

Plan: Input from Retailers and State and Local Health Departments to Improve Federal Outreach to Support Control of Lm in Retail Delis

Purpose: Improve retail control of *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) in retail delicatessens through coordinated outreach and enhanced communication on “retail best practices”, interagency data-sharing on observed retail deli practices, and collaborative updates to the Food Code.

Why are we doing this?

- Enhance federal outreach to support the control of Lm at retail through improved coordination and based on input from retailers and state and local health departments.
- The National Advisory Committee for Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) provided several recommendations¹ to FSIS related to enhancing federal outreach to control of *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) in retail delicatessens.

Who is Involved?

- FSIS (lead) (in collaboration with FDA and CDC per NACMPI recommendations)
- Partner with National Associations:
 - Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)
 - American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI)
 - Alliance for Listeriosis Prevention (ALP)
 - Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
 - Food Marketing Institute (FMI)
 - National Association of County and City Health Officials (HACCHO)
 - National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)
 - National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)
 - National Grocers Association (NGA)

Key NACMPI Recommendation: Messaging/Outreach on Controlling Lm in Retail Delis

- Ensure guidance² on control of Lm at retail is clear/understandable, consistent, practical and available to all audiences.
- Engage stakeholders (retailers, state/local health/agriculture regulators) to garner input for improving access to and usefulness of information related to the control of Lm at retail
- Develop an Interagency Lm Action Plan outlining an integrated and coordinated federal effort on control of Lm at retail (taking into consideration the role and needs of state/local regulators, information needs of chain and independent groceries, and current activities of allied stakeholder associations)

Plan: In response to the NACMPI recommendations, FSIS, in collaboration with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will conduct focus

¹ NACMPI Subcommittee 1: FSIS Best Practices guidance for Controlling *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm) in Retail Delicatessens [recommendations](#) and meeting [transcript](#) March 29-30, 2016.

² Website: [FSIS Best Practices Guidance for Controlling Listeria monocytogenes \(Lm\) in Retail Delicatessens](#)

groups with a sample of stakeholders from industry, state and local public health and agriculture departments, and retail delicatessens to gather feedback. In the focus groups, a sample of stakeholders will be invited to provide input on the awareness and usefulness of existing outreach materials and tools related to best practices for controlling *Lm* in delicatessens, how they currently receive this type of information (e.g., from FSIS, FDA, CDC, State Health department, Cooperative Extension), and how those channels of communication could be improved. FSIS's Office of Planning, Analysis and Risk Management will facilitate the focus groups. FSIS has a specialized on-line (web-based) platform that it has successfully used to conduct the 1.5 -hour focus group sessions (note: a total of 30 focus groups, approx.. 6-8 per focus group; see corresponding Excel Sheet for focus groups, including criteria).

FSIS's Office of Planning, Analysis, and Risk Management will analyze and summarize the data, and provide it to the interagency team (FSIS, FDA, and CDC) for further consideration to enhance Federal outreach and interagency coordination to control *Lm* at retail. This feedback will help FSIS, FDA and CDC better understand the information needs of State public health and agriculture departments with retail food safety responsibilities, local health departments, and retail delicatessens, how these stakeholders currently get information used to guide retail food safety efforts, and provide feedback on the usefulness and practicality of current FSIS outreach (e.g., tools and communication) to support control of *Lm* in retail delicatessens. The feedback collected from participants may also include practical recommendations for improving Federal communications and outreach efforts to support the control of *Lm* at retail moving forward.

Proposed Focus Group Types (based on input from national associations):

FSIS is planning on 30 focus groups (6-8 people/focus group) based on the NACMPI recommendations and input from partnering associations.

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters – Partner with NASDA

Note: Diversity in geographic distribution of state agriculture departments (all invited)

Focus Group #	Potential State Agriculture Department Contacts*	Selection Criteria	
1	FL Dept. of Ag. and Consumer Services/Div. of Food Safety; GA Dept. of Ag. Food Safety Retail Program; KS Dept. of Ag Food Safety & Lodging; ME Dept. of Ag Food Inspection Unit; MI Dept. of Ag Food Safety & Recalls; MN Dept. of Ag Food Safety & Recalls	State-level agency official with oversight for retail food safety that handles retail food safety under an "agriculture department," specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; (n=6 representatives)	
2	MS Dept. of Ag and Commerce; NE Dept. of Ag Food Div.; NY Dept. of Ag & Markets Div. of Food Safety &	State-level agency official with oversight for retail food safety that handles retail food safety under an	

	Inspection; OH Dept. of Ag Food Safety Division; OR Dept. of Ag Food Safety Division; PA Dept. of Ag Bureau of Food Safety & Lab Services	"agriculture department," specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; (n=6 representatives)	
3	TN Dept. of Ag Regulatory Services Div.; UT Dept. of Ag Division of Regulatory Services; VA Dept. of Ag & Consumer Services; WV Dept. of Ag; WI Dept. of Ag, Trade & Consumer Protection Div.; WY Dept. of Ag Consumer Health Services Section	State-level agency official with oversight for retail food safety that handles retail food safety under an "agriculture department," specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; (n=6 representatives)	

*Resource- FDA Website:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/retailfoodprotection/foodcode/ucm122814.htm>. (Note: additional resource: AFDO: <http://dslo.afdo.org/>.)

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters – Partner with AFDO

Focus Group #	Potential State Environment or Health Department Contacts*	Selection Criteria	
4	AK (Dept. of Environ. Conservation Food safety & Sanitation); AZ Dept. of Health Services Food Safety & Environ. Services; CO Dept. of Public Health & Environment Retail Food Program; NV Dept. of Health & Human Services Environmental Health Services; SC Dept. of Health & Environmental Control Division of Food Protection; TN Dept. of Health Division of General Environ Health; VA Dept. of Health Div. of Food & General Environmental Health Services; NM Environment Dept. Food Program	State-level agency that handles retail food safety under an "environmental department," specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; (n=8)	
5	AL Dept. of Public Health Div. of Food, Milk & Lodging; AK Dept. of Health Food Protection Program; CA Dept. of Public Health Food Safety Program; CT Dept. of Consumer Protection, Food and Standards Div.; CT Dept. of Public Health, Food	State-level public health agency that handles retail food safety, specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to	

	Protection Program; DE Dept. of Health & Social Services Office of Food Protection; FL Dept. of Business Professional Regulations, Div. of Hotels and Restaurants, FL Dept. of Health Food Hygiene Program	delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities (n=8)	
6	HI Dept. of Health Sanitation Branch; ID Dept. of Health & Welfare Food Protection Program; IL Dept. of Public Health Foods, Drugs & Dairies; IN Dept. of Health Food Protection Program; IA Dept. of Inspections & Appeals Food & Consumer Safety Bureau; KY Cabinet for Health & Family Services Food Safety Branch; LA Dept. of Health Retail Food Program; ME Dept. of Health & Human Services Health Inspection Program	State-level public health agency that handles retail food safety, specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities (n=8)	
7	MD Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene Div. of Food Safety; MA Dept. of Public Health Food Protection Program; MN Dept. of Health Food Safety; MI Dept. of Health & Senior Services Food Safety; MO Dept. of Public Health & Human Services Food & Consumer Safety Section; NH Dept. of Health & Human Services Food Protection; NJ Dept. of Health & Senior Services Food & Drug Safety Program; NY Dep to Health, Food Handling, Preparation and Storage	State-level public health agency that handles retail food safety, specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities (n=8)	
8	NC Dept. of Health and Human Services Food Protection and Facilities, Div. of Public Health; ND Dept. of Health Div. of Food & Lodging; OH Dept. of Health Food Safety Program; OK Dept. of Health Consumer Protection Div.; OR Dept. of Human Services Foodborne Illness Prevention Program; RI Dept. of Health Office of Food Protection; SD Dept. of Health Protection	State-level public health agency that handles retail food safety, specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities (n=6)	
9	TX Dept. of State Health Services Food Establishments Group; UT Dept. of Health; VT Dept. of Health Food & Lodging Program; WA Dept. of Health Food Safety Program; WV Dept. of Health & Human Resources Public Health Sanitation Division; WI Dept. of Health Services Food Safety & Recreational Licensing	State-level public health agency that handles retail food safety, specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities (n=6)	

*Resource - FDA Website:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/retailfoodprotection/foodcode/ucm122814.htm>. (Note: additional resource: AFDO: <http://dslo.afdo.org/>).

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters - Partner with NACCHO

Focus Group #	Potential Urban Local Health Department Contacts*	Selection Criteria	
10	Local Health Departments (Urban)	local health departments that conduct retail food safety outreach in urban areas (West Coast/Midwest), specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; n=8 representatives on focus group	
11	Local Health Departments (Urban)	local health departments that conduct retail food safety outreach in urban areas (South/East), specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; n=8 representatives on focus group	

*Resource- FDA Website:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/retailfoodprotection/foodcode/ucm122814.htm>. (Note: additional resource: AFDO: <http://dslo.afdo.org/>).

Note: To differentiate “local” and “urban” areas, definitions were used from the US Census Bureau Urban and Rural classification: "The Census Bureau’s urban-rural classification is fundamentally a delineation of geographical areas, identifying both individual urban areas and the rural areas of the nation. The Census Bureau’s urban areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses. The Census Bureau delineates urban areas after each decennial census by applying specified criteria to decennial census and other data. The Census Bureau identifies two types of urban areas: “Rural” encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area." Specifically, the Census Bureau defines “Urbanized Areas” as 50,000 or more people and “Rural” areas as those having (<50,000 people). The U. S. Census Bureau Urban and Rural Classification page: <http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/urban-rural.html> (link is external)

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters - Partner with NEHA

Focus Group	Potential Rural Local Health Department Contacts*	Selection Criteria	

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12	Local Health Departments (Rural)	local health departments that conduct retail food safety outreach in rural areas (West Coast/Midwest), specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; n=8 representatives on focus group with 1 representative from tribal territory	
13	Local Health Departments (Rural)	local health departments that conduct retail food safety outreach in rural areas (South/East), specifically a person who provides education and outreach (e.g., Food Code) to delicatessens or a person who oversees these activities; n=8 representatives on focus group with 1 representative from tribal territory	

*Resource - FDA Website:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/guidanceregulation/retailfoodprotection/foodcode/ucm122814.htm>. (Note: additional resource: AFDO: <http://dslo.afdo.org/>).

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters - Partner with FMI

Focus Group #	Grocery Chain Types*	Selection Criteria	Potential Dates for Focus Groups
14	Traditional Grocery Chain/Supermarket	Retail food safety representatives from supermarkets	
15	Traditional Grocery Chain/Fresh Format	Retail food safety representatives from "fresh format" grocers	
16	Traditional Grocery Chain/Super Warehouse	Retail food safety representatives from "super warehouse" grocers	
17	Traditional Grocery Chain/Limited Assortment	Retail food safety representatives from "limited assortment" grocers	
18	Non-traditional Grocery Chain/Wholesale Club	Retail food safety representatives from "wholesale club"	

		grocers	
19	Non-traditional Grocery Chain/Mass	Retail food safety representatives from “mass” grocers	
20	Non-traditional Grocery Chain/Convenience	Retail food safety representatives from “convenience” grocers	
21	TBD	TBD	

*The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) identified key types of retailers to garner input from and these based on categories for retail grocers from 2018 *Future of Retailing* (Inmar Inc., 2018).

Lm Focus Group Selection Parameters - Partner with NGA

Focus Group #	Urban and Rural Independent Grocery	Selection Criteria	
22	Urban Independent Grocers - Midwest/West	Urban Independent Grocers in the Midwest/West	
23	Urban Independent Grocers - Midwest/West (English as a 2 nd language)	Urban Independent Grocers in the Midwest/West where English as a 2 nd language	
24	Urban Independent Grocers - South/East	Urban Independent Grocers in the South/East	
25	Urban Independent Grocers - South/East (English as a 2 nd language)	Urban Independent Grocers in the South/East where English as a 2 nd language	
26	Rural Independent Grocers - Midwest/West	Rural Independent Grocers in the Midwest/West *At least one representative from a tribal area	
27	Rural Independent Grocers - Midwest/West (English as a 2 nd language)	Rural Independent Grocers in the Midwest/West where English as a 2 nd language	
28	Rural Independent Grocers - South/East	Rural Independent Grocers in the South/East *At least one representative from a tribal area	
29	Rural Independent Grocers -	Rural Independent Grocers	

	South/East (English as a 2 nd language)	in the South/East where English as a 2 nd language	
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Lm Focus Group Section Parameter for Academia/Cooperative Extension

Dr. Donald Schaffner, Professor, Rutgers University, was a participant on the NACMPI committee that made the recommendations that FSIS get input from retailers, state and local health officials, and academia/Cooperative Extension on the information needs and usefulness of current FSIS outreach to control Lm in retail delis. Dr. Schaffner noted there are only six professionals in academia/Cooperative Extension that provide outreach related to retail food safety. These names are provided below and, with OMB approval to move forward, will be invited to participate on “focus group #30).

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Attachment: Identification of Representatives and Definitions for Focus Groups (additional input from partnering associations)

- **Focus Groups: 1-9:** State agriculture and health that oversee retail delicatessens are listed by AFDO in the Director of State and Local Officials: <http://dslo.afdo.org/> [provided by Dr. Abraham Kulungara, Senior Director, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, November 2018]
- **Focus Group 10-13:** Local Health Departments: Governmental entities that derive their authority and responsibility from the state and local laws that govern them and exist for the common good and are responsible for demonstrating strong leadership in the promotion of physical, behavior, environmental, social and economic conditions that improve the health and well-being; prevent illness, disease, injury, and premature death; and eliminate health disparities” [National Association of County & City Health Official. Operational Definition of a Functional Local Health Department. November 2005. <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Operational-Definition-of-a-Functional-Local-Health-Department.pdf>]
- **Focus Groups 14-21:** “A chain supermarket is a publically or privately owned or controlled food retail company operating in a variety of formats that generally have 11 or more stores and \$2 million or more in annual sales” [2018 Future of Food Retailing, Inmar Analytics 2018 provided by the Food Marketing Institute, November 2018]. **Sub-categories used for FSIS Focus Groups 14-21:**
 - **Traditional Grocery/Supermarkets** (focus group 14): These are stores offering a full line of groceries, meat and produce with at least \$2 million in annual sales and up to 15 percent of their sales in GM/HBC. These stores typically carry anywhere from 15,000 to 60,000 SKUs (depending on the size of the store), and may offer a service deli, a service bakery and or a pharmacy.
 - **Traditional Grocery/Fresh Format** (focus group 15): These stores are different from Traditional Supermarkets and Traditional Natural Food Stores, fresh stores emphasize perishables and offer center-store assortments that differ from those of traditional retailers – especially in the areas of ethnic, natural, and organic.
 - **Traditional Grocery/Super Warehouse** (focus group 16): A high-volume highbred of a large traditional supermarket and a Warehouse store. Super Warehouse stores typically offer a full range of service departments, perishables, and reduced prices.
 - **Traditional Grocery/Limited Assortment** ((focus group 17): A low-priced grocery store that offers a limited-assortment of center-store and perishable items (fewer than 2,000).

- **Non-traditional Grocery/Wholesale Club** (focus group 18): A membership retail/wholesale hybrid with a varied selection and limited variety of products presented in a warehouse-type environment. These approximately 120,000 square foot stores have 60-70 percent GM/HBC and a grocery line dedicated to large sizes and bulk sales.
 - **Non-traditional Grocery/Mass** (focus group 189): A large store selling primarily clothing, electronics, and sporting goods, but also carries grocery and non-edible grocery items.
 - **Non-traditional Grocery/Convenience without Gas** (focus group 20): A small, higher-margin convenience stores that don't sell gas and offer an edited selection of staple groceries, non-food and other convenience food items.
 - **Non-traditional Grocery/ Convenience with Gas** (focus group 21): A small, higher-margin store that sells gas and offers an edited selection of staples groceries, non-food, and other convenience food items.
- **Focus Groups: 22-29:** “Independent grocer is defined as a store/set of stores that are family-owned and privately-held. While ~80% of NGA’s membership are grocers that operate 1-5 stores, there are independent grocers that own chains of up to 200 stores.” [Ms. Molly Pfaffenroth, Director of Government Relations, National Grocers Association, Dec. 10, 2018]

Note: Progressive Grocer’s Annual Report of the Grocery Industry includes a definition of independents at [10 or fewer stores](#).

Progressive Grocer Report http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/ensembleiq/pg_201804/index.php#/26 and chart that defines formats.
http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/ensembleiq/pg_201804/index.php#/30