auction



WAFDO will hold a Silent Auction at the WAFDO 2000 Conference. All proceeds from the silent auction will be directed to the scholarship fund that helps hard working students like Darryl pay for their education. WAFDO members may also send monetary contributions to Secretary / Treasurer Chuck Henry for the 2000 scholarship fund.

Eligible 2000 WAFDO scholarship applicants must attend a college or university in Washington State and demonstrate a desire to serve in the fields related to food, drugs, cosmetics and / or medical devices. For more information, contact WAFDO's Scholarship Committee Chair, Claudia Coles 360-902-1905.



AFDO Millennium Conference June 17 - 21, 2000

**Sheraton Burlington
Hotel & Conference Center
Burlington, Vermont**

For more information call 717-757-2888

FDA to Strengthen Pre-Market Review of Bioengineered Foods

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced plans to refine its regulatory approach regarding foods derived through the use of modern biotechnology. The initiatives unveiled stem in part from input received during FDA's public outreach meetings held late last year and build upon programs already underway at FDA to help ensure the safety of all foods.

"FDA's scientific review continues to show that all bioengineered foods sold here in the United States today are as safe as their non-bioengineered counterparts," said Jane E. Henney, MD, Commissioner of Food and Drugs. "We believe our initiatives will provide the public with continued confidence in the safety of these foods."

FDA will publish a proposed rule mandating that developers of bioengineered foods and animal feeds notify the agency when they intend to market such products. FDA also will require that specific information be submitted to help determine whether the foods or animal feeds pose any potential safety, labeling or adulteration issues.

Although the current consultative process has worked well, and the agency believes it has been consulted on all bioengineered foods and feeds currently on the market, FDA will propose to strengthen this process by specifically requiring developers to

notify the agency of their intent to market a food or animal feed from a bioengineered plant at least 120 days before marketing. After reviewing the company's submission, FDA will issue a letter to the firm describing its conclusion about the regulatory status of the food or animal feed. To make sure that consumers also have access to product information, FDA will propose that submitted information and the agency's conclusions be made available to the public, consistent with applicable disclosure laws, by posting them on the FDA Web site for easy viewing.

In a related step, the agency will augment its food and veterinary medicine advisory committees by adding scientists with agricultural biotechnology expertise. FDA will use these committees to address over-arching scientific questions pertaining to bioengineered foods and animal feed.

FDA also announced plans to draft labeling guidance to assist manufacturers who wish to voluntarily label their foods being made with or without the use of bioengineered ingredients. The guidelines will help ensure that labeling is truthful and informative. To receive maximum consumer input, FDA will develop the guidelines with the use of focus groups and will seek public comment on the draft guidance.

Source: HHS News, May 3, 2000

Safety Alert— Voluntary Recall Of Strawberry Yogurt In Ontario and Quebec

TORONTO, May 1, 2000 – *Parmalat Canada has voluntarily recalled the following products due to reports of fragments of glass having been found in samples of the product.*

UPC Code	Product Name / Variety	Size	Best Before Date
55300 22303	Beatrice Strawberry Stirred Yogurt, 1.0% M.F.	750G MA 22
553833	Beatrice Fat Free Strawberry Yogurt, Naturally Sweetened, 0.1% M.F.	175G MA 22 and MA 29
55300 22307	Beatrice Fat Free Strawberry Yogurt, Naturally Sweetened, 0.1% M.F.	750G MA 22
55300 17103	Beatrice Strawberry Stirred Yogurt, 1.0% M.F.	125G MA 26

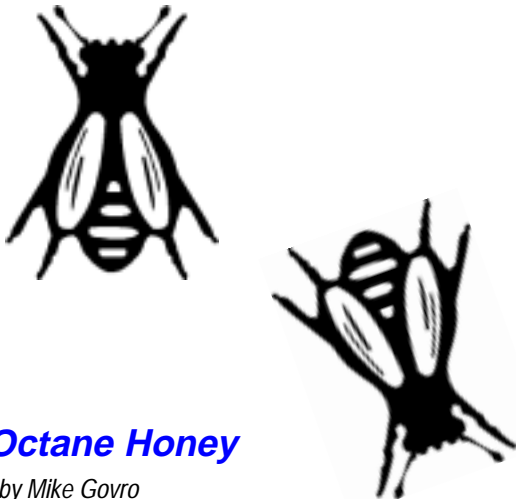
The "best before" date is printed on the top, side or bottom of the container. For example, MA 22 denotes May 22. Consumers in Quebec and Ontario are advised to immediately return any of the above-mentioned products to point of purchase for a full refund. Consumers with questions are advised to call toll free: 877-312-9001 for details. An investigation into the exact source of the problem is underway. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is monitoring the effectiveness of the recall.

For more information, contact:

Ken Marcynuk
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Pager: 613-364-2058

James Biltekoff
Parmalat Canada
416-641-2940

Source: Canadian Food Inspection Agency



High Octane Honey

Submitted by Mike Govro

On February 23, 2000, the Oregon Health Division Drug Lab Cleanup Program informed the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Food Safety Division that they had seized the contents of a methamphetamine lab that was found in an unlicensed honey processing facility. Over 14,000 gallons of honey, valued at nearly \$100,000 was on the premises. According to police reports, the operators allegedly extracted honey and cooked meth in the same room during the same time period.

Given the toxic nature of the chemicals used in this process, ODA decided to embargo the honey as adulterated product. Because the Oregon State Police seized a considerable number of weapons when they raided the lab, and the owner was out on bail, the Oregon State Police accompanied ODA field Sanitarian Laura Ruhland when she issued the product embargo and notice and directive to cease and desist food processing operations. She posted the notices on February 24, 2000, and later, on advice of the Department of Justice also issued a Notice of Closure and Condemnation.

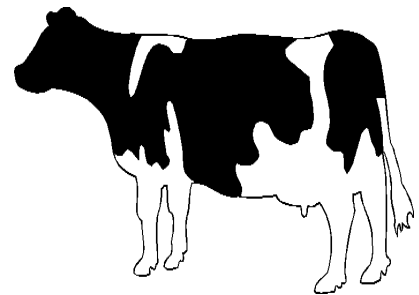
Subsequently, the honey owners requested a hearing to challenge the propriety of the embargo. An administrative law judge will determine the fate of the product in a contested case hearing at a time not yet determined. The Department's position will be that the product was handled in a manner whereby it had become contaminated, and that no amount of testing will conclusively prove that the honey is entirely free of contaminants. The Oregon Health Division toxicologists have advised ODA that the characteristics of the honey and chemicals that may have been used would make proving absence of toxic substances nearly impossible.

When Ms. Ruhland visited the firm, she learned that the firm had also shipped 30 drums of honey to a honey bottler in the state. An ODA sanitarian visited the firm and placed that product under an embargo, which the firm has challenged.

Meat Products Recalled

Submitted by Roberta Boitano

Personnel at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Consumer Protection Division responded to inquiries from local health agencies and consumers regarding a recall of beef products processed by a Delta, Colorado packing company. Approximately 4,600 pounds of ground beef, ground beef patties, beef patty mix and beef cube steak were recalled because it may have been contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7. The beef patties and beef cube steak were distributed to the Sterling Correctional Facility and ground beef and beef patty mix were distributed to restaurants in Glenwood Springs, Montrose, Delta, Rifle, Mesa County, New Castle, and Durango. No reports of illness have been received from the consumption of these products.



Drug Residues in Milk Prompts Regulatory Warning

Submitted by Roberta Boitano

Excessive drug residues found in milk from a producer in Morgan County, Colorado resulted in a temporary suspension of approval. A total of 105,340 pounds of milk was destroyed because of the residues. This was the second drug violation in a twelve-month period for this producer. The producer was sent a warning letter concerning the possible revocation of his Grade A Dairy Farm License if a third milk sample is found positive for drug residues during a twelve-month period.

CDC's New Food Safety Web Site

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has a new food safety Web site to provide easy and timely access to CDC Food Safety Information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety>

Plans for National Food Safety Education Month

Be Smart...Keep Foods Apart Don't Cross-Contaminate

September is National Food Safety Education Month. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are joining together with the restaurant and food service industry to invite you to participate in this annual event. The goal of National Food Safety Education Month is to educate the public about safe food preparation.

This year's theme "Be Smart...Keep Foods Apart - Don't Cross Contaminate," is one of the four quadrants of Fight BAC!™ It advises consumers about the importance of keeping foods apart to avoid cross-contamination by the transferring of harmful bacteria that cause food related illness. More information to come. To help you get started with resources, look up the Fight BAC!™ fact sheet resource: Combat Cross-Contamination at Web site <http://www.fightbac.org/pdf/separate.pdf>

USDA - FSIS Public Meeting: Revised Action Plan for the Control of Listeria monocytogenes for the Prevention of the Foodborne Illness Listeriosis

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) held a public meeting to discuss and receive public comment regarding *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) on May 15, 2000. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the initiatives the Agency took after its February 1999 public meeting on Lm and the Agency's future plans to further protect the public from foodborne illnesses associated with Lm. The Agency also invites data and public comment on Lm.

Written comments must be received by June 7, 2000. For further information contact: Judith Riggins, Associate Deputy Administrator, Office of Policy, Program Development and Evaluation, by telephone 202-720-2709 or Fax 202-720-2025.

Source: Federal Register Docket No. 00-016N

Reduction of Salmonella Possible Through Filter Systems

A new electrostatic air cleaning system reduced airborne Salmonella by 94 percent in a commercial hatchery in Georgia recently, according to Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists who developed the system. Once it's incorporated into commercial poultry operations, the system promises to improve food safety by reducing Salmonella in hatching cabinets—a primary source of Salmonella contamination for broiler chickens. Strong air currents can spread Salmonella from a single infected chick to all of the chicks in a hatching cabinet.



The new system developed by ARS scientist Bailey W. Mitchell at the Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory in Athens, Georgia., captures dust that harbors hitchhiking organisms such as Salmonella. Dust is electrostatically charged and captured on special plates that are automatically washed clean at prescribed intervals. The system has been tested in hatching cabinets of two large poultry integrators as well as in experimental caged layer rooms. Results of the most recent commercial experiments showed an average reduction of 77 percent in dust levels and 94 percent less enterobacteriaceae (commonly encountered bacteria such as Salmonella and *E. coli* that frequently cause disease) than a cabinet treated with hydrogen peroxide disinfectant. The system has also been shown to reduce airborne *Salmonella enteritidis* in a caged layer room by 95 percent and to have a strong killing effect on Salmonella at close range.

Researchers applied for a patent in July 1998, and two companies have licensed the technology. A commercial version of the system, called "Clean Chick," has been developed by Biolon, a newly formed company in Watkinsville, Georgia., and it is being distributed by Surepip, Inc., of Dallas, Georgia. Major poultry companies around the world, including the United States, Mexico, South America, Japan, Korea, Israel and Holland, also have expressed interest in the system as a food safety intervention approach. USDA Contact Sharon Durham. Scientific contact: Bailey Mitchell, ARS Southeast Poultry Laboratory, phone 706-546-3443, bmitchell@sepri.usda.gov.

Source: NASDA News, February 28, 2000

Charles Breen Visits with WSDA Food Safety Program

The New FDA Seattle District Director Charles Breen visited with Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Food Safety Program staff at their program meeting in Lake Chelan during the last week of April. Director Breen explained that the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) requested a 14 percent budget increase to address food safety initiative projects. It is unsure whether that request will be approved, but clearly food safety continues to be a high priority for the administration.

The final HACCP rules are expected later this year for untreated juice products. The recent outbreak linked to some unpasteurized citrus juices produced by California Day-Fresh confirms that unpasteurized juice products continue to be a food safety concern.

The CFSAN recently issued an inspectional program to determine whether sprouting firms are following the guidelines published by FDA in the fall of 1999. The guidelines are not regulations, so there would not be any violations cited for not following the production guidelines. However, FDA inspectors will collect spent irrigation water samples and FDA will take enforcement action if pathogens are found in the water samples. If after this first round the data confirms that sprouting procedures outside the FDA guidelines contribute to a high probability of pathogens, then FDA could take action based on that probability of occurrence in future inspections.

The Food and Drug Administration is increasing the number of high-risk food inspections conducted annually and will be enlisting help from their state partners. Don Voeller, State Activities Manager for the FDA Seattle District informed WSDA that state contract inspections will increase from 150 to 250 in this next contract year. FDA will also conduct joint inspections with state food safety officials on ten percent of the contract inspections in an effort to assure standardized inspection procedures. Celeste Corcoran, Investigation Branch Director for the FDA Seattle District also visited with staff at the program meeting and provided a comprehensive overview of FDA's recall procedures.

FDA - Oregon Dept. of Agriculture Contract & Workshare

Submitted by Mike Govro

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and FDA have signed a new agreement calling for ODA to perform 225 FDA contract inspections from May 2000 to April 2001. Fifty of these inspections will be done in Seafood HACCP firms. The ODA and FDA have divided the responsibility for inspections of seafood firms in the state, with each agency performing all of the inspections on firms assigned to it for the entire contract period. The firms are divided between the two agencies approximately the same as they were during the last contract period. This approach has provided continuity in enforcement of the seafood HACCP requirements.

JIFSAN-FARRP Allergen Conference

Submitted by Mike Govro

On April 27 & 28, the Joint Institute of Food Safety and Applied Nutrition and the University of Nebraska's Food Allergy Research and Resource Program held a conference on Analytical Techniques for Allergenic Residues. Mike Govro was invited to speak on Oregon's experiences in sampling for peanut residues in non-peanut chocolate candies.

Oregon and Minnesota conducted studies that showed that residues of class one allergens are frequently present in foods that are produced on shared equipment, i.e., equipment that is used to produce foods that contain allergens as well as foods that do not. Scientists from lab companies, National Food Processors Association and several international food companies presented information on new rapid methods, barriers to accurate testing, and uses of new lab methods in a production environment. Ken Falci from CFSAN reported that FDA is currently formulating a position on allergen residues and will issue guidance at some point in the future.

In dealing with the Oregon confectioners that had peanut residue levels over the level of concern (10 ppm), it became apparent that regulatory agencies are not on firm ground when dealing with allergen residues. Oregon called on FDA to determine acceptable levels of class one allergen residues in foods, more clearly define good manufacturing practices for use of shared equipment, and clarify its position on the use of precautionary labeling.

California Day-Fresh Foods Issues Voluntary Recall On Unpasteurized Fruit Juices

On April 20, 2000, the California Department of Health Services (DHS) warned consumers not to drink a variety of unpasteurized citrus juices manufactured by California Day-Fresh Foods because the products may be contaminated with Salmonella bacteria. As of May 10th, Lea Brooks of DHS reported that a total of 41 cases have been confirmed.

The juices were sold statewide under the brand names Naked Juice, Ferraro's, Trader Joe's, and in Southern California, Von's. They were distributed in gallons, half gallons, quarts, pints, 8 ounce or 10 ounce containers to retail stores and wholesale distributors with "best if used by" dates on or before May 4. The products were voluntarily recalled by the manufacturer, California Day-Fresh Foods, Inc., in Glendora, CA. Products being recalled were sold not only in California, Colorado and Nevada, but also Arizona, Oregon and Washington.

Although Salmonella has not been found in any of the company's juices, the manufacturer has agreed to recall these products in the interest of public safety. Unaffected by this recall are California Day-Fresh Foods all-natural fruit and vegetable juice blends and smoothies, including its frozen juice products, which are pasteurized.

Officials with DHS, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are investigating the illnesses, inspecting the manufacturing facility and working with the firm to ensure the product is completely removed from sale.

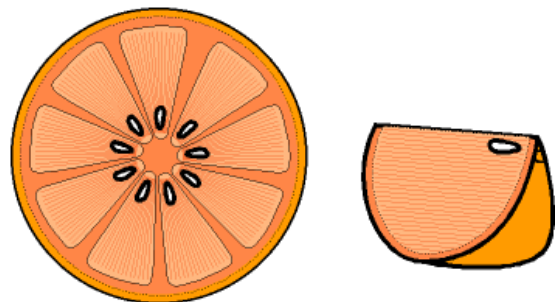
The DHS urged consumers who had purchased Naked, Ferraro's, Von's, or Trader Joe's unpasteurized citrus juice products with "best if used by" dates on or before May 4 to discard the products or return them to the place of purchase.

California Day-Fresh Foods Recalled Products:

- Naked Fresh-squeezed Orange Juice, Grapefruit Juice and Lemonade products packaged in 10 oz., 16 oz., 32 oz., 64 oz. and 128 oz. containers.
- Naked Strawberry Lemonade and Naked Tangerine Scream packaged in 16 oz., 32 oz. and 64 oz. containers.
- Naked Old Fashioned Lemonade packaged in 64 oz. containers.
- Ferraro's Fresh-squeezed Orange Juice packaged in 16 oz., 32 oz. and 64 oz. containers.
- Trader Joe's Fresh-squeezed Blood Orange Juice packaged in 16 oz. and 32 oz. containers.
- Von's Fresh-squeezed Orange Juice packaged in 8 oz., 16 oz. 32 oz. and 64 oz. containers.
- Von's Fresh-squeezed Grapefruit Juice packaged in 16 oz. and 32 oz. containers.

For further information, contact Ken August or Lea Brooks at DHS 916-657-3064 or visit the manufacturer's Web site at: www.nakedjuice.com .

Source: DHS News Release, April 20, 2000



Oregon's Budget Considerations

Submitted by Mike Govro

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is formulating its budget proposals for the 2001/2003 biennium. All divisions will submit budgets that reflect cuts of 5, 10, 15, and 20% reductions in general fund money. These cuts reflect possible revenue reductions that will take place if any of several tax cutting initiatives pass in the November elections.

Salmonellosis Outbreak Associated with Raw Mung Bean Sprouts

On April 19, 2000, California State Health Director Diana Bontá, R.N., Dr. P.H., warned consumers not to eat Pacific Coast Sprout Farms brand raw mung bean sprouts purchased before April 18 because the product may be contaminated with Salmonella. According to DHS, a total of 58 cases had been confirmed as of May 9, 2000.

*First reported outbreak
of salmonellosis
associated with raw mung
bean sprouts in the
United States.*

The California Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Sacramento and Placer county health departments have linked this outbreak to mung bean sprout consumption. While most of the patients suffered diarrhea and cramping, two immuno-compromised patients were hospitalized with bloodstream infections.

The manufacturer, located in Sacramento, voluntarily recalled the bean sprouts, which were distributed to restaurants and grocery stores in Northern California and Reno area in 12 ounce and 16 ounce plastic bags and in bulk.

This is the first reported outbreak of salmonellosis associated with raw mung bean sprouts in the United States. Previous outbreaks have been associated with raw alfalfa and clover sprouts.

DHS and FDA previously issued consumer advisories regarding the potential risks associated with eating alfalfa and clover sprouts. Children, the elderly, and individuals with weakened immune systems should not eat any raw sprouts. Healthy individuals also can become ill from raw sprouts. DHS officials emphasized that raw sprouts should not be served in day care centers, school lunch programs, nursing homes and hospitals.

Raw sprouts present unique food safety problems because:

- The warm, humid conditions needed to grow sprouts also are ideal for the rapid growth of harmful bacteria.
- With the exception of bean sprouts, sprouts generally are eaten raw with no additional treatment, such as cooking, which would eliminate harmful bacteria.
- Washing may reduce the bacterial load. However, it does not eliminate the harmful bacteria that may be present.
- People may unknowingly eat sprouts in sandwiches and salads purchased at restaurants and delicatessens.

*Children, the elderly, and
individuals with weakened
immune systems should not
eat any raw sprouts.*

Bontá advised consumers who wish to generally reduce their risk of foodborne illness to specifically request that raw sprouts not be added to their food purchased at restaurants, delicatessens and other eating establishments. Sprouts grown in the home also present a risk if eaten raw. Bontá also reminded consumers that harmful bacterial contamination may not change the appearance, texture or taste of any food product.

FDA's guidelines for the sprout industry on recommended sprout production practices designed to reduce the risk of bacterial contamination can be viewed on the FDA's Web site at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/sprougd1.html> and <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/fr991027.html>.

Source: California Department of Health Services, April 19, 2000

Safe Queso Fresco Cheese Gets Approval for Flavor and Price

Submitted by Gena Reich

The Cinco de Mayo celebration at the Farmer's Market in Pasco, Washington provided an excellent opportunity to promote the new home recipe for safe Queso Fresco cheese, poll the public on the quality and flavor, and check market price tolerance for a safe, commercially manufactured Queso Fresco cheese product.



Washington State Department of Agriculture Food Safety Supervisor Gena Reich and Food Safety Officers Joie Navarrete and Randy Utley, joined by representatives from the Benton-Franklin County Health Department and Benton-Franklin Washington State University (WSU) Cooperative Extension hosted the booth and offered free samples of the safe cheese during the Cinco de Mayo celebration.

Queso Fresco is a soft white Mexican cheese that has been traditionally produced with untreated animal gut and raw, unpasteurized milk. The safe recipe, developed by WSU food technologists, is based on a traditional recipe offered by community member Julia Herrera, but it replaces the potentially harmful ingredients with safe, approved cultures. The home recipe has been circulated throughout the Hispanic community by the Abuela Project, which enlists the help of abuelas (grandmothers) to share the information among their neighbors and family members. The WSU Cooperative Extension hired Julia Herrera's daughters Anna Ceragoza and Frances Herrera as trainers for the Abuela Project.

Responses to the Cinco de Mayo safe cheese tasting were overwhelmingly positive and many commented that the flavor was strikingly similar to the traditional recipe. When asked whether people would buy safe Queso Fresco cheese in the marketplace for \$3.99 / pound, responses were very positive. This is great news for a new manufacturer gearing up for their first production of commercially produced safe Queso Fresco cheese later this fall. For more information on the recipe or the Abuela Project contact, Gena Reich 509-546-2977.

Health Officials Research Bundnerfleisch Processing

Submitted by Roberta Boitano

A recent telephone call from a county health department asked if the Colorado Department of Health's Consumer Protection Division had knowledge of a Swiss beef called Bundnerfleisch, which is traditionally served without cooking. With the assistance of the Denver and Kansas City District FDA, and a professor from the University of Missouri, it was determined that Bundnerfleisch," pronounced BOOND-ner-flysh, is a Swiss salt-cured, air-dried beef product.

The process of turning prime beef into Bundnerfleisch involves three dozen separate steps. First, prime cuts of beef, such as top round, the eye of round, or flank meat are selected for quality, then curing salt is added along with alpine herbs and secret spices, which are left to cure for several weeks. The meat is then wrapped in nets and, apart from occasional pressing, left to mature for several months. Exposed to the pure, cool air of the Grisons area of Switzerland, the meat loses about one-half of its original weight and the rich, natural taste is intensified.

Bundnerfleisch has a typically mild flavor and keeps extremely well - both characteristics that are due to the gentle seasoning with salt and spices and the natural air-drying process, which takes ten to fifteen weeks at about 50° F. One striking feature is the rectangular form as a result of several pressings while it is drying.

The Bundnerfleisch process was developed centuries ago; people living in the remote mountains of the Swiss Alps were forced to lay in stocks of food for the harsh winters.



Herds of cattle that grazed in high alpine pastures in the summer were moved to a lower altitude, some were slaughtered while the rest would be fed over the winter with hay stored during the summer months. At the time of slaughter internal organs, which could not be preserved, were eaten immediately. The choicest parts of the animal were kept to provide a food source throughout the winter, and the Bundnerfleisch preservation process was implemented.



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