Southern California Association for Food Protection

Summer 2006

May 19 Meeting

The May meeting was very interesting and informative with an insiders view of the Jack in the Box Innovation Center. We saw the inner workings of R&D, the ultra modern sensory panel room with secret viewing room, the studio where all the Computer Based Training is born, the QA laboratory complex and the office space. Jack was busy running the business so we didn't see him but he sent his autographed picture and antenna balls. We were then treated to a Jack in the Box lunch prepared by Chef Angelito and his crew. Sorry you missed the onion rings Marty. They were great!
After lunch, we hopped in the big van and drove down to the North Island Naval center. Two soldiers picked us up at the gate and delivered us to the USS Nimitz CVN 68 aircraft carrier. Chief Vierra took us to the ship's store (some of us got great buys on t-shirts and fleece jackets) and through all five of the on-board kitchens. There we saw amazing equipment with giant heated pots all in a row, fryers, grills and racks of ovens that prepare over 20,000 meals per day.
While they are underway (at sea), the kitchen prepares meals 24 hours a day. They make all their own bread. Their cleaning system is "clean as you go". We did see they had CCP's (Critical Control Point) on their menu recipes. The recipes rotate on a 21 day cycle. Workers are trained in food safety and other aspects of proper food handling procedures. The dining rooms are all over two decks and range from mundane to opulent depending on rank. As an outsider, it seemed it would take a long while to orient yourself just to find meals!

The supply department manages 60,000 line items in support of the ship and the air wing. They do the ship's payroll and run the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program. Supply also does the ship's laundry, operates two stores, the onboard Post Office, three solid waste processing centers and three gyms. We found it interesting that waste (except plastic) is put through a grinder and dumped overboard. Plastic is melted down into a big pellet and returned to land. Water is all made on board through their desalination plant.

May 19 meeting

After returning to Jack in the Box, we had a great dinner of chicken and ribs, pizza, salad and brownies.

Margaret gave a presentation on Avian Influenza. A review of the presentation is on the following page.

Next meeting – Sept 6

Hi Point Industries egg facility
Wednesday, September 6, 2006.
1811 Mountain Ave.
Norco, CA 92860

Your support for this Association is critical for the health of the organization. Please take a moment to share why you choose not to attend meetings. Just a quick e-mail to:
margaret.burton@jackinthebox.com
would be greatly appreciated.
What would you like to see done at meetings?
How can the organization better serve you?
Do you want classes in some subject?
Do you want certification in something?
Is it on a wrong day, place, time?
Help us understand how we can be a better organization while addressing food safety issues.

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Avian Influenza

Avian influenza (AI) is in the news and has been spreading across the world, especially in Asia and Europe, causing great destruction of flocks to try to stop the spread. The disease can be low pathogenic or high pathogenic. The low pathogenic gives birds respiratory distress, declined egg production, increased mortality, sinusitis in turkey and is detected by serology antibodies. Low path AI does not infect blood, meat or bone and cannot infect eggs. High path. AI gives a totally different picture on a ranch with no egg production, high mortality up to 100%, swollen combs and wattles, hemorrhages in combs, legs and internally. It is very obvious. This virus can get inside eggs laid by infected hens before death and can infect blood, meat and bones. The virus is killed by cooking so chicken, even if it came from an infected hen, is safe as long as it is fully cooked. Birds however, once the virus is detected, are 100% culled at the ranch for both high path and low path viruses because of the ease with which viruses mutate.

One important way the virus is spread is through migratory birds. Some waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds are the natural hosts for AI and is a natural infection in ducks. Migratory waterfowl range over the globe with their flyways frequently overlapping. The government is spending millions to monitor the flyways to detect AI before it spreads. The summer breeding grounds in Alaska overlap with the Asia/Australia and Pacific American Flyways intermingling birds from Asia that may carry the virus.

The most recent concern is the virus has jumped from a bird flu to humans. To date, there have been 229 confirmed cases of AI in humans with 131 deaths (7/12). These cases are always transmitted by close proximity with dead or sick birds and behavior that allow close proximity to mucus, feathers, droppings, or internal organs of sick birds. It is also now suspected that people in close proximity to infected individuals can contact the virus from another person through contact with infected body fluids. The symptoms are similar to regular “flu”, such as fever, cough, sore throat, eye infection, muscle aches, and pneumonia.

You can protect yourself from AI with normal good hygiene. This includes washing your hands, not putting your hands on your face or eyes, cooking poultry to >70 degrees C (158 degrees F). Freezing does not inactivate the virus. Normal strength sanitizers inactivate the virus. Extra precaution should be taken when handling fresh poultry.

There is tremendous work going on through academia, government and the private sector to monitor and prepare for an event called a pandemic flu. These events are rare, with only 3 recorded in modern times (1918 Spanish Flu, 1957 Asian Flu, and 1968 Hong Kong Flu). These pandemics occur when the virus shifts and no one has immunity to the shifted virus. Such pandemics cause a significant loss of life and are to be avoided at all cost.

Some of the planning being done can be seen on the Web site www.pandemicflu.gov. This Web site also provides an outline you can use for your business, company and family planning. www.avianinfluenzainfo.com also has useful AI information.

The National Chicken Council has a Pandemic Flu team comprised of all major companies. They

- act under the authority of the NCC Board of Directors,
- develop and enhance testing programs,
- researched consumer attitudes and response to key messages.
- developed media and communication plans

They have contracted with two independent spokespersons to give a single AI message. The spokesperson communicates regularly with the USDA and CDC, and have met with the Secretary of Agriculture on March 22. They prepare and disseminate news releases and fact sheets, handle media inquires from an industry perspective and participate in public seminars.

The Poultry and Egg Export Council is campaigning to build consumer confidence and promote consumption in AI affected countries. They also work with individual country governments.

From the industry perspective, all sick birds are tested for AI. Breeders are constantly tested. Birds are kept in enclosed housing which is likely to minimize migratory bird contact. There will be swift, decisive response to an outbreak. Broilers flocks are tested no more than 2 weeks before a market date. Confirmatory testing is done at the state lab level. If either low or high path AI is confirmed, flocks will be culled at the grower site and will not enter the food supply. Bio-security programs on a ranch might include :

- restricting visitors,
- posting bilingual procedures and no trespassing signs,
- securing the ranch border,
- disinfecting vehicles entering and exiting the ranch,
- Foot baths at all house entrances,
- plastic boot covers and protective clothing,
- education of contract producers on procedures,
- broiler testing,
- active surveillance of Dead On Arrival birds,
- making the facility as repulsive as possible to migrating birds.

Nationally, the plan is to detect and contain an outbreak. They are working to prevent or delay introduction into the United States with travel advisories, screening, possible isolation and quarantining. They are gathering current antiviral treatments which may or may not work on the mutated virus. They are ready to implement social distancing, school closures, and communications. They are expanding the production of current egg based vaccine and exploring modern non-egg vaccines. There is a 6-fold increase in monitoring Alaskan flyways.

In conclusion

- It is better to be overly cautious now
- A threat anywhere is a threat everywhere
- A human pandemic could shut down the world
- Vaccine is an improbable resolution at this time
- Better be getting vaccine and adequate supplies
- Maintain bio-security and firewalls
- Engage in planning and preparation
- Industry must continue to work with government
- Support the food industry with info and material to meet consumer needs.