

# Hot off the Grill

*A Publication of the Foodborne Illness Prevention Program*

## Inside this issue:

Rule Revision	1
Where are we headed?	1, 2
Nuggets	2
Q and A	2
Crumbine Award 2006	3
What's Cookin'?	3
Meet the FIPP Staff	3
Calendar	4

## Rule Revision

As you know, the Foodborne Illness Prevention Program recently completed amendments to our food service regulations. Once again, the revision process went quickly and without a hitch! (We'll pause here so you can stop laughing and catch your breath...)

The revisions folded the Mobile Food Unit rules into the Food Sanitation Rules. Mobile food units must now

comply with the same food safety standards as restaurants including increased standards for handwashing, temperature control, food storage and staff knowledge.

DHS also amended the rules relating to Food Handler Training. These amendments simplify the program's learning objectives and focus them on the factors most associated with causing foodborne illness. DHS also made minor

housekeeping changes to the rules relating to intergovernmental agreements with Local Public Health Authorities and Bed and Breakfast Facilities.

As with any rulemaking process, we'll look back at what worked well and what didn't and try to make improvements in how we do things. We appreciate the committees and individuals that assisted us in our efforts and your support and/or patience during this process!

## Where are we headed?

Over the past several years, Oregon's food safety system has taken several steps to update and upgrade the program. From adoption of the FDA Food Code, to emphasis on interactive inspections, to assessing the statewide program against the FDA Voluntary Program Standards, we have tried to focus our efforts on the factors most likely to cause foodborne illness. While sometimes it can be difficult to see, as a result of these efforts, Oregon is viewed favorably on the national level as a progressive and innovative food safety system.

But where do we go from here? What steps are necessary to keep moving the pro-

gram forward in a way that will use our limited resources in the most effective manner with a focus on preventing foodborne illness?

The Foodborne Illness Prevention Program, in conjunction with the Food Service Advisory Committee, county environmental health supervisors and the industry, has spent the past few years working to get the program looking forward, rather than reacting to changes as or after they happen. We want to be able to answer the question, "Where will the program be in one, three or ten years down the road?"

To that end, we have committed to focusing our efforts on

three areas and we'll try to answer these questions:

**Licensing and Inspections:** How to best use our limited resources in a way that focuses our efforts on foodborne illness. The statute requires a minimum of two inspections per food establishment regardless of the complexity of operations. In addition, facilities are licensed based upon seating rather than their complexity. Can the inspection frequency and licensing model be adjusted to take into account the complexity of facility operations? Are the current scoring system and inspection report the best ways to reflect the food safety status of a restaurant?

Are there enforcement or incentive mechanisms that can improve food safety in food service establishments, in particular for repeated violations? Can the statute be revised or streamlined to remove inconsistencies between program areas?

**Food Manager Certification:** What barriers exist to voluntary food manager certification? How can we encourage food service operators to obtain food manager certification for their staff? Are there incentive programs that can be developed and implemented to increase the number of certified food managers?

**The Silce**

**Question:** Our Division has undergone several name changes over the years. Which of the following have we been called?

- a. Oregon Health Division
- b. Health Services Cluster
- c. Public Health Division
- d. You don't want to know what we've been called!
- e. All of the above

**Answer:** e. (unfortunately)

**Where are we headed?, Cont...****Effective Communication:**

How can we improve communication between the food service industry and regulators? What barriers exist to effective communication and how can they be overcome so that our message can be heard and understood?

As we prepare to embark on these efforts, we will be asking for your input and assistance on how best to achieve our goals. We are in the process of forming a committee to

evaluate the questions above and to make recommendations to DHS on how to move forward.

Keep in mind that some of the committee recommendations may be fairly easy to implement, while others may necessitate legislative changes, so be patient during this process. In any case, we are committed to assuring that everyone gets a chance to participate in the process at some level and to be heard.



*As you know in the northwest, this is the time of year for flooding and power outages.*

*Check out our revised materials online at:*

<http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/foodsafety/eprep.shtml>

**Turkey Tidbits:**

President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863.

Ben Franklin thought the North American wild turkey, instead of the eagle, should be the national bird.

The average American consumes about 18 pounds of turkey a year.

**Nuggets****FDA Approves Virus As New Food Safety Additive**

FDA announced that it has approved the use of a bacteriophage preparation to be used on RTE meat and poultry products as an antimicrobial agent against *Listeria monocytogenes*. Bacteriophages are viruses that infect only bacteria and do not infect animal or plant cells. The preparation will be used in processing plants as a spray application on the surface of products such as hot dogs

and lunchmeats. The use of the phage preparation will need to be declared as an ingredient on the label of the treated product.

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/opabacqa.html>

**Sushi vs. Sashimi-Do you know the difference?**

People often use the term sushi to refer to food items that contain raw fish. But some types of sushi may not contain any raw fish at all...

**Sushi** is the Japanese specialty that always includes cooked vinegared rice, such as when small rice portions are wrapped in or layered with raw or cooked seafood and other ingredients like egg or vegetables. Sushi rolls are often wrapped in thin sheets of seaweed.

**Sashimi** is sliced raw fish, often served with condiments such as shredded daikon radish, ginger, wasabi (Japanese horseradish) and soy sauce.

**Q and A-Is it acceptable to use soap or bleach to wash produce?**

Produce associated with food-borne illness outbreaks has been in the news lately, and it is likely that you will get questions about the best way to wash produce.

FDA recommends washing fruits and vegetables under running water just before eating, cutting or cooking. Using soap, detergent or commercial produce washes is not recommended. However,

chemical washes may be used as long as they meet the requirements specified in 21 CFR 173.315 (7-204.12). FDA understands that people use sodium hypochlorite on fruits and vegetables, but 21 CFR 173.315 does not specify any maximum level. What little research that has been done suggests that weak chlorine solutions are no more beneficial than plain, potable

water. While chlorine may work well to purify clear water or to sanitize clean kitchen surfaces, it does not seem to work well in the complex environment of fruit and vegetable surfaces.

Quaternary ammonium compounds are **not** allowed for washing raw agricultural products.

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodsafe.html#prep>





## Multnomah Co. Wins Crumbine Award

**Congratulations to Multnomah County Environmental Health** for winning the prestigious Samuel J. Crumbine Consumer Protection Award for 2006!

The Crumbine Award is presented annually to one local governmental health agency that has demonstrated unsur-

passed achievement in providing outstanding food protection services to its community. The award is named in honor of Dr. Samuel J. Crumbine (1862 - 1954), a public health pioneer who was renowned for his innovative methods of improving public health protection.



## New Hire—Sort of?

We are happy to welcome James Mack back to the EHS-Net Program. Emal Wahab has moved on to a position in Radiation Protection Services across the hall. Who would've thought inspecting x-ray machines would be more fun than hanging out with us?



## What's Cookin'?

**EHS Orientation – September 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

DHS had a great group of participants attend the EHS orientation. Please welcome the following Environmental Health Specialists:

**Robert Baker**, Benton County; **Jason Borzy**, Polk County; **Liann Fields**, Washington County; **Sombra Forrest**, **Robert Gowan**, and **Christie Sweitz**, Multnomah

County; **Morgan Poloni**, Tillamook County; **Jim Schmidt**, Deschutes County; **Jennifer Radtke**, and **Mauureen Taylor**, Clatsop County. **Welcome to Environmental Health in Oregon!**



**Congratulations to James Mack ...**

and the EHS-Net team for getting their article, *Food Worker Hand Washing Practices: An Observation Study*, published in the Journal of Food Protection, Vol. 69, No. 10, 2006.

The article is posted on the webpage at: <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/foodsafety/snet/index.shtml>



Learn more about the nationwide **FDA ALERT Program:**

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/alert.html>

## Meet the FIPP Staff– Hope Nelson-FIPP Support Staff

**Hope Nelson** has been at DHS for five years, coming to the Foodborne Illness Prevention Program with 15 years experience from the University of Oregon payroll unit.

She currently has no time for hobbies, but if she did, she would like to do more beadwork.

Her favorite colors are blue and green.

Most of you know her as the helpful voice on the other end of the line when you call to order stickers or other materials.

In FPLHSS we could not do our jobs without her!

**Hope's Favorite Quote:**

*"Be true to yourself."*





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**Food Defense**

Vacant

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**Mission:** To work in partnership with Local Public Health Authorities, the food service industry and trade associations, academia, and state and federal agencies to reduce or eliminate the known causes of foodborne illness.

**WE'RE ON THE WEB:**  
[WWW.HEALTHOREGON.ORG/FOODSAFETY](http://WWW.HEALTHOREGON.ORG/FOODSAFETY)

**Calendar**

**November 2006**

**FDA Broadcast**

Nov. 30 - PSOB - 10am

**December 2006**

**Happy Holidays!**

**January 2007**

**FSAC Meeting**

Jan. 4 - PSOB - 1pm

