

## Pre Harvest Food Safety PDG

**Organizers:** Dr. Sid Thakur and Dr. Paula Fedorka-Cray.

**New Members Present:** Sid Thakur, Paula Fedorka-Cray, David Gombas, Divya Jaroni, Mark Updike, Mayra Marquez Gonzalez, Sherri McGarry, Anh Linh Nguyen, Brita Ball, Susanne Keller, Manpreet Singh, Jitu Patel, Kali Kniel, Jie Wei, Sarah Markland, Bassam Annous, Karl Matthews, Ema Maldonado-Siman, Peymen Fatemi, Anna Lammerding, Jack Guzewich, Jeff LeJune, Eelco Franz, Claudio Zweifd, Mitch Gilgour, Randall Phebus, Li Ma, Fawzy Hashem, Patricia Millner, Keith Warriner, Timothy Clouse, Eric Line, Maria Nazarowec-White and Moustapha Oke.

**Introduction:** Drs. Sid Thakur and Paula Fedorka-Cray welcomed everyone to the Pre Harvest Food Safety PDG organizational meeting. A signup sheet and program agenda were distributed to the audience. After a brief introduction the members discussed the proposed PDG mission statement, objectives, and focus areas and the following:

### 1. Objectives of the PDG

- To work towards understanding the factors that affect the emergence, persistence, transmission and ecology of microorganisms that may impact human health at the pre-harvest level,
- Controlling these factors at the pre-harvest level, and
- Promote the outreach, education and adoption of scientifically sound agricultural practices that minimize public health risks

### 2. Focus Area

This PDG will exclusively focus on the challenges posed by the presence of microorganisms at the pre-harvest level and will not extend into the harvest and post- harvest levels.

### 3. Microorganisms of Interest

- *Salmonella*
- MRSA – pigs
- *C. difficile* – retail meat
- *Cryptosporidia* – water
- *Cyclospora* – fruits
- Non-O157 STEC
- O157:H7
- Viruses
- Other emerging microorganisms

### 4. Microbial Ecology and Environment

There was great interest shown by the members to better understand the microbial ecology of pathogens in the pre-harvest environment and determine how this affects food safety. It was decided that this PDG should focus on the important aspects of reservoirs and vectors including:

- Workers
- Equipment
- Manure
- Water
- Soil and amendments
- Insects

### 5. Organic Production

The growing popularity of products that are raised in organic setting will also be targeted; not much is known about this production system at the pre-harvest level.

### 6. Control

The members highlighted that it will be important to include discussion on designing control measures to counteract the threat posed by microorganisms.

### 7. Education and Extension

The focus will be on educating students, stakeholders and members on the importance of pre-harvest food safety.

### General Comments

- This PDG will not be commodity centered and, therefore, is anticipated to have wider acceptance

- The potential overlap of this PDG with the other established PDGs was discussed. However, those present felt that after the mission and objectives were discussed this PDG is important, it serves an area that has been underrepresented, and that it will be an important addition to the other PDG groups. To minimize overlap, it was decided that there will be an open communication between the chairs of the different PDGs, pending approval of this PDG by the IAFP Program Committee.

8. **Selection of Chair and Vice Chair (done by show of hands):** Paula Fedorka-Cray – Chair and Sid Thakur – Vice Chair.

#### 9. **List-serve**

Dr. Sid Thakur will create a list serve that will be used for future communication with the PDG members.

#### 10. **Future Conference Calls and Webinars**

It was brought to the attention of the members that IAFP supports conference calls and Webinars for all the PDGs. Dr. Lee Ann Jaykus shared the IAFP program committee views on this topic with the audience. The proposed \$25 fee for Webinars may be problematic.

#### 11. **Symposia**

Multiple topics for future symposia (IAFP 2011) were discussed at the meeting. Potential topics include:

- Predicting the next 100 years of controls in the pre-harvest area
  - i. Think tank of the future
  - ii. What are the questions that need to be answered in the next 100 years
- The interface between fruits/vegetables/meat/animals/wildlife
- One-health concept
  - i. Bringing animal and human medicine together; different aspects of the same issues; protecting animals and protecting humans provide the same outcome.
- Other important points that were discussed under the symposia section were:
  - i. Hold a short symposia.
  - ii. Plant pathology and insecticide.
  - iii. Look for NEW speakers outside of IAFP.
  - iv. Invite new speakers to membership free 1st year and ½ price for 2nd year to capture new members.
  - v. Team up with other PDG to have support for the symposia.

NOTE: 15 additional members expressed interest in the committee but could not attend.

#### **Recommendations to the Executive Board:**

1. This committee respectfully requests that this PDG be accepted as a PDG within the organization.
2. A recommendation is given to consider a free membership for 'new' speakers with a 50% discount the following year.
3. Approve Paula Fedorka-Cray as Chair and Sid Thakur as Vice Chair.