



The SkipJack

September 2016

President's Message

Greetings Members of the Baltimore Conference,

It is a pleasure to serve as the President of the Baltimore Conference of CASA this year. Through my decade plus of experience as a regulator in the food program at the Calvert Health Department, I have seen many food safety regulatory and relationship changes. Most important, is the evolution of the cooperative relationship between regulators and industry. During our meetings, members have the opportunity to see the progress achieved in both regulatory and industry arenas to promote the protection of public health. Without this progress and partnership, sufficient public health protection and regulatory progress would not be possible. It is important to remember that our CASA meetings serve as an educational forum for both regulators and industry and give us the opportunity to network and share ideas. This opportunity has led me to continue my dedication to CASA and promotes my belief that we all share the same goals.

Regulators and industry must address more food safety and production issues than ever. We have seen the introduction of legislation that has changed food handling, permitted production methods, labeling, and allergen awareness. We have seen consumer interest increase in the areas of food allergens, GMO foods, organically produced foods, trans-fats, and sustainable food production. Food-related legislation is ever evolving and requires both regulators and industry to respond to changes on a continuous basis. Education is paramount to ensuring that both regulatory and industry members are informed of these changes in legislation and consumer expectations.

Our meetings, in response, have also been diversifying to include industry practices and regulatory topics regarding food safety, food emergency response, water supply, and sewage disposal. As we move forward, the executive board encourages all members to become involved by providing topics for discussion at our meetings. CASA meetings belong to the members and our executive board is dedicated to providing you with topics that are both relevant and interesting to our membership. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

Regards,

Lisa A. Laschalt, LEHS, RS/REHS, MPH
President, Baltimore Conference

Welcome New Executive Board Members



Pictured left to right: Andrea Drenner-Hanley, Lisa Laschalt, Cheryl Chaney, Lisa Staley, Ndidi Okoh

President: Lisa Laschalt, LEHS, RS/REHS, MPH

Lisa Laschalt is the current President of the Baltimore Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association. Ms. Laschalt obtained her Bachelor's degree in Biology from St. Mary's College of Maryland and her Master of Public Health degree from Walden University. She is the current Food and Community Protection Program Supervisor at the Calvert County Health Department. She has been employed in the public and private sectors of the Environmental Health industry for 16 years. Lisa was the previous Vice President of the Baltimore Conference of CASA and served on the Food Committee.

Vice President: Ndidi Okoh, LEHS, RS/REHS

Ndidi Okoh is the current Vice President of the Baltimore Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association. Ndidi is employed by the Howard County Health Department, Bureau of Environmental Health in the Plan Review division of the Food Protection Program. Ndidi is a University of Maryland alumna with a Bachelor's degree in Biology and a Master's degree in Business Administration. She has served in the private and public sectors of the Environmental Health industry for nearly 15 years. Ndidi continues to dedicate her time and expertise to educate the public and promote food safety and environmental health awareness.

Secretary: Andrea Drenner-Hanley, LEHS, RS/REHS

Andrea received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Community Health Education and a Minor in Business from Towson University in 1988. She began working at the Bureau of Environmental Health at Carroll County Health Department in 1988. She has been involved in most aspects of Environmental Health with a heavy concentration in Community Hygiene Programs. She is currently the Assistant Director of Environmental Health at Carroll County Health Department. Andrea has served as Past Vice

President CASA in 1999-2000; President 2000-2001; Board Member 2001-2002; and Secretary 2014-present.

Treasurer: Lisa Staley

Lisa Staley is the current Treasurer of the Baltimore Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association and a Representative to the CASA Executive Board. She is the Chief of the Center for Facility and Process Review, Office of Food Protection, at the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She has been a member of CASA since 2001. Lisa has served on the Baltimore CASA board since 2005 and began to serve as the Representative to the CASA Executive board in 2011.

Past President: Cheryl Chaney, LEHS

Cheryl Chaney is the Past President (2015) of the Baltimore Conference of the Central Atlantic States Association. She received her Bachelors of Science degree from York College of Pennsylvania and her Masters of Science from Towson University. Cheryl is the current Supervisor of Community Hygiene at the Carroll County Health Department, where she has worked since 1998. She has worked in various Environmental Health programs, including Rabies and Air and Water Quality. Cheryl has been an active CASA member since 1998.

Congratulations to Gwen Hector:



The CASA Executive Board welcomes Gwendolyn Hector as the New Executive Secretary. Gwen works for the Prince George's County Health Department and is a Baltimore Conference member. Gwen is a loyal supporter of CASA. The Executive Board is excited to have her as their Executive Secretary. Congratulations Gwen!

Review of the 333rd Quarterly Meeting

The Executive Board would like to thank all of the speakers that participated in the 333rd Quarterly Meeting. Additionally, the Executive Board would like to thank Giant of Landover for providing the wonderful location and food for the meeting.

Lisa Staley, Division Chief, DHMH Center of Facility and Process Review

In an opening presentation, Ms. Staley provided a brief update on changes to the Code of Maryland Regulations 10.15.03.

Terence McGowan and Saliha Ghaffar, Giant Food, Food Safety and Quality Assurance

Giant Food Team members Saliha Ghaffar and Terry McGowan gave an interesting presentation on how Giant Food and their parent Company, Ahold USA, take great care to give back to the communities they serve and to be conscious of their business' impact on the environment. Saliha and Terry explained how Giant Food and Ahold USA have strategies and initiatives in key areas of: Healthy Living, Community Well-Being, Responsible Products, and Care for the Environment. The programs listed range from normal recycling of cardboard, plastic, paper and used cooking grease, to more complex programs like organic waste recycling. An anaerobic digestion process is used to convert food waste into electrical power for one of the distribution centers and the byproduct is used as fertilizer - turning what would normally be landfill waste into "zero-waste" and energy. Other programs include a comprehensive food bank donation program that provides various food items to five (5) local Feeding America food bank partners. Pediatric cancer research is a key charity that has provided support to Johns Hopkins and The Children's Cancer Foundation for the past 30+ years. Their community support also reaches out to the military with annual support of the USO and TAPS organizations as well as local youth sports and school support programs such as their A+ School Rewards Program. With their core business being food, it was impressive to hear about initiatives such as 100% Sustainable Sourced Seafood for all of their Giant brand fresh, frozen and canned seafood. Giant Food has recently entered into the environmentally friendly world of hydroponic produce through a new partnership with a local grower, Bright Farms, eliminating thousands of gas-guzzling road miles from the salad green supply chain from the West coast. Terry and Saliha wrapped up their presentation with some impressive stats on energy reduction with cutting-edge technology being used to reduce in-store refrigeration and electricity consumption which earned them recognition by the EPA with a Green Power Partnership award.

Bert Nixon, Bureau Director, Bureau of Environmental Health -Howard County Health Department

Mr. Nixon provided a much anticipated presentation on the final status of the Board of Environmental Health Specialists following an introduction on January 16, 2016, of Senate Bill 200 by the Committee Chair to sunset the Board. Senate Bill 200 was introduced to repeal provisions of the law that established the Board of Environmental Health Specialists. On Wednesday, February 26, 2016, an amendment to House Bill 497 was presented to prevent the SB 200 proposal to sunset the Board. Following further hearings and testimony, votes in favor of the amendments to HB 497 were approved. The final version approved and signed by the Governor in May, extends the Board for 10 years and allows those who were licensed under the Board prior to conversion to the NEHA administered REHS examination to continue to practice with their existing credentials until review of the Board before July 1, 2027.

Loretta Carey, Consumer Safety Officer, U. S. Food and Drug Administration Food Labeling and Standards

Ms. Carey gave a follow-up presentation on updated menu labeling requirements to provide further clarification on nutrition labeling of menu items for covered establishments. A covered establishment, as defined by the final rule under the Code of Federal Regulations Title 21 section 101, is a restaurant or similar food establishment operating under the same name as part of a chain of 20 or more facilities and offers the same menu items for sale. As a result of the final rule effective on December 1, 2015 with an extended compliance date of December 1, 2016, covered establishments are required to:

- Declare calorie information for standard menu items on menus and menu boards,

- Disclose calorie information for standard menu items on display or for self-service on signs that are adjacent to the food item(s),
- Provide written nutrition information for standard menu items at the request of consumers, and
- Display a statement on menus and menu boards to inform consumers of the availability of written nutrition information and a second statement that suggests daily caloric intake to educate the public on the significance of calorie declarations.

The final rule also requires that covered establishments provide necessary records to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as requested and allows establishments that are not covered to register with the FDA if the facility voluntarily elects to be subject to the rule.

Paula Montgomery, Program Supervisor, Maryland Department of the Environment Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Ms. Montgomery gave an informative and fact-based presentation on the impact of lead poisoning on affected segments of the population and initiatives to aid in prevention. According to Ms. Montgomery, while the number of children with elevated blood lead levels in Maryland has declined dramatically over the years, there are still children with historically elevated blood lead levels and a significant number of children who are newly exposed to lead every year. Children are at the greatest risk from birth to age six while their neurological systems are being developed. Exposure to lead can cause long-term neurological damage that may be associated with learning and behavioral problems and with decreased intelligence. As of March 2015, all children at ages one and two years are required to have a blood lead test in Maryland. MDE's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program provides oversight and education to parents, tenants, rental property owners, home owners, and health care providers to enhance their role in lead poisoning prevention.

**Susan Thweatt, Program Chief, Food Protection and Policy Program, Prince George's Co. Health Dept.
Wendy Cochran, Food Control Program Manager, Frederick County Health Department**

Summarized by Ms. Thweatt and Ms. Cochran, the Mentorship Program for the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards) is funded through a five-year cooperative agreement between NACCHO and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Mentorship Program provides opportunities for local health department (LHD) staff to learn about the Retail Program Standards through active participation and training, share experiences and develop tools and resources related to the Retail Program Standards, and support the ongoing effort to increase the use of the Retail Program Standards nationwide. LHDs seeking assistance on the Retail Program Standards were matched to seasoned Retail Program Standards mentors from a LHD to help progress the work towards meeting Retail Program Standards while building sustained capacity within the LHD. Mentors are encouraged to assist mentee LHDs in preparing for self-assessments and verification audits and in developing improvement plans. Through the program, NACCHO has gathered a wide variety of qualitative data about the Retail Program Standards from the perspective of the LHD.

Prince George's County received the grant and was a part of Cohort III (December 2013- August 2014). Mentored by the Alexandria Health Department, the project was focused on completing a policy and procedures manual with documentation in compliance with the Retail Program Standards. This grant provided the LHD \$10,000 as the mentee, which primarily went towards staff overtime for the two workshops held with the mentoring HD. This included paying for lunch for the workshops and supplies

for the manuals. Remaining funds were used to send one staff member to NEHA Conference. Frederick County received the grant and was also part of Cohort III (December 2013- August 2014). Mentored by the Fairfax County Health Department, the project was focused on completing the initial self-assessment of all Standards. This grant provided the LHD \$10,000 as the mentee, of which \$2,460 went towards purchasing equipment for the Food Program, \$2,650 went to staff training costs (Annual CASA Conference and Food Safety Summit & HACCP Certification Course), with the remaining funds used to reimburse staff salary for time spent on the project.

Current Food Safety Topic

President Obama Signs GMO Labeling Bill

There is a new law on the horizon that pertains to the labeling of foods containing genetically engineered ingredients. On July 15, 2016, President Barack Obama responded to consumer demands by signing bill S. 764 into law. This bill requires that manufacturers label most packages of food products through text, symbol, or electric (QR) code to indicate whether or not the food is genetically modified or contains a genetically modified ingredient. The law would institute a uniform labeling standard for the food industry that would avoid inconsistent individual state laws. Though the labeling would provide a uniform standard for the industry, Fortune reports that there is a concern that populations that do not have smartphones may be denied access to the labeling information if electronic coding is utilized. There is also concern that the new federal law is less stringent than some already instituted state labeling laws.

Genetically Modified Foods (GMO's) are produced or contain an ingredient that was produced using genetic engineering techniques. According to NBC News, the food industry reports that 75 percent to 80 percent of foods contain ingredients that are genetically engineered. The USDA reported that 94 percent of the domestically produced soy bean crops are genetically engineered. In 2000, the USDA reported that 54 percent of the soybean crops were genetically engineered. The FDA reported that in 2012, 88 percent of the domestically planted corn crops were genetically engineered. Given that the majority of domestic soybean and corn crops are genetically engineered, this increases the quantity of food products that contain genetically engineered ingredients. Though the FDA has stipulated that genetically engineered foods must meet identical safety requirements as the non-GMO counterparts, Fortune reports that consumers are demanding a right to know if the food they consume contains GMO's.

The United States Department of Agriculture has been given two years to determine the quantity of genetically engineered ingredients that would necessitate the GMO label, according to NBC News. Advocates for the labeling of GMO foods, according to NBC News, are concerned that if a genetically engineered ingredient threshold is set high, many GMO-containing products will not have to be labeled. There is also concern that there will be insufficient penalties for those who do not comply with the law. Though labeling advocates are concerned that consumers will not be properly informed, NBC News reports that the industry is concerned that labeling would imply that GMO-containing products are not safe for consumption.

References:

Addady, M. (2016). President Obama Signed This GMO Labeling Bill. Retrieved August 31, 2016, from <http://fortune.com/2016/07/31/gmo-labeling-bill/>

Congress Passes GMO Food Labeling Bill. (n.d.). Retrieved August 31, 2016, from <http://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/congress-passes-gmo-food-labeling-bill-n609571>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (n.d.). Retrieved August 31, 2016, from <http://www.fda.gov/food/foodscienceresearch/geplants/ucm461805.htm>

USDA ERS - Adoption of Genetically Engineered Crops in the U.S. (n.d.). Retrieved August 31, 2016, from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/adoption-of-genetically-engineered-crops-in-the-us.aspx>

334th Quarterly Meeting Agenda (pre-registration is required)

Date: Thursday, September 15, 2016
Time: 8:00 AM-3:00 PM
Location: Carroll County Agricultural Center, 706 Agricultural Center Drive
Burns Hall, Westminster, Maryland 21157
Topics: Wastewater Discharge and Grease Interceptor Requirements; Food Safety Training in the U.S., South America, and Asia; Cooling and Refrigeration; and Active Shooter Training