
The Food Protection GRAPEVINE

The BCFPA Newsletter: Vol.1 No.5, November 2002

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Well, it is that time of the year again, when Remembrance Day is just behind us and we distribute our BCFPA Autumn Grapevine Newsletter. Our October 2002 Speakers evening on Hepatitis A and handling a crisis in a food company was a resounding success. We had 92 attendees. As amazing as 92 attendees is, I am proud to say that it was NOT a record for us.

For our Next speakers evening in late February 2003, we are planning on having a speakers evening devoted to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) and what they (GMO's) mean to you as a member of the food and allied industries, as a food manufacturer and as a consumer of food, both now and into the future.

Quite frankly, my executive colleagues on the BCFPA and I are sick and tired of the one-sided, non-scientific opinions of self-proclaimed experts in not only food science but also GMO's. If and only if we

can organize experts in their respective fields from both sides of the GMO debate, will we put on the GMO

Speakers Evening. If we are not able to find the respective experts on GMO's (both the accredited and self proclaimed experts) then we will turn our focus to another interesting and pertinent food safety topic. Either way, rest assured that we will put on a speakers evening that will be well worth your time.

Once again, thank you to everyone who so strongly supported our past speakers evenings. People like yourselves make the work that we at the BCFPA go

through, to set up these speakers evening, well worth our time.

Please e-mail me back with your thoughts on a speakers evening devoted to hearing the true scientific facts about GMO's and also your thoughts on other



food safety topic that you may be interested in.

Please look out in the mail for your membership renewal forms for 2003. Your membership dues are vital in sustaining the BCFPA and enabling us to put on the quality programs that we all so much enjoy. If you are currently not a BCFPA member, then we urge you to please consider joining. We are planning on giving an even greater discount to our BCFPA members at our future meetings.

Take Care,

Clive Kingsbury
BCFPA President

My e-mail address is ckingsbu@jms.ca

or

ckingsbury@shaw.ca

BCFPA Speakers Evening a Hit With HACCP

*First Speakers Evening for 2002,
Wednesday, April 3 at the British Columbia
Institute of Technology, Burnaby, BC.*

BCFPA has again presented a popular topic for their Speakers Evening. The format for this HACCP evening was changed from previous Speakers Evenings. It had an earlier start time and featured six speakers from different levels of government, food retail, food manufacturing and private consulting. Each speaker spoke about the role of HACCP in their organization and at their niche of the food spectrum. Good planning and the talented lineup of speakers paid off. The evening was a great success with 70 registrants and included some new BCFPA memberships. The evening was attended by representatives from industry, government

and academia working in production, QC, inspection, laboratory and management. A number of students representing the food programs at BCIT and UBC were also in attendance.

The meeting was opened by our vice president, Terry Peters, who welcomed the guests and outlined the events for the evening. Terry then introduced our lead-off speaker for the HACCP evening, Gordon Stewart, deputy Chief Public Health Inspector for Simon Fraser Health Region.

Gordon's presentation "*HACCP on Produce Farms is Urgently Required in BC*" stressed the need for HACCP based systems on farms in the wake of a recent *Shigella* outbreak in BC attributed to locally grown spinach. He provided information on the investigation and pointed out deficiencies identified on the implicated farm. These deficiencies included problems with function and location of septic systems, drainage and irrigation ditches, sewage and outhouses and personal habits of workers. Gordon then went on to tell us about a Public Health survey of farming practices in the South Surrey area arising out of the outbreak. The survey looked at water sources, sewage, pesticide, animal waste and crops. They determined that the farming practices that led to the *Shigella* outbreak are not uncommon. The major problems are lack of available clean water and a shortage of hand washing facilities. The result of the study was to recommend that some form of a HACCP program would minimize risk on farms.

A member of our BCFPA executive, Annette Moore, On-Farm Food Quality and Safety Specialist of the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries was our next speaker. Annette presented an "Update of On-Farm HACCP Programs in BC." Annette went over a number of foodborne illnesses that have been linked to produce and advised us

that many were the result of imported products.

Annette identified similar deficiencies as the former speaker that included contaminated. Annette then enlightened us on the HACCP programs starting on the BC farms. She indicated that there are now HACCP auditors at the farm level to help our farmers meet worldwide standards through a national recognition program.

Following these two excellent presentations, we had the first break of the evening and enjoyed a hosted supper generously catered by Schneider Foods and BCFPA that included delicious cold cuts and an assortment of beverages and sandwiches purchased from BCIT. This gave everyone opportunity to meet and greet as well as to talk shop, network, get to know each other more and discuss the two presentations thus far with their colleagues. In our ongoing support for students of food technology, we again allowed students from the BCIT and UBC Food programs to sell 50/50 draw tickets to help fund their activities and allow them to participate in student competitions.

Our third speaker of the evening was Lynn Wilcott. Lynn is a Food Safety Specialist with the BC Ministry of Health. His talk, "HACCP in British Columbia, A Means to an End," outlined the various food protection programs in BC and

irrigation water and non potable water being used in plants. Other problems that had resulted in outbreaks were linked to uncomposted manure, pests in processing areas and poor worker hygiene. gave us information on HACCP in the food service and food retail industries in BC.

We learned that BC has a risk-based inspection approach that is shared between the Environmental Health Officer and the establishment operator. A modified HACCP approach is used in these industries that incorporates the first three to four traditional steps of HACCP into a food safety plan and ensures that the highest risk hazards are addressed first.

Our next presentation came from the retail industry itself. Rick Thompson, manager of product integrity at Overwitea Foods and also a very active member of the Canadian Council

of Grocery Distributors gave us an insight into "HACCP Pre-Requisites at Retail: The Vendor Pre-Recognition Program." Rick gave a thorough presentation on the requirements that deal with procurement, premises, transportation



and storage, equipment, personnel training, sanitation and pest control, recall procedures and records. Each of these comprehensive components form a necessary part of Overwitea's prerequisite program to HACCP.

Following this presentation, we had a break that allowed time for us to again socialize and enjoy the good food. It was becoming apparent from the evening's presentations thus far, how the thread of HACCP weaves through different levels of the food industry and provided an interesting topic for discussion. Also during the break, our student guests were able to meet many of us and continue to sell some more tickets for their fund-raiser draw.

In the final session of the evening we met the manufacturing and consulting sides of HACCP. The next speaker was Clive Kingsbury, our BCFA president and QC Manager for Schneider Foods. Clive's presentation "*What it Really Takes to Develop a Successful HACCP System*" gave us an overview of HACCP and showed us how one manufacturing company has handled HACCP in their plant. Clive shared with us Schneider's approach to HACCP and outlined topics under HACCP recognition, team, software, documentation and prerequisite programs. His talk finished by outlining the many benefits of HACCP and affirming that "HACCP is an investment in your company's future."

Our last presentation for the evening was from Rebecca Robertson of Robertson and Ross Associates. Her talk was entitled "Hazard Analysis - It's not a Consensus Decision." This was our first experience with a speaker from the consulting side of the industry and found this different viewpoint a refreshing change for the

Major Outbreaks of Foodborne Illness in British Columbia

Vibrio parahaemolyticus - shellfish
E. coli O157:H7 - fermented sausage
Shigella - spinach
Hepatitis A - deli products
Listeria - soft cheese

The "TOP TEN" Food Handling Practices that Cause Food Poisoning

1. Improper Cooling
2. Advance Preparation
3. Infected Person
4. Inadequate Reheating
5. Improper Hot Holding
6. Contaminated Raw Food or Ingredient
7. Unsafe Sources
8. Use of Leftovers
9. Cross-Contamination
10. Inadequate Cooking

These "TOP TEN" food handling practices cause over 95% of all food poisoning outbreaks in food service establishments, and the top 5 cause 80% of all outbreaks.

-Excerpt from the October 2002 Presentation by Larry Copeland, Director, Food Protection Services

CFPA GRAPEVINE

end of the evening. Rebecca delved into HACCP and showed us how she puts together a HACCP program as well as delivers training on the topic. We learned that hazard identification and that a "CCP without a critical limit is worthless." So much can depend upon a HACCP plan as we learned with Rebecca's presentation using a case study.

Following Rebecca's presentation, each of the speakers came forward to the front of the room to answer questions from the audience and participate in a "round table" discussion. The evening had obviously generated a lot of interest as many questions were directed to our speakers. A number of key points related to HACCP were discussed. After this, Terry summed up the evening sessions in his closing remarks and showed our appreciation by presenting each of the speakers with a gift. We ended the evening

with a draw for our door prize, a beautiful wristwatch donated by Schneider's Foods, as well as the students' 50/50 draw for some extra cash.

The British Columbia Food Protection Association would like to express our thanks to our corporate sponsors and to all of you who were able to join us. Your support allows us to present this valuable information and work toward a safer food supply. The evening was a great success and we are looking forward to our next Speaker's Evening on communicable pathogens, their spread and control in foods next October 1, 2002.

Special thanks to Terry Peters for this report. Look for excerpts from the October 2002 Speaker's Evening in this issue and Terry's report in our next issue.

Hepatitis A

Clinical Illness

Incubation period: 1 month (15-50 days)

Abrupt onset: Fever, malaise, GI upset

Jaundice (yellow eyes and skin)

Often asymptomatic, especially kids

Hepatitis A – Clinical Illness

Duration of illness: Weeks-months

Case fatality: 1/1,000 cases

(2% over age 50 years)

Transmission

Communicable:

From 2 weeks BEFORE symptoms start until 1 week after onset of jaundice (4 weeks total)

Fecal-oral:

Directly (sexual, diaper changing), indirectly (food or water)

Hepatitis A Virus Transfer

Small amounts necessary for infection

Experiments show transfer from fingers to food

Handwashing reduces the risk

Virus killed by heating

Hepatitis A Virus in Food

Seafood (sewage contamination)

Mussels, clams

Fruits/vegetables (irrigation)

E.g. Frozen strawberries

Food handler

Raw food or food after cooking

...No test for the virus in food

-Excerpt from the October 2002 presentation by

Patricia Daly MD, FRCPC

Medical Health Officer and Director of

Communicable Disease Control

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

Job Listings

The BCFPA is looking for an internet-adept person to help design

and possibly maintain an official website for us. A \$\$\$ fee is available.

Just contact Clive or Terry of the Executive Board.



POSITION: Research & Development Technologist

LOCATION: Ingleton Plant, Burnaby, BC

REPORTS TO: Plant Manager

PRIMARY FUNCTION:

To lead the research and development department in developing high quality products and improving existing products for the foodservice and retail food industry. To meet the needs of customers and capitalize on current and new market opportunities.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Formulate cake, dough and related bakery products within the context of Sales and Marketing and our customer's requirements, taking into consideration quality, production capabilities and cost.
- Work in a cooperative and collaborative manner with the Product Development Team (Production, Purchasing, Quality Assurance, Sales & Marketing) and industry suppliers to take projects from initial concept to successful product launch.
- Carry out projects in an efficient manner and maintain concise and complete records for all projects undertaken.
- Prepare ingredient statements, product assembly records, nutritional information and finished product specifications.
- Provide training and support to the production

MASTHEAD

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>e-mail address</u> |
|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Clive Kingsbury | President | ckingsbu@jms.ca |
| Terry Peters | Vice President | tpeters@em.agr.ca |
| John Boyce | Treasurer | john.boyce@diverseylever.com |
| Ernst Schoeller | Secretary | cdssanltd@shaw.ca |
| Annette Moore | Executive Member | Annette.moore@gems5.gov.bc.ca |
| Earl Bowler | Newsletter Committee | earlb@yvesveggie.com |
| Catherine Semple | Executive Member | semplec@inspection.gc.ca |

department when working with new products, procedures or equipment.

- Provide technical information and support to Sales & Marketing.
- Assure compliance with Canadian and U.S. food and drug regulations and labelling laws.
- Head up and carry out other non-R&D related projects (ie. Workplace improvement meetings).

REQUIREMENTS:

- Degree in Food Science, Pastry Chef Degree or related discipline.
- Minimum 3 years experience in the food industry (Experience in the baking industry is an asset).
- Working knowledge of Canadian and U.S. Food & Drug Regulations.
- Must be able to work in a team environment as well as independently.
- Must be able to multi-task, pay close attention to detail and work under strict timelines in a fast paced environment.
- Possess excellent time management, organizational and problem solving skills.
- Professional and interpersonal with excellent communication skills (written & verbal)
- Must be self-motivated, highly analytical and a good critical thinker.
- Computer literacy in word processor, spreadsheets and database program.
- Team player

Please contact the Newsletter Committee if you wish to post a job listing in this section. Postings are free!

Webwatch

UPDATED WEB SITE
Oct. 31/02
Food Safety Network

www.foodsafetynetwork.ca

The Food Safety Network has updated its consumer food safety section of the web site, Eat Well, Eat Safe, at <http://www.eatwelleatsafe.ca/>

International Association for Food Protection
<http://www.foodprotection.org>

Dong-Hyun Kang, Assistant Professor at Washington State University [dhkang@mail.wsu.edu], operates a very informative website with access to job listings, educational videos, and food safety news.

www.foodhaccp.com

If you have the opportunity you should surf around on this site.

<http://www.healthspac.ca/>

It looks like a young site that could have potential. Of particular interest is a number of BC Health Authorities are using it and therefore see some local information as well as American. I was informed that a number of US jurisdictions (LA

FoodAssure Laboratory Ltd.

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Testing food since 1997



tel 604-251 9588
foodassure@telus.net

California, Virginia State) are seriously looking at it.

It contains info on outbreaks, inspection findings and boil water advisories, etc. Unfortunately not all HA in BC are using the same system. Other HA's may be using Hedge Hodge, which I am unfamiliar with.

BCFPA salutes its Corporate Members

Fletcher's Fine Foods

C.D.S. Sanitation Ltd.

FoodAssure Laboratory Ltd.

I.G. MicroMed Environmental Inc.

Unipac

As a benefit of your corporate membership, you are entitled to advertise free of charge in our newsletter that is distributed by e-mail. For future newsletters, please forward artwork and copy to our newsletter editor, Earl Bowler at earlb@yvesveggie.com.

.....courtesy Terry Peters

Newsbits

Aka "Op-Ed Bits"-Ed.

UNCOOKED, UNHEALTHY

October 30, 2002

Thomas R. DeGregori

Health Facts and Fears

<http://www.healthfactsandfears.com/>

"Eating closer to nature" has become the latest imperative of the food faddist. To some, this means eating food raw (and not irradiated) whenever possible, which carries considerable risks. Raw can be dangerous, since the largest source of salmonella in the United States is uncooked sprouts, which cannot be rendered safe by any means (including being washed with chlorine). Alas, sprouts are too delicate for irradiation, but that method probably wouldn't be popular with the raw foods crowd anyway. Some heating is allowed by the nature-eaters, as long the temperature does not exceed 118 degrees, which is a marvelous temperature to multiply most microorganisms. A dedicated food faddist may make reservations four months in advance and pay \$69 or more per person for a meal at an uncooked-foods restaurant. There are even uncooked foods cookbooks.

One pundit maintains that "if you want to be healthy, you have to stay as close to nature as possible. When an animal or plant is raised in an organic environment, you are giving your body what Mother Nature intended."

Whatever "nature intended," our biological endowment tells us otherwise. The changes in physiology that produced larger brains and erect posture and freed our hands for tool-making were accompanied by changes in our dentition and jaw muscles and by the development of a digestive tract that cannot digest cellulose and raw starch. We simply do not have sufficient gut for the fermentation necessary to break down many complex carbohydrates. Cooking has rightly been described as a type of "external, partial predigestion."

Some of our relatives don't need cooking as much as we do. Gorillas can sit around munching on high-fiber vegetable matter, which lands in their large hind gut, where it is slowly broken down, drawing out whatever nutrients it contains. Human physiology is adapted for a high-energy-dense diet, which involves meat and fruit along with other

foods. Lacking storage capacity, we pass fiber through our system quickly, extracting little nutrient from it.

Vegetarianism is a companion food fetish for those who want to "live closer to nature." Given our ancestors' need for energy-dense food, strict vegetarianism is anything but natural. The modern abundant availability of fruits and refined foods makes vegetarianism a greater possibility today than it was for our hominid ancestors. Both cooking and meat-eating gave our ancestors the high-caloric-density food to fuel the energy-demanding human brain, making the most of the recent evolution of a large brain and greater intelligence.

The raw and uncooked are presumed to be "living foods." But "eating closer to nature" is not "natural," whatever that means; it still deprives us of vital nutrients, as it did our hominid ancestors. Even with our greater access to an incredible array of foods, we need heat, germination, and fermentation to make some nutrients accessible.

Fish is a source of the B vitamin thiamin, essential for metabolizing carbohydrates and for the maintenance of neural activity. Its deficiency in adults results in beriberi. Unfortunately, fish has the enzyme thiaminase, which inhibits utilization of the thiamin -- but thiaminase is destroyed in cooking, increasing the availability of the thiamin. Cooking does not destroy the nutritious oils in fish.

"Eating closer to nature" may be trendy and give one a sense of superiority, but nutritionally it doesn't make sense. Luckily, modern science and technology has made nutritious food so abundant that it takes a truly extreme food fetish to cause substantive harm. Probably the best nutritional strategy is variety: eating a number of different vegetables as well as meats, grains, and fruits and eating your vegetables in a variety of forms, both raw and cooked. Most of us already do just that without any help from the food police.

The fetish for "eating closer to nature" is part of a larger complex of beliefs critical of modern life in all its forms: our food supply, modern medical care and pharmaceuticals, or any number of advances in science and technology. In the twentieth century, we added nearly thirty years of life expectancy while reducing infant mortality by 90% and maternal mortality by 95% or more. We live longer, healthier, and safer lives. Somehow, there is a widespread belief that the very forces that have so bountifully transformed our lives are a threat to them and must be completely changed.

Such beliefs would be laughable except that adherents are assiduously working to turn their views into policies they can impose on the rest of us.

Thomas R. DeGregori is an ACSH Director, a professor of economics at the University of Houston and author of The Environment, Our Natural Resources and Modern Technology (Iowa State Press).

CAN TV COOKS BECOME FOOD SAFETY CELEBRITIES?

Oct. 15/02

Commentary from the Food Safety Network
By Douglas Powell

(with files from Lisa Mathiasen and Bonnie Lacroix).
www.foodsafetynetwork.ca

Now that the Thanksgiving orgy of pretentious and bland food safety advice for consumers has been tucked away until Christmas, or Easter, or the launch of barbecue season (it ends?), in what way do mere mortals go about preparing food and where do they get their information on a daily basis? If they're anything like my semi-retired father, they hear the messages but they do not necessarily internalize them; that is, people may say they know how to handle food safely, but actually do something else, especially in the kitchen. And one of the biggest sources of those messages?

Television.

My father watches cooking shows. He tries out the recipes. And he seems to be having fun in the kitchen, or at least living vicariously through others on the Food Network while sitting on the couch. Last year after Thanksgiving, dad called for my turkey stock recipe.

For the last 15 years, my wife and I have taken the turkey leftovers from my parents' house and made a killer stock. But now, inspired by TV and expectations of adventures in soup, dad wanted to make his own stock.

Such is the popularity and prominence of food in our lives that two suburban men can have a discussion about how the cloves have to be stuck into the onion and how tarragon is the secret stock ingredient

without being mocked (right?). And if we can, others

One celebrity chef said that food safety was boring and time-consuming.

probably are as well.

With that in mind, my lab undertook a formal study of the food safety practices of celebrity chefs on TV. We have over 160 hours on tape from broadcasts in June and July 2002, and are formally viewing and assessing good and bad food safety practices. Recently (Oct. 7), we had the opportunity to present preliminary results at the Cuisine Canada meeting, a bi-annual gathering of cooks, chefs and others, TV celebrities included.

Based on 29 hours of detailed viewing, we observed basic food safety errors about every five minutes, especially cross-contamination (handling raw meat and then handling vegetables or herbs without washing hands) and time-temperature violations. Few used meat thermometers. And no one talked about how they ensured the safety of ingredients entering the kitchen.

The response from the crowd was varied. One celebrity chef said that food safety was boring and time consuming. Maybe, but not for the 76 million Americans and 2-7 million Canadians who get sick each year from the food and water they consumer. Another participant remarked that if the public sees food professionals licking the spoon and using the same spoon to serve food to others all the time, they begin to think that's the way it should be done.

These seemingly simple food safety practices that TV chefs could promote belie a much deeper reality: producing and keeping food safe is hard.

The largest food recall in U.S. history was announced late Sunday – 27 million pounds of fresh and frozen ready-to-eat turkey and chicken products produced by a Pilgrim's Pride plant in Penn. The recall came as federal officials investigated a *listeria* outbreak that has caused at least 23 deaths and 120 illnesses in eight Northeastern states.

The recall also came as Canadians were once again being told food safety is simple, never thaw the turkey on the counter (which I always do) and that it is OK to thaw turkey in the sink with water (which the Brits find appalling).

But smoked turkey breast from the deli? Who's going to cook that except some derivative of the fried bologna culture trying to move upscale? Food safety is complex; it requires constant vigilance and commitment. And TV chefs can help spread that message.

A couple of years ago flying out to give a food safety talk, I sat near one of these Canadian celebrity television chefs. I listened to him talk to another passenger who had recognized him from the tube. He profused for about 30 minutes about how his show was really about entertainment, and the food was more of a condiment.

I entered the conversation with a vague question about food safety, citing an outbreak that was described in that morning's paper -- raw sprouts and E. coli O157:H7, 50 sick -- and asked if he was ever concerned about the food safety practices being broadcast on his show.

He said his producer occasionally pointed something out but that he really didn't know about it or care, it was supposed to be a fun show.

My dad cares.

-Douglas Powell is scientific director of the Food Safety Network at the University of Guelph. Bonnie LaCroix and Lisa Mathiasen are graduate students. The Food Safety Network provides research, commentary, policy evaluation and public information on food safety issues from farm-to-fork

*[These articles were obtained via Doug Powell's Listserv, **FSNet**
To subscribe to FSnet, send mail to:
listserv@listserv.uoguelph.ca
Leave subject line blank & in the body of the message type:
subscribe fsnet-L firstname lastname
e.g.. subscribe fsnet-L Doug Powell]*

Announcements

IAFP 2003 CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

November 7, 2002

The International Association for Food Protection
Des Moines, Iowa

The International Association for Food Protection is now accepting abstracts for IAFP 2003 to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana on August 10-13, 2003. The deadline for submissions is January 6, 2003. IAFP accepts abstracts online or via E-mail. Abstract submission, general information and instructions,

Speaker Reference Guide, Policy for Commercialism and information on the Developing Scientist Awards Competition are available at our Web site, www.foodprotection.org.

FDLI FOOD WEEK '03

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For more info, check out
http://www.fdpi.org/conf/food_week/#P1

The Grapevine STILL wants your C.V.!

Students, Researchers, or any Food Industry Professionals interested in a change are invited to submit a short summary of their professional offerings and goals in confidence to the **Grapevine** (BCFPA@hotmail.com). Suggested format: a plain

text e-mail copy of your résumé's vital points (8-10 lines max), with a note to us how you would like to be contacted (directly or through us).

A new postings section will feature the abbreviated CV (minus the contact name if privacy is preferred) with a Grapevine Reference # allowing prospective employers to contact you.

Postings are FREE for BCFPA members!

Top Ten Tips If You Get a Case of
Hepatitis A
- [Advice to the food industry]

1. Cooperate fully with public health
2. Maintain a good relationship with ill employee(s)
3. Provide duties, schedules quickly and accurately
4. Discard food potentially contaminated
5. Get other employees vaccinated
6. DON'T let staff answer health questions of customers
7. DON'T ask for confidential medical information of any case
8. DON'T take credit for response before secondary cases appear
9. DON'T attempt to pay for response
10. Public communication best left to public health

Most Important.....

DON'T PANIC!

*-Excerpt from the presentation by **Patricia Daly MD, FRCPC**
Medical Health Officer and Director of
Communicable Disease Control
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority*

