



Enhancing the Roles of State and Local Government in an Integrated, Prevention-Oriented Food Safety System

Project Overview

Background

Debate is underway in Washington on how best to strengthen the nation's food safety system to make it more effective in preventing foodborne illness. While much of the spotlight is on FDA and other federal food safety agencies, their success depends to a large extent on effective coordination and collaboration with food safety regulators and health officials at the state and local level. Thus, as the food safety debate goes forward, it is critical to advance policies and other proposals for strengthening the roles of state and local agencies, in both their community-based food safety efforts and as integral parts of the nation's food safety system.

Project Approach and Goals

This project will develop an agenda for strengthening state and local roles by bringing together state and local officials, their federal counterparts, and diverse stakeholders of the food safety system, including the food industry and consumer groups, to:

1. Formulate and express a modern vision of the role of state and local government in an integrated, prevention-oriented food safety system;
2. Identify gaps or constraints in current law, policy and practice at the federal, state and local levels that inhibit fulfillment of that vision;
3. Recommend changes in law, policy, and practice that are needed to enhance the effectiveness of state and local agencies in addressing food safety problems at the local, state and national level;
4. Identify specific opportunities to improve collaboration among state, local, and federal agencies; and
5. Describe current funding patterns and resource needs at the state and local level.

Collaborating Organizations

The project is being pursued jointly by the:

- Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO),
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO),
- George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services (GWU),
- National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), and
- Emerging Pathogens Institute at the University of Florida (UF/EPI).

Workshops and Report

Much of the work of the project will be done through a series of four meetings, as follows:

- Kick-off Symposium – June 17, 2008 in Washington, D.C.
- Workshop on Surveillance and Outbreak Response – July 1, 2008 in Arlington, Virginia.
- Workshop on Inspection and Regulatory Activities – July 14-15, 2008 in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Workshop on Integration of the Food Safety System – October 2008 in Washington, D.C.

The project will produce a report in early 2009 that synthesizes the analysis and policy ideas generated by project participants and that can serve as a fact-based platform for efforts to modernize and strengthen the roles of state and local food safety agencies as part of the national food safety system.

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Contact Information

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