



May Newsletter

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Training Opportunities

Basic HACCP

May 24-25, Boston, MA
June 22-23, Sterling, VA

Developing and Implementing SQF Systems

August 3-4, Dayton, OH

***FSPCA Preventive Controls - PCQI - Part 2 Blended Course**

September 26, Fayetteville, AR

FSPCA Preventive Controls – PCQI

May 23-25, Fayetteville, AR
May 25-27, Monterrey, Mexico
June 21-23, Peabody, MA
August 8-10, Peabody, MA
August 23-25, Washington, DC
September 13-15, Atlanta, GA
November 14-16, Fayetteville, AR

*The Blended course consists of 2 parts. Part 1 is online and Part 2 is instructor-led. Both parts must be completed in order to obtain the certificate.

Register Now!

Welcome New HCG Member: Dr. Kelly G. Vest



The HACCP Consulting Group is pleased to introduce our newest Associate Member, Dr. Kelly G. Vest. Kelly lives in Maryland with his wife, Jeanine. Kelly and Jeanine spend as much time as possible with their 6 kids and 15 grandchildren. Kelly enjoys woodworking, fly fishing, and gardening and he collects Louis L'Amour first edition hardbacks.

Kelly holds the degrees of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (1987), Masters of Public Health (1994), and Doctor of Public Health in epidemiology (2003). He has dedicated his efforts to veterinary and infectious disease epidemiology, surveillance, food safety, food defense, One Health, and research of military relevance. Kelly has served in military command and staff positions to include Chief Veterinarian to the US Army Southern Command Surgeon and as Commander, Japan District Veterinary Command. He is presently serving as the President of the American Association of Food Safety and Public Health Veterinarians.

Kelly's full professional biography can be found [here](#).

FSIS Hidden Treasures

FSIS thinks long and hard before trying to develop and issue regulations, federal register publications, Directives, and Notices; it takes a lot of time and effort. In order to release general information and policy briefs in a more timely fashion, FSIS setup Fact Sheets on their web site. These fact sheets can be a treasure trove of information on how to get things done and get in tune with what the agency is thinking. You have to go find it, but the hunt is worth it. For easier access, you can click on [this link](#) for some interesting reading.

As you can see, there is a wide range of subjects from consumer education to industry guidelines. In turn, each subject opens up to a list of fact sheets. Fact sheets include consumer education items such as safe food handling, emergency preparedness, and food preparation tools. Industry fact sheets include appealing inspection decisions, BSE, Recalls, and Validation under the subject Production and Inspection; and PHIS and FOIA under the subject FSIS Programs and Workforce; and these are just a few examples. These fact sheets are written mainly for industry personnel and consumers and are based on the number and relevance of questions received by FSIS. These are some of the questions industry is asking, so here are the answers from the horse's mouth. Good hunting.

Written by [Eric L. Thomson, HCG Associate](#)

Shocking Discovery: Bacteria are Smarter than we Thought

New research has demonstrated that bacteria in biofilms may be using electrical signals to communicate among multiple species in order to regulate growth patterns within a biofilm. Observations included the presence of a two-hour growth cycle of expansion and pausing that helps ensure cells in the center of a biofilm continue to have access to nutrients and the overall structure remains stable. Understanding this two-hour cycle may enable sanitation techniques designed to interfere with it and thus discourage biofilm development. More information can be found [here](#).

Written by [Cathy M. Crawford, HCG President](#)

HCG Attends Food Safety Summit

On May 8–11, 2017 HCG attended the annual Food Safety Summit held in Chicago, IL. During the Summit, two major themes were emphasized regarding the “Latest in *Listeria* Control” and “My New FSMA Inspection Is Coming: Expectation on Both Sides.”

During the *Listeria* Workshop, industry experts shared control strategies and insights on sanitation, equipment design, sampling, investigations, and real case studies. The major take-away was that companies' *Listeria* Control Programs must be aggressive, even when finding *Listeria* species, and that the “route cause” should be better investigated. Documentation of the corrective actions and results of the route-cause analysis is critically

important.

During presentations related to preparing for a FDAFSMA investigation, it was stressed that companies should be prepared to deal with several FDA/ state investigators for several days in the facility; including the investigation team taking 100+ swabs. The team will focus on the facilities' Food Safety System and its implementation; including the interview of plant personnel implementing the program. During the presentations, it was strongly recommended that companies develop a detailed plan and procedures to follow when FDA arrives at your facility. Elements of the plan should include, but not be limited to: having plant personnel available when the team splits up in the facility, policy on taking photographs, whether to take companion swabs, taking plant photos of sites sampled, immediate sanitation of sites samples, and holding of product until the results of swabs are known.

For more information, please [contact HCG](#).

Written by [Robert A. Savage, HCG Senior Vice President](#)

HCG Provides International FSMA Training

HCG has trained over 600 individuals on the Food Safety Preventive Controls for Human Foods Rule thus far. Over half of these were participants outside the U.S. Over 100 participants were from the FDA. Many of these participants completed a combined course that included earning two certificates; a HACCP certificate and a Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) certificate. With our diverse team of FSPC Lead Instructors, we bring to the Standard Curriculum experience and practical advice regarding the development and review of Food Safety Plans from both the regulator and industry perspectives.

HCG's Eric Thompson Receives Administrator's Award for Excellence

On April 18, FSIS hosted the 2017 Administrator's Awards for Excellence Ceremony in the Jefferson Auditorium at the South Building at USDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. A U.S. Armed Services honor guard performed a Presentation of Colors, accompanied by a U.S. Marine Corps Band, to open the ceremony. OM Assistant Administrator Pete Bridgeman then welcomed attendees. USDA's Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety and FSIS Administrator Al Almanza spoke on the importance of the Agency's mission, thanked all FSIS employees for their contributions, and presented the awards to each winning team or individual. The award ceremony was followed by a reception at the Whitten Building Patio. The award categories and recipients were:



- Excellence in Mission Results: *Salmonella* Extreme Weather Team and Siluriformes Fish Final Rule Team
 - Excellence in Workplace Harmony: Union Springs 1st Shift Inspection Team
 - **Excellence in Safety and Health: Eric L. Thompson, DDM**
 - Excellence in Civil Rights and Diversity: OPPD EEOAC Disability Subcommittee
 - Excellence in Labor Management Collaboration: Matthew A. Epperson, HR Specialist
 - Employee of the Year: Nathan K. Greenwell, Lead Data Analyst
 - Leader of the Year: Gregory D. Shaw, Jr., SPHV; Chris V. Yol, SPHV
 - Customer Service: Virtual Reality Team, OOEET
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Implementation of the Foreign Supplier Verification Programs (FSVP) Rule

On May 11, 2017 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration updated [FDA.gov](#) to include updated [fact sheets](#), and [new guidance](#) as a resource for importers subject to the FSVP rule, which makes them responsible for verifying that food imported into the United States has been produced in a manner that meets applicable U.S. safety standards. The first FSVP compliance date is **May 30, 2017 for importers whose foreign supplier falls into one of these categories**. The supplier:

- Will not be covered by the FSMA preventive controls or [produce safety](#) rules;
- Is subject to the [Preventive Controls for Human Food rule](#), and is not a "small business," "qualified facility," or subject to the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance; or
- Is subject to current good manufacturing requirements in the FSMA [Preventive Controls for Animal Food rule](#), and is not a "small business" or "qualified facility".

A chart on [fda.gov](#), titled [Am I Subject to FSVP?](#), will help determine if your firm is subject to the rule. Read more [here](#).

Best Wishes,

Cathy M. Crawford

Cathy M. Crawford, President

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STAY CONNECTED

